



North

Yorkshire County Council

Equality impact assessment (EIA) for proposed Independent Reviewing Service Restructure Evidencing paying due regard to protected characteristics

January 2017

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যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔



Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are public documents. EIAs accompanying reports going to County Councillors for decisions are published with the committee papers on our website and are available in hard copy at the relevant meeting. To help people to find completed EIAs we also publish them in the Equality and Diversity section of our website. This will help people to see for themselves how we have paid due regard in order to meet statutory requirements.

Name of Directorate and Service Area	CYPS, IRO Team
Lead Officer and contact details	Heather Pearson, Safeguarding Unit Manager. Tel. 01609 532301 heather.pearson@nothyorks.gov.uk
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the EIA	Helen Furphy, Project & Change Officer Dave Taylor, Independent Reviewing Service Manager
How will you pay due regard? e.g. working group, individual officer	Due regard will be paid through regular meetings of the Service Review Project Board and formal consultation process with staff and young people. The Service Review Project Board is attended by The two Safeguarding Unit Managers, the two

	IRO Managers, The Fostering Group Manager, Head of Business Support and a senior HR representative. The Project Board has been established and is meeting regularly. There have already been two engagement sessions with Independent Reviewing Officers, chaired by the Safeguarding Unity Managers and a formal consultation meeting is proposed to be held on 27 th February 2017 to which a Trades Union representative has also been invited.
When did the due regard process start?	29 th August 2016

Section 1. Please describe briefly what this EIA is about. (e.g. are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, stopping doing something?)

The Independent Reviewing Service (IRO) fulfils key statutory responsibilities for the Local Authority concerning Looked After Children and children who may be suffering significant harm, including those subject to a child protection plan. IROs chair statutory reviews for looked after children and Child Protection Conferences. Fostering IROs chair Foster Carer statutory reviews.

The service, provided by the team of Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs), currently consisting of 11 FTE, (previously 13 FTE but reduced by 2 FTE prior to the start of this review) is being reviewed in light of a reduction in demand for the service. Staffing levels in the IRO Service are linked to numbers of children who are looked after by the Local Authority and the requirements for Child Protection Conferences and Reviews. The recent trend has shown a reduction in the demand for work reducing by 20%. Work on the LAC programme to drive further reductions would suggest this trend will continue and improve with a further reduction in numbers of LAC to 400 by 2020. This review also provides an opportunity to review, and potentially streamline the processes which currently underpin these areas of work. There will be a reduction in the overall number of IRO's on the staffing establishment. However this will be achieved through not recruiting to a current vacancy and not renewing a temporary fixed term contract.

Section 2. Why is this being proposed? What are the aims? What does the authority hope to achieve by it? (e.g. to save money, meet increased demand, do things in a better way.)

Reduced demand for the IRO service provides an opportunity to streamline the service producing efficiencies which will save money while maintaining a high quality service for children and young people. The review also provides an opportunity to consider delivering services in new ways that will directly benefit children and young people.

Current Structure:

There are two IRO managers with first line management responsibilities based on the specialist roles provided by the service. One IRO manager has portfolio responsibility for Child Protection Conference services (CP), the other for the Looked After Review service (LAC) and the Foster Carer review service (FC). In periods of absence and/or abstraction the managers provide respective cover to each of the services. IROs are based in three locations around North Yorkshire - Harrogate, serving Craven,

Harrogate and Selby: Northallerton – serving Hambleton and Richmondshire: Scarborough, serving Ryedale, Scarborough and Whitby.

The current structure leads to inefficiency in terms of travel, time and cost, with IRO Managers travelling to meet with teams and provide managerial and operational support.

There are currently a total of 11 full time equivalent (FTE) IRO posts. The current structure results in significant variance in caseload sizes and demands across the county and this is further exacerbated by the use of the specialist roles. There can be overlap between cases in terms of CP and LAC, or LAC and FC.

Proposed Structure:

IROs will be located in two geographic locations, West and Selby – (Harrogate, Craven and Selby) and North and East – (Scarborough, Ryedale and Hambleton and Richmondshire). Two IRO managers will be based within each team base and will oversee IRO activity within those respective geographic locus for all IRO services provided.

