

## Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity.
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an equality analysis.

<b>Directorate: CYPS</b>	<b>Service area: Commissioning</b>
<b>Lead person: Jenny Lingrell</b>	<b>Contact number: Ext 54836</b>

### 1. Title: LAC Sufficiency Strategy

Is this a:

**Strategy / Policy**

**Service / Function**

**Other**

**If other, please specify**

### 2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The LAC Sufficiency Strategy aims to demonstrate a detailed understanding of the children's placement market in Rotherham and nationally, examining supply and demand whilst identifying gaps in provision. The strategy supports the ambition of RMBC to ensure that all our looked after children live and grow up in homes with carers who meet all of their physical and emotional needs. The strategy defines what Rotherham intends to do in the future to improve our provision for children and young people in our care.

### 3. Relevance to equality and diversity

Questions	Yes	No
Does the activity have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole community?		x
Is there an impact for an individual or group with protected characteristics? (Discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?	x	
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	x	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?	x	

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

### 4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals prior to carrying out an **Equality Analysis**.

Considering equalities and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below and use the prompts for guidance.

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

(**think about** the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

There are four key strands of work that are inter-dependent, but affect different groups.

Looked After Children; Rotherham's Looked After Children will have protected characteristics. All care planning will take account of the needs of the individual child and

seek to match their needs with an appropriate placement. The LAC Sufficiency Strategy will provide more options to ensure that the placement is matched with the child's needs (including any protected characteristics). For example, the Muslim Foster Carer project will provide more options to place children with Muslim Foster Carers where this is a good match.

The Looked After Children's Council meets regularly. The LAC Council agree their own programme of work; a request to co-produce market management activity with them will be made.

Rotherham has an existing community of Foster Carers. RMBC meet with this group regularly to ensure that their voice can inform future planning for new recruitment initiatives as well as support package that is available to Foster Carers. Becoming a Foster Carer provides an employment opportunity to Rotherham residents. All initiatives to recruit more Foster Carers should aim to increase the diversity of the Foster Carer profile across all protected characteristics; this will support children and young people to achieve positive outcomes as placements that are a good match will be available.

Rotherham currently works with a number of Independent Fostering Agencies and engages with this group via a Provider Forum.

Plans to open new residential provision within the borough may have an impact on the wider community. Robust arrangements to consult with the community will be considered as part of the commissioning process with new providers in the borough.

- **Key findings**

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

The LAC Sufficiency Strategy sets out a clear need analysis that helps to support work to meet the needs of Looked After Children in the borough. The work will have a positive impact in terms of addressing the diversity of this cohort through a broader range of placement options.

Work to open new residential provision in the borough may be perceived negatively by local communities. Consultation and engagement work will need to be implemented carefully and sensitively. The Local Authority will maintain oversight of this through the commissioning process and ensure that Elected Members are included in the process.

- **Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/reduce negative impact)

A full Equality Analysis will be completed as part of the Market Management Project. This will include details of all key areas of work.

In summary, these are:

- To seek engagement in the Market Management Project with the Looked After Children's Council
- To continue to engage with Rotherham Foster Carers
- To continue to engage with the Independent Foster Carer Forum
- To ensure that consultation and engagement with the public is embedded in all plans to open new residential provision in the borough

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	Completed
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	June 2019
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Jo Smith, Head of Commissioning

### 5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Jon Stonehouse	Strategic Director CYPS	

### 6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If an Equality Analysis is not required the screening document will need to be published.

If this screening relates to a **Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, full Council** or a **Significant Operational Decision** a copy should be emailed to Corporate Governance (**to include contact**) and will be published along with the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to [Zaidah.ahmed@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Zaidah.ahmed@rotherham.gov.uk) For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file (but not published).

<b>Date screening completed</b>	
<b>If relates to a Key Decision - date sent to Cabinet</b>	
<b>Date screening sent to Equalities Officer Zaidah.ahmed@rotherham.gov.uk</b>	