

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE Name / description of the issue being assessed	Review of the Old Vicarage provision
DATE Date the DIA is completed	4 December 2019
LEAD OFFICER Name, title and dept of person responsible for carrying out the DIA.	Jackie Brown, Head of Business Change (People) & ICT

1 Summary description of the proposed change

- What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed?
- How does it compare with the current situation?

The Old Vicarage is an established eight-bedded residential unit for children and young people located in the village of Upnor within Medway. It provides a medium- to long-term residential service for up to eight young people aged 12-18.

The home currently has four young people in placement, with four vacancies.

The ILACS inspection of children's social care service in July 2019 concluded that too many vulnerable children and young people in need of statutory help and protection wait too long for intervention.

The Council needs to develop a provision to ensure that a greater number of young people receive the right intervention at the right time. The changing profile of need no longer fits the core purpose that the Old Vicarage was designed for and it is unable to meet this evolving demand.

The Council's current forecast overspend has significant ramifications for all areas of Medway Council's provision.

It is therefore proposed to review the current purpose of the Old Vicarage and explore the various types of provision that could be provided.

On 22 October 2019 Cabinet approved the proposal to consult with staff and service users to examine the future use of the Old Vicarage provision.

2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

- Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user records etc.
- Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile

A public consultation was carried out for 30 days from the 19 November 2019 to 18 December 2019 and included contacting and notifying young people living at the provision.

Meetings were held with young people resident at the Old Vicarage. The meetings were held as group meetings and were also offered on an individual basis.

Diversity impact assessment

A meeting was also arranged with the heads of the schools attended by the young people.
There was an online consultation, allowing stakeholders and the wider public to have their say.

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to :

- Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't?

(insert ✓ in one or more boxes)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	✓		
Disability	✓		
Gender reassignment			
Marriage/civil partnership			
Pregnancy/maternity			
Race			
Religion/belief			
Sex			
Sexual orientation			
Other (eg low income groups)	✓		

4 Summary of the likely impacts

- Who will be affected?
- How will they be affected?

- Young people living at this provision may be affected depending on the outcome of the consultation.

Diversity impact assessment

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

- What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?
- Are there alternative providers?
- Can demand for services be managed differently?

Depending on the outcome of the consultations, and to mitigate adverse impacts it was important that:

- All people affected were notified of the consultations in order to be able to express their views.
- A review of the service users' care and support needs have been carried out by Social Workers to determine each client's eligible needs and onward pathway.
- Alternative provisions suitable for the Service Users were identified.

6 Action plan

- Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Carry out consultation with affected young people.	V White	18 December 2019
Carry out consultation with stakeholders and public.	V White	18 December 2019
Determine suitable alternative care and support packages which may be implemented depending on the outcome of the consultation.	C Impey	14 January 2020
Implement alternative care arrangements, depending on the outcome of Cabinet on 14 January 2020	C Impey/ V White	7 February 2020

Diversity impact assessment

7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be:

- to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate
- consider alternatives
- gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

The recommendation is to proceed with the closure of the Old Vicarage on 7 February 2020. Whilst it is recognised that the closure of the provision may cause anxiety to residents, they are all already or approaching the age of 18, and their transition to provision within appropriate adult social care is already under way. There is a risk of the provision being under-utilised or even empty once the current cohort moves on (as is planned within their respective pathways) as children and young people with similar needs are now being placed in a family environment (i.e. Foster Care) rather than Residential Care.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that:

- the recommendation can be implemented
- sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned
- the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Date

Contact your Performance and Intelligence hub for advice on completing this assessment

RCC:	phone 2443	email: annamarie.lawrence@medway.gov.uk
C&A (Children's Social Care):	contact your usual P&I contact	
C&A (all other areas):	phone 4013	email: jackie.brown@medway.gov.uk
BSD:	phone 2472/1490	email: corppi@medway.gov.uk
PH:	phone 2636	email: david.whiting@medway.gov.uk