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**LB Bexley**  
**Kent County Council**  
**Medway Council**  
**Equality Analysis/ Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

**Directorate/ Service:**

**LB Bexley** – Children’s Services - Adoption  
**KCC** - CY Integrated Children’s Services – Adoption  
**Medway** – Children’s Services - Adoption

**Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service:** Creation of Regional Adoption Agency Partnership with London Borough of Bexley, Kent County Council and Medway Council

**Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer:**  
Fi Cisneros – Assistant Director Bexley  
Caroline Smith -Assistant Director KCC  
Paul Startup – Head of Corporate Parenting - Medway

**Version: 1**

**Author:**  
Sarah Skinner – Interim Head of RAA  
Jerry Tosswell – Employee Relations and HR Policy Manager, Bexley  
Hillary Bland – Senior HR Business Adviser KCC  
Jesse Bhelay – Acting HR Business Partner, Medway

**Pathway of Equality Analysis:**

RAA Executive Board – 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020

**Summary and recommendations of equality analysis/impact assessment.**

- **Context**
- In March 2016, the Government announced changes to the delivery of adoption services setting a very clear direction that all local authorities’ adoption services must be delivered on a regionalised basis by 2020.
- The premise of regionalisation is to:
  - Promote early permanence planning across the region.
  - Improve the timeliness of children’s adoption journeys and reduce the length of time children wait to be adopted
  - Improve post-adoption support services to families who have adopted children from care

- Reduce the number of agencies that provide adoption services thereby improving efficiency & effectiveness.

- **Aims and Objectives**

- The Bexley, Kent & Medway RAA are now formally proposing a partnership model that requires no physical transfer of staff but operates under a robust governance structure where each local authority will delegate to the Head of the Regional Adoption Agency, responsibilities for finance and staffing matters to ensure the effective operation of the partnership and our adoption practice. This preferred model is subject to legal agreement.
- This way of working will mean:
  - No TUPE or secondment of staff
  - Pooling of budgets and a clear structure in which the RAA Head of service has final accountability for budgets and staffing across the region
  - Practices will be aligned, over time, through co-design with staff at every level of the business
  - Where functions do need to be led by one Local Authority on behalf of the others, this will be identified and agreed by the Executive Board.
- The RAA is committed to designing services capable of improving outcomes for children for whom the plan is adoption through:
  - Securing good and timely adoptive placements for children to avoid delay and unnecessary time spent in care
  - Placing more children in an early permanence placement to avoid unnecessary moves
  - Compliance with timescales set for adopter assessments and fast track when appropriate
  - Produce good quality adopter assessments
  - Recognising the impact of early trauma and life experiences for children and providing support to them and their adoptive families to ensure permanence and improve their life chances
- The proposed service delivery is based on an evidence base of what works in adoption and on initial consultation with the Heads of Service for adoption in all 3 LA's. Below is an outline structure for the RAA. This model is flexible and subject to change and will be informed by consultation with adoption staff from all 3 LA's through a series of workshops between October 2019 and March 2020. The model is also subject to the agreement of the RAA finances.
  - One Head of Service
  - Service Manager(s)
  - 4 thematic team areas; Recruitment and assessment, family finding and matching, adoption support and panels made up of:
    - Advanced practitioners
    - Senior social workers
    - Social workers
    - Social work assistants
    - Specialist practitioners
    - Administration support

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- o Each team will be managed by a Team Manager and there may be more than one team within a thematic area.

- **Summary of equality impact**

Screening of the proposed changes has not highlighted any negative impact on any protected group

**Adverse Equality Impact Rating Low**

**Attestation**

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment concerning the Adoption service within KCC. I agree with risk rating and the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

**Head of Service**



Signed:

Name: Paul Startup

Job Title: Head of Corporate Parenting

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020

**Head of Service**

Signed:

Name:

Job Title:

Date:

**Head of Service**

Signed:

Name:

Job Title:

Date:

**RAA DCS Member**



Signed:

Name: Dr. Lee-Anne Farach

Job Title: Assistant Director Children's Social Care

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020

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Signed:

Name:

Job Title:

Date:

Signed:

Name:

Job Title:

Date:

### Part 1 Screening

Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent?

Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?

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Protected Group	Please provide a <u>brief</u> commentary on your findings. Fuller analysis should be undertaken in Part 2.		
High negative impact Eq/A	Medium negative impact Screen	Low negative impact Evidence	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact Evidence
Age		<p>Low</p> <p>Line managers to make time available to address any issues</p> <p>For KCC the age ranges are split across a wide range and due to the number of staff involved in the ranges we are unable to provide percentages.</p> <p><u>Medway</u> Percentage in Age brackets; 34% - 30's 9% - 40's 9% - 50's 18% - 60's</p> <p>For Bexley 78% of staff are over 55.</p>	<p>It is not envisaged that any particular age group would adversely affected more than another as a result of this proposal as age would not be a factor.</p> <p>Agreed policies and procedures will be applied throughout the process and the principles, and arrangements that it sets out are applicable to all employees irrespective of their protected characteristic/s</p>

