

Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (January 2021)

Section 1:

EIA lead Officer: Steven Smith

Email address: stevensmith5@wirral.gov.uk

Head of Section: Steven Smith – Head of Permanence

Chief Officer: Kerry Mehta – Assistant Director Children and Families

Directorate: Children, Families and Education

Date: 3rd October 2024

Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?

Therapeutic Support for Children Looked After

The proposal is to re-tender for the service that provides Mental Health and Therapeutic Support for Children Looked After (CLA) In Wirral.

The procurement of a new specialised provider is required to deliver therapeutic support for children and young people in care. Children in care are four times more likely than their peers to have a mental health difficulty due to their experiences both before and during care. There is a requirement to commission a specialist provider to deliver bespoke mental health support and therapeutic interventions to support these young people to develop positive attachments with others, to develop a sense of their own identity, and a sense of safety.

This service will offer bespoke trauma informed support for CLA, addressing any gaps in the current offer and will focus on the following: one to one support for young people, collaborative working with Wirral MyMind to ensure continuity for complex cases, providing support to the wider professional group working with children and young people in care, and providing support to foster carers when placement stability is a concern.

Section 2a: Will this EIA be submitted to a Committee meeting?

Yes

Committee Coordination and Oversight Group – Tuesday 8th October 2024

Hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published on the Council's website

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

Section 3: Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick relevant boxes)

- Services**
- The workforce**
- Communities**
- Other** (please state eg: Partners, Private Sector, Voluntary & Community Sector)

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 4:

Could the proposal have a positive or negative impact on any protected groups (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals. We encourage services to consider the impact on those who serve and who have served in the armed forces and their families, in accordance with the Armed Forces Covenant

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All	<p>Positive Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support children and young people in care to have a sense of belonging to their communities, the homes that they live in, and their peer groups. • To break the cycle of poor outcomes and raise the aspirations of our young people by taking steps to minimise the disadvantages suffered by children due to their protected characteristics. • Take steps to meet the needs of children from protected groups where 	<p>The service commissioned to have a tailored approach to meet the emotional health and wellbeing needs of children and families with protected characteristics. Ongoing engagement and communication with the awarded provider to ensure that the service is delivering expected outcomes.</p>	Steven Smith	<p>Duration of contract, 2 years from 1st April 2025 (with 2+2 extension options)</p>	<p>Fostering service, permanence service, social work teams and commissioning team.</p>

	these are different from the needs of other children.				
All	<p>Negative Impact of not proceeding with the proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lack of targeted mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people in care and failure to implement earlier interventions can impact negatively on individual children and on wider local services. • An increased risk of foster care placement breakdown for those children and young people experiencing adverse emotional health and wellbeing episodes. 	<p>Children and young people in care could potentially access universal services. However, this may result very lengthy waiting times which are likely to exacerbate poor mental health and wellbeing in our young people. Therefore, an alternative proposal would need to be considered to minimise further disadvantages among this cohort of young people.</p>	Steven Smith		<p>Increased Pressure on council budgets, fostering teams, social work teams, IFD and EDT, and placement commissioning teams.</p>

Section 4a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?

The awarded provider will be expected to submit quarterly monitoring reports to the local authority. This will include providing data and case studies to the service delivery lead and lead commissioning officer to demonstrate impact and progress. There will also be a requirement for the provider to attend quarterly monitoring meetings.

Section 4b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?

The service will enhance the local emotional health and wellbeing offer for children and young people in care and will strengthen multi-agency partnership working. Therefore, there is no expected negative impact of proceeding with this proposal.

Section 5: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?

Wirral Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy

Wirral Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-25

Children's Commissioner - Children's Mental Health Services 2021-22 (March 2023)

House of Commons Education Committee, Mental health, and well-being of looked-after children.

Department for Education and Department for Health and Social Care. Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children

Section 6: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council proposal?

Yes – Consultation with children and young people in care and a care leaver who has been identified to support with the moderation process.

Consultation with Wirral Place Integrated Care Board and Wirral MyMind CYPMHS.

(please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 7: How will consultation take place and by when?

Feedback from a cohort of Children Looked After was captured by the Participation and Engagement team in August 2024.

Ongoing consultation with Wirral care leaver who has offered valuable insight and has agreed to support with the tender process.

Pre-market engagement exercise was undertaken by the Children's commissioning team in autumn 2023 to assess the level of interest from potential providers.

Monitoring arrangements with existing contract providers has highlighted gaps in the current provision and areas for improvement for the new service specification

Ongoing consultation with Wirral MyMind CYPMHS.

Before you complete your consultation, please email your preliminary EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer in order for the Council to ensure it is meeting it's legal publishing requirements. The EIA will need to be published with a note saying we are awaiting outcomes from a consultation exercise.

Once you have completed your consultation, please review your actions in section 4. Then email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing.

Section 8: Have you remembered to:

- a) **Select appropriate directorate hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published** (section 2a)
- b) **Include any potential positive impacts as well as negative impacts?** (section 4)
- c) **Send this EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer?**
- d) **Review section 4 once consultation has taken place and sent your updated EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer for re-publishing?**