The geographic based IRO Manager model provides increased accountability and challenge within local areas. IROs will no longer be specialised into foster carer review services, adopting instead, a generic role covering CP, LAC and FC services. The use of generic IROs based in two geographic teams with a manager will allow the manager to actively manage workloads of the team on a daily/weekly basis thereby prioritising and managing cases effectively. The IRO managers will have oversight of all LAC, CP and FC cases within their respective areas and they will ensure that there are strong links to other CYPS team managers within the geographic locus to ensure that IRO involvement is efficient and effective whilst being supportive and offering appropriate challenge to other CYPS teams.

The use of resources undertaking generic IRO roles allows for the deployment to cover all IRO services on an area needs basis, but, builds up skills and resilience across all specialist aspects.

IROs will undertake foster carer reviews only for foster carers requiring an in-depth review as identified by the Fostering Team. The reduction of IRO involvement in full FC reviews will ensure the IRO Service is focused on cases that require independent oversight and will allow for non-contentious cases to be managed in a less forensic way. This will ensure there are evidenced efficiency savings for IROs, additional CYPS teams, other professionals and FC/LAC engaged in the current review processes.

The changes will be introduced in September 2017 following formal 30 day consultation with staff members, UNISON and stakeholders starting 23 February 2017.

Section 3. What will change? What will be different for customers and/or staff?

Staff

Generic roles – IROs will deliver CP, LAC and FC services. IROs may need to undertake fostering reviews in areas other than the location of their base in order to remain independent. This will have a cost impact due to travel expenses and travel

time. At the time of writing this is not yet confirmed and is still subject of further development.

Geographical Locations – It is possible that some IROs may have to travel further to their base from home depending on the final structure. There will be an opportunity for IRO's to preference their location following the completion of consultation. If additional travelling requirements are required, these will be mitigated by effective diary management, effective use of technology, being able to hot desk in areas other than their base and the NYCC policy Travel Expenses Guidance (Home/Work) whereby qualifying staff are entitled to claim excess travelling expenses in the first year of the new arrangements. IROs undertaking fostering reviews are likely to need to travel to different geographical locations to undertake the reviews in order to remain independent from their work with individual children. At the time of writing this is not yet confirmed and is still subject of further development.

Workforce skill IROs will become generic in their role.

Training, Mentoring and Support. Requirement that IROs will need training and support to deliver services with which they are currently unfamiliar.

Children, Young People and Foster Carers

Efficiencies are likely to include the following:

- Fewer face to face Looked After Review (LAR) meetings for children who are cared for by the Local Authority for children and are settled in their placements. This will be by agreement with the child/young person, their carer and professionals involved in planning their care. This is likely to be received positively by many settled young people who have objected to having two Looked After Reviews per year as they say this is often a reminder of their status as looked after children. This is likely to have no impact for other settled young people as the arrangements for their care will still be reviewed by an IRO without a face to face meeting but with consultation by other means determined by the needs and personal circumstances of the young person.
- Foster carers having fewer reviews that are chaired by an IRO. This is likely to have no adverse impact. All Foster Carers will continue to have an annual review. The majority of these will involve a standard annual review overseen by an IRO Manager in association with the Fostering Team Manager. A small number of Foster Carers will have an annual enhanced review chaired by an IRO if escalation thresholds are met and there is a determination that the review requires a more in-depth review. In addition, any professional and/or party to the review process (including the Foster Carer) may request their annual review to be an enhanced review subject to an agreed criteria.

Section 4. Involvement and consultation (What involvement and consultation has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results? What consultation will be needed and how will it be done?)

- A series of informal communications and meetings with the IRO team and stakeholders
- Project Board with key stakeholders represented.
- Business change workshops prior to consultation. A number of business change workshops will be held prior to the 30 day consultation to which key stakeholders will be invited to contribute. The workshops will consider potential

changes to working practices and responsibilities including with regard to the Child Protection Conference service, Looked After Review service, the Foster Review service and the Quality Issue Alert procedures.

- A 30 day consultation process will be held to which all stakeholders and interested parties may respond. All responses will be reviewed and potential changes to the proposed changes to the IRO Service considered in light of the responses.
- Foster Carers, Looked After children and multi-agency partners will be invited to take part in focus groups during the consultation period in which they will be able to share their views about the proposed changes.