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<p><b>Disability</b></p>			<p><b>Low</b>                  The recruitment process may require reasonable adjustments to be made for staff with disabilities covered by the Equality Act 2010.                   Line managers to make time available to address any issues                   For KCC 88.1% are declared as not being disabled. The remaining staff are undeclared/unknown.   <u>Medway</u>                  100% of staff have not declared a disability so undeclared/unknown.                   For Bexley 71% are declared as not disabled. The remaining staff are unknown.</p>	<p>Vacancies will be filled where there is a clear business need to do so and benchmarked against work requirements and capacity. The employing authority will be determined on a geographical basis e.g. requirement for a member of staff to fulfil a role within the Bexley area - employee will be employed by London Borough of Bexley. The proposal is not expected to have any adverse effect on staff within this category as disability should not be a factor                  Agreed policies and procedures will be applied throughout the process and the principles, and arrangements that it sets out are applicable to all employees irrespective of their protected characteristic/s.</p>
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<p><b>Gender</b></p>			<p>Low Line managers to make time available to address any issues For KCC 95.2% are female. <u>Medway</u> 90% are female 10% are Male For Bexley 93% are female.</p>	<p>The proposal is not envisaged to effect one gender more than another as gender is not a factor. Agreed policies and procedures will be applied throughout the process and the principles, and arrangements that it sets out are applicable to all employees irrespective of their protected characteristic/s.</p>
<p><b>Gender identity/ Transgender</b></p>			<p>Low If any issues currently unknown are revealed during the consultation process then this will be revisited. For KCC this is new field and currently 64.3% is unknown. 33.3% have declared</p>	<p>Agreed policies and procedures will be applied throughout the process and the principles, and arrangements that it sets out are applicable to all employees irrespective of their protected characteristic/s.</p>



<p><b>Race</b></p>			<p>No and the remaining staff have declared that they prefer not to say.  <u>Medway</u>                      54% have declared                      45% have not declared                      Bexley do not currently hold this information</p>	
			<p>Low                      If any issues currently unknown are revealed during the consultation process then this will be revisited.                      For KCC 81% are declared as white.                      Due to the number of staff involved we are unable to provide percentages for any other ethnicity or                      Undeclared/Unknown  <u>Medway</u></p>	<p>Agreed policies and procedures will be applied throughout the process and the principles, and arrangements that it sets out are applicable to all employees irrespective of their protected characteristic/s.</p>

			<p>100% have declared overall from which; 73% declared White British 18% declared White Other 9% declared White Irish</p> <p>For Bexley 64% are declared as white and 21% declared as BAME origin. The remaining are undeclared.</p>	
<p><b>Religion and Belief</b></p>			<p>Low</p> <p>If any issues currently unknown are revealed during the consultation process then this will be revisited.</p> <p>For KCC 52.4% are declared as Christian. Due to the number of staff involved we are unable to provide percentages for any</p>	<p>Agreed policies and procedures will be applied throughout the process and the principles, and arrangements that it sets out are applicable to all employees irrespective of their protected characteristic/s.</p>

			<p>other declared category.</p> <p><u>Medway</u>                      55% Declared from which;                      45% have declared Christian                      9% Declared Atheism                      45% have not declared</p> <p>For Bexley 43% are declared as Christian, 7% as Islam (Muslim) and the remaining as no religion or undeclared.</p>	
<p><b>Sexual Orientation</b></p>			<p>Low                      If any issues currently unknown are revealed during the consultation process then this will be revisited.</p> <p>For KCC 81% have declared they are heterosexual. The remaining staff are</p>	<p>Agreed policies and procedures will be applied throughout the process and the principles, and arrangements that it sets out are applicable to all employees irrespective of their protected characteristic/s.</p>

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<p><b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b></p>			<p>Undeclared/Unknown.</p> <p><u>Medway</u> Only 55% have declared from which; 46% have declared that they are heterosexual 9% has declared Gay Women / Lesbian 45% - Have not declared</p> <p>For Bexley 57% are declared as heterosexual. The remaining staff are undeclared.</p>	
			<p>Low</p> <p>If any issues currently unknown are revealed during the consultation process then this will be revisited.</p> <p>For KCC due to the number of staff involved we are unable</p>	<p>Agreed policies and procedures will be applied throughout the process and the principles, and arrangements that it sets out are applicable to all employees irrespective of their protected characteristic/s.</p>



			<p>to provide percentages.</p> <p><u>Medway</u> Currently none known but can be revisited during consultation if required.</p> <p>For Bexley no staff are currently recorded as pregnant or on maternity leave.</p>	
<p><b>Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b></p>			<p>Low</p> <p>If any issues currently unknown are revealed during the consultation process then this will be revisited.</p> <p>For KCC 26.2% have declared Married, 61.9% are Undeclared/Unknown.</p> <p>For remaining categories due to the number of staff involved we are unable</p>	<p>Agreed policies and procedures will be applied throughout the process and the principles, and arrangements that it sets out are applicable to all employees irrespective of their protected characteristic/s.</p>

			<p>to provide percentages.</p> <p><u>Medway</u>          55% Declared that they are married          45% -          Undeclared/Unknown</p> <p>For LBB 35% are recorded as married, the remainder are divorced, single or undeclared.</p>	
<p><b>Carer's Responsibilities</b></p>			<p><u>Low</u>          If any issues currently unknown are revealed during the consultation process then this will be revisited.</p> <p><u>Medway</u>          Currently unknown but can be revisited during the consultation process if required.</p>	<p>Agreed policies and procedures will be applied throughout the process and the principles, and arrangements that it sets out are applicable to all employees irrespective of their protected characteristic/s.</p>

## Part 2

### Equality Analysis /Impact Assessment

#### **Protected groups**

At this stage we do not envisage any particular staff groups will be negatively impacted by the change

#### **Information and Data used to carry out your assessment**

Equality data from London Borough of Bexley, Kent County Council and Medway Council

#### **Who have you involved consulted and engaged?**

HR and Managers from authorities

#### **Analysis**

The proposal will have limited impact on protected groups however we will continue to monitor the impact as the changes are implemented

#### **Adverse Impact,**

None

#### **Positive Impact:**

Unable to declare

#### **JUDGEMENT**

- **No major change** - no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken

#### **Internal Action Required**

**NO**

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