

INITIAL SCREENING – STAGE 1 (See Guidance information page 4)

As a public authority we need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity.

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a Full EINA/EQUALITY ANALYSIS is required.

Name of policy, strategy or function: Fostering Service Restructure	Ref: CYPF 11-11 FO
----------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------

Responsible Officer: Jacquie C Smith	Role: Chairperson of EINA/EQUALITY ANALYSIS Task Group
Directorate: CYPF	Assessment Date: 17.01.2012

Is this a:	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Function <input type="checkbox"/>	Service X
Is this:	New or Proposed <input type="checkbox"/>	Already exists and is being reviewed X	Is Changing <input type="checkbox"/>	

1. What are the main aims, objectives of the policy, strategy, function or service and the intended outcomes and who is likely to benefit from it

The Fostering Service recruits and supports foster carers who provide placements to looked after children. The management of the service, its functions and how it undertakes them has to comply with National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations 2011, as well as any other relevant legislation. The service is regularly inspected by Ofsted.

Foster carers and the children they look after benefit directly from the service provided.

The reason for undertaking this equality assessment is that the Fostering Service is required to make savings of £480k for 2012/13. This will come from staffing costs within the £18m budget.

A number of options to achieve the required savings have been considered, identifying the possible impact on different grades and different numbers of staff. The preferred option to reduce the number of senior practitioner posts will have an impact on the least number of staff with a particular job description. Changes to staffing structures and numbers will be mitigated by deleting posts and staff hours currently vacant, and ceasing to offer employment to agency staff. VR and VER are not available to staff holding a social work qualification since there are vacant posts requiring this qualification in CYPF.

If there are insufficient posts available to the current number of staff at that grade and job description all usual staffing process will be followed to ensure a fair and consistent process. It is expected this option will affect only a small number of staff (7, approx 6.5FTE) at the senior practitioner level.

There are currently 9 posts at senior practitioner level and the preferred option will reduce these by 4 to 5. Of the 9 posts, 1 is vacant and another filled by an agency worker. The 7 workers in this group of permanent staff are 5 white workers, 1 Asian and 1 Black. Given the characteristics of the staff group at this level any reductions in posts will not fall on any particular ethnic or age group but recruit the best person for the post following usual HR processes.

2. Explain how the main aims of the policy, strategy, function or service will support the Equality Duties?

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation? x
2. Advance equality of opportunity?
3. Foster good relations? x
4. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?
5. Encourage participation of disabled people?
6. Consider more favourable treatment of disabled people?

The Fostering Service recruits foster carers from the general population, including those who are disabled, are of the varied range of ethnic and religious groups locally and of heterosexual and other sexual orientations. Information on the ethnicity of foster carers is available in the dataset required by Ofsted and completed for the year up to March 2011.

At the inspection of the Fostering Service in January 2010 Ofsted found the service to be excellent in respect of diversity, both in the foster carers and staff.

The process to implement these savings, and its outcome, will be undertaken in a manner that will ensure this positive assessment of equality duties is maintained.

Foster carers have been consulted through the BFCA (Birmingham Foster Carer Association), with the wider membership being contacted through the regular magazine.

3. Does your policy, strategy, function or service affect:

Service users	Yes	No x
Employees	Yes	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Wider community	Yes	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide an explanation for your 'Yes' or 'No' answer

The savings required will mean slightly reduced staffing at senior practitioner level. The posts to be deleted are the specialist senior practitioner posts such as in training and disruptions. Future posts for senior practitioners will be, as now, in the support teams and assessment team and will each have a specialist interest, eg in training or disruptions, which they will lead on for the Fostering Service.

The characteristics of staff in the Fostering Service are shown below. Senior practitioners are Grade 5 staff with a job description that includes a higher level of responsibility than Grade 5 senior social workers.

Grades	Staff	%
Grade 7	1	2
Grade 6	5	9
Grade 5	40	70
Grade 4	8	14
Grade 3	3	5

The following shows the ethnicity of staff in the Fostering Service

Ethnicity	Staff	%
Asian / Asian British	15	18
Black / Black British	19	23
Chinese / Other	8	10
White	40	49
Total	82	100

This shows the age distribution of staff

Age	Staff	%
<30	6	7
31-40	13	16
41-50	27	33
51-60	32	39
61-65	4	5
65+	0	0
Total	82	100

This information shows ethnicity by gender and then by age

Ethnicity by Gender

Of 73 female staff

- Asian / Asian British – 16% (12)
- Black / Black British – 25%(18)
- Chinese / Other – 9% (7)
- White – 49% (36)

Of 9 male staff

- Asian / Asian British – 33% (3)
- Black / Black British – 11% (1)
- Chinese / Other – 11% (1)
- White – 44% (4)

Ethnicity by Age

Age	Asian / Asian British	Black / Black British	Chinese / Other	White	Total	%
<30	2	2	1	1	6	7
31-40	3	1	2	7	13	16
41-50	5	7	4	11	27	33
51-60	5	9	1	17	32	39
61-65	0	0	0	4	4	5
65+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	15	19	8	40	82	100

Disability – there are no staff within the Fostering Service with a known disability.

Information on disability by gender or age is not applicable.

Religion or belief – no information is available.

Sexual orientation – no information is available.