Section 5. What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

Although the IRO Service has been set an overall savings target of £275,000 by March 2019, this review will focus on the delivery of an efficient and effective service. Any savings that are made will be done through the following:

- Reduction in IRO & Business Support staff
- Changes to process
- Better use of technology to save on travel
- Vacation of Birchwood Mews in Harrogate.

Section 6. How will this proposal affect people with protected characteristics?	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
Age	√			<p>Staff: The restructure does not introduce any change in terms of the current age profile. We will be compliant with the legislation to ensure that staff are not disadvantaged because of their age.</p> <p>Service Users: No impact</p>
Disability	√			<p>Staff: Taking in to account any protected characteristics of the staff group, no impact is anticipated as a result of the proposed changes. The changes will not introduce change in terms of the current disability profile. As an</p>

				<p>organisation, NYCC must continue to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, which obliges the organisation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled individuals as employees or service users.</p> <p>Service Users: There will be no impact on service users as a result of these changes. Provision for service users with disabilities will continue.</p>
Sex (Gender)	√			<p>Staff: The current gender profile of affected staff is 87% female; 13% male. This is broadly similar to the corporate profile. Appointments to the new structure will follow NYCC policies and procedures and will be made on merit. The resulting profile will be reviewed as part of the post implementation review.</p> <p>Service Users: No impact is anticipated as a result of the proposed changes.</p>
Race	√			<p>Staff: No impact is anticipated as a result of the proposed changes. As an organisation, NYCC must comply with relevant legislation and all services need to be culturally sensitive and appropriate and respect the values, beliefs, culture and tradition of the individuals we work with. Staff should also directly tackle any evidence of racist attitudes, bullying or discrimination amongst colleagues and service users.</p> <p>Service Users: No impact is anticipated as a result of these changes.</p>
Gender reassignment	√			<p>Staff: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes. As an organisation, NYCC must comply with the conditions of the Gender Recognition Act and there is the statutory requirement to protect the confidentiality of someone who has changed, or is in the process of changing their gender.</p>

				<p>Service Users: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes.</p>
Sexual orientation	√			<p>Staff: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes.</p> <p>For information this data is not recorded within the corporate HE system. The Government estimates that 5-7% (one in 15) of the population is lesbian, gay or bisexual. As an organisation, NYCC should promote an understanding of diversity and respect for others and work sensitively around the issues of sexuality and identity.</p> <p>Service Users: Customer: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes.</p>
Religion or belief	√			<p>Staff: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes.</p> <p>For information – this data is not recorded within the corporate HR system. No impact is anticipated and will not introduce any change in terms of the current profile. As an organisation, NYCC should continue to make effort to accommodate the needs of individuals in terms of religion or belief.</p> <p>Service Users: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes.</p>
Pregnancy or maternity	√			<p>Staff: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes. As an organisation, NYCC must comply with relevant legislation and it is unlawful for employers or service providers to discriminate against women who are pregnant or have recently given birth.</p> <p>Service Users: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	√			<p>Staff: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes.</p>

				<p>It is unlawful for employers or service providers to discriminate against individuals with regard to marriage or civil partnership. Employers must also treat civil partners in the same way as married people in a wide range of matters, including employment and vocational training. Any benefits given to married employees must also be offered to civil partners, including flexible working, statutory paternity pay, paternity and adoption leave, health insurance and survivor pensions.</p> <p>Service Users: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes.</p>
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Section 7. How will this proposal affect people who:	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
...live in a rural area?			√	<p>Staff: The service will reduce the number of areas where IROs are based from three to two through these proposals but the same services will continue to be delivered in these areas. The current areas include East – Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale; West – Harrogate, Selby and Craven; Central – Hambleton and Richmondshire.</p> <p>Consideration is being given locating IROs and Managers in two geographic locations, West and Selby – (Harrogate, Craven and Selby) and North and East – (Scarborough, Ryedale and Hambleton and Richmondshire). Two IRO managers will be based within each team base and will oversee IRO activity within those respective geographic locus for all IRO services provided.</p> <p>The geographic based IRO Manager model provides increased accountability and challenge within local areas.</p> <p>Some IROs will be required to travel further to their work base. However this</p>

				<p>will be mitigated through effective diary management, use of technology and use of hot desks in other NYCC buildings. There is likely to be the need for IROs to travel outside their assigned geographic areas to chair fostering reviews if this is deemed necessary to maintain independence from their work chairing LARs and Child Protection Conferences. At the time of writing this remains the subject of development and so may not subsequently have an impact.</p> <p>Service Users: No impact is anticipated as a result of the changes.</p>
...have a low income?	√			

Section 8. Will the proposal affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics? (e.g. older women or young gay men) State what you think the effect may be and why, providing evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.

