

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 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 five young people in placement, with three 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 Old Vicarage is unable to meet the needs of this evolving demand.

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.

Consultation took place between 19 November and 18 December 2019 and included the following staff who work at the provision:

- One registered manager
- One deputy manager
- Three team leaders
- Nine residential care workers
- Three residential care workers employed on a casual basis
- One Cook/housekeeper
- One Support Services Assistant

2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

- Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user records etc.

Diversity impact assessment

- Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile

A staff consultation was carried out for 30 days from the 19 November 2019 to 18 December 2019 and included contacting and notifying staff employed at the provision.

There were group meetings and individual meetings were also offered.

Staff were immediately placed on the redeployment register.

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?

Diversity impact assessment

- Staff working at this provision may be affected depending on the outcome of the consultation.

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.
- We identify whether there were any alternative suitable roles available for staff to enable them to continue working in the authority (staff were immediately placed on the Redeployment Register).

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 staff.	V White	18 December 2019
Send out consultation responses to employees and trade unions	V White/ N Beattie	24 December 2019
Prepare and issue redundancy notices if appropriate	V White/ N Beattie	5 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
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