There will also be 3.65 Grade 4 and 3.92 Grade 5 social worker/linkworker posts deleted in the service. Some of the deleted posts have been vacant for years due to the need to ensure budgets meet the previous requirement of turnover savings targets. There will continue to be sufficient posts for the number of linkworkers currently employed. The deletion of the few non-turnover vacancies will require a change to the way in which foster carers are supported. Providing an increased amount of support through effective duty systems will ensure that, although there will be some change, foster carers will not suffer from reduced staffing levels.

There has been discussion with BFCA about support to foster carers at 2 recent Fostering Development Forums, the latest being on 2 February.

There has been consultation with the Fostering Service as a staff group on 31 October and 5 December, both at the Martineau Centre. Also on 19 January at the Pavilions. HR and representatives from the Trade Unions Unison, GMB and Unite were invited. Representatives from Unison and GMB have been present. As well as presentations that included the requirement to make the savings, the wider financial context for BCC and the restructuring of CYPF, staff were given time in groups to express their views both verbally and in writing. These views were collated and then presented at the following consultation event. Staff have also had the opportunity to have one-to-ones with fostering managers and their TU rep.

At the consultation event on 19 January 2012 staff were given more information about the likely option for implementation, more information about possible mitigation and also the opportunity to have one-to-ones with fostering managers and their TU rep. The presentation made is attached as an appendix. Please note that in the final slide showing the number of posts to be deleted the senior practitioner post occupied by an agency worker has not been counted among the vacancies.

The Head of Service and HR have also met with senior practitioners as a group on 2 February to explore issues and answer further questions, as well as give information about the coming processes.

The wider community will not be affected directly.

4. Are there any aspects of the policy, strategy, function or service, including how it is delivered, or accessed, that could contribute to inequality? (including direct or indirect discrimination to service users or employees)

Yes

No

Please provide an explanation for your 'Yes' or 'No' answer

Reduction in staffing levels will be undertaken in accordance with the usual HR principles and processes and with all mitigation possible. Staff reductions are likely to be concentrated on senior practitioners, with a reduction of 4 posts of which one is currently available as a vacancy with another filled by an agency worker.

The reductions needed of Grade 4 and Grade 5 social workers will be met by the deletion of current vacancies, both in full-time posts and hours available from current part-time working.

5. Will the policy, strategy, function or service, have a adverse (negative) impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?

Yes

No **X**

Please provide an explanation for your 'Yes' or 'No' answer

There will be slightly fewer posts available to staff the Fostering Service. This will mean increased prioritisation of work by management and staff is essential. The level of reductions has already been mitigated by the deletion of posts and hours currently held as vacancies. No worker will be without a post in CYPF since there are currently senior practitioner posts available eg in area children's services and in disabled children's services. Some of the senior practitioners have already expressed an interest in these posts and arrangements are in hand for 2 to meet these managers and discuss opportunities in the week beginning 6 February.

Foster carers may find the type of support provided to them will be changed but a similar level of support will continue to be available.

6. Is an Equality Impact Needs Assessment/Equality Analysis required?

If your answer to question 2 has identified potential adverse impact and you have answered '**yes**' to any of the following questions 3, 4, or 5, then you should carry out a Full EINA/EQUALITY ANALYSIS.

Does the Policy, Strategy, Function or Service require a Full EINA/EQUALITY ANALYSIS? **Yes**
 No X

If a Full EINA/EQUALITY ANALYSIS is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the assessment with service managers in your service area as well as the Directorate EINA/EQUALITY ANALYSIS Contact Officer.

If a Full EINA/EQUALITY ANALYSIS is Not required, please sign the declaration below and forward a copy of the Initial Screening to your Directorate EINA/EQUALITY ANALYSIS Contact Officer

DECLARATION

A Full EINA/EQUALITY ANALYSIS is not required, the Initial Screening has demonstrated that the Policy, Strategy, Function or Service is robust; there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken.

Chairperson: *Jaquie Smith*

Sign-off Date: 2.2.12

Summary statement:

The number of staff who may be affected is small. The staff group is diverse and no particular age or ethnic group is affected. An initial impact analysis is required, as above.

Quality check: The screening document has been checked using the agreed audit arrangements in the Directorate:

<p>Name: (Officer/Group carrying out the Quality Check) Veronika Quintyne</p> <p>Directorate: CYPF</p> <p>Contact number: 0121 4643073</p>	<p>Date undertaken: 2.2.2012</p>	<p>Screening review statement:</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	----------------------------------------

EINA/EQUALITY ANALYSIS Task Group Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Role on Task Group</u> (e.g. service user, manager or service specialist)	<u>Contact Number</u>
1.		
2. Chairperson		
Jacque C Smith	Head of Service, Fostering	0121 464 2309
3. Janet M Groves	Team Manager, North Support Team	0121 303 9523
4. Michelle Gardiner	Team Manager East Support Team	0121 303 9523
5. Anita Earl	Team Manager, Assessments Team	0121 303 9523
6. Barbara Gregg	Team Manager, South Support Team	0121 303 5313
7. Joyce M Carey	Team Manager, West/Central Support Team	0121 303 5313
8. Maria Pena-Diaz	Team Manager, Fostering Business Support	0121 303 1010
9.		
10.		