Engagement and analysis thus far has not revealed any adverse impact to staff involved in the service review with regard to combinations of protected characteristics. The changes will be applied equitably across the IRO Service and all employees in the posts impacted by these changes will be subjected to the same process. As a result there is no impact on a combination of any protected characteristics.

Section 9. Next steps to address the anticipated impact. Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen. (Remember: we have an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services and work for us)	Tick option chosen
1. No adverse impact - no major change needed to the proposal. There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified.	√
2. Adverse impact - adjust the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We will change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or we will achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people.	
3. Adverse impact - continue the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We cannot change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, nor can we achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people. (There must be compelling reasons for continuing with proposals which will have the most adverse impacts. Get advice from Legal Services)	
4. Actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and remove the proposal – The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It must be stopped.	
Explanation of why option has been chosen. (Include any advice given by Legal Services.) There will be no significant negative impact on staff or service users.	

Section 10. If the proposal is to be implemented how will you find out how it is really affecting people? (How will you monitor and review the changes?)

There will be a formal post implementation review six months after the proposed structure has been implemented.

As a result of the work currently being undertaken with Technology and Change the service will continue to develop new processes which will ensure the service is more efficient, consistent and is responding to customer feedback.

Comments from staff and service users will be included in the post implementation review as well as analysis of data relating to workload, throughput of work and compliance with statutory requirements.

The service will assess the number of compliments or complaints that are received through the corporate system that are in relation to the changes made. Anecdotal evidence will also be analysed to address any unexpected impact the changes have on customers. Audit work will also provide assessment of potential impact on the quality of the services provided by the IRO service, post implementation.

Section 11. Action plan. List any actions you need to take which have been identified in this EIA, including post implementation review to find out how the outcomes have been achieved in practice and what impacts there have actually been on people with protected characteristics.

Action	Lead	By when	Progress	Monitoring arrangements
Travel impact	IRO Managers	Ongoing from start of new arrangements		Team Meetings, 1:1s, group supervision. Mileage costs analysis
Identifying and delivering training	IRO Managers	By implementation and thereafter as required		Review of arrangements before implementation. Ongoing monitoring of the quality of the service - Team Meetings, 1:1s, group supervision, complaints and commendations from service users, feedback from service users, NYCC staff and

				partner agencies.
Diary a review of the implementation of staffing structure	Safeguarding Unit Manager(s)	Review to take place six months following implementation		Post implementation review
Monitoring of the new arrangements	IRO Managers	Ongoing		Team Meetings, 1:1s, group supervision, complaints and commendations from service users, feedback from service users, NYCC staff and partner agencies.

Section 12. Summary Summarise the findings of your EIA, including impacts, recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

This EIA has highlighted that the proposals will have no impact on service users.

There may be limited negative impact on some staff members who may have to travel further to their work base and incur increased home to work travel costs. This will be mitigated through effective diary management, use of technology and use of hot desks in other NYCC buildings as well as use of the NYCC policy 'Travel Expenses Guidance (Home/Work)' whereby qualifying staff are entitled to claim excess travelling expenses in the first year of the new arrangements.

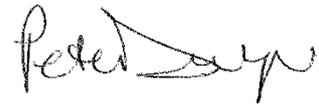
There may be the need for IROs to travel outside their assigned geographic areas to chair fostering reviews if this is deemed necessary to maintain independence from their work chairing LARs and Child Protection Conferences. This could lead to increased business travel expenses which may be mitigated by effective diary management, use of technology and use of hot desks in other NYCC buildings.

Section 13. Sign off section

This full EIA was completed by:

Name: Dave Taylor
Job title: IRO Manager
Directorate: CYPS, Safeguarding Unit
Signature: Dave Taylor

Completion date: 23 February 2017

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Day".

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature):
Date: 23 February 2017