

Equality Impact Assessment



Name of project/proposal

Proposed Family Support Service: Staff Changes

Contact name

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Department

Childrens Services

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Purpose for project/proposal

The purpose of this decision report is to make recommendations and seek approval from the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services regarding the future of Hampshire County Council's early help services, including the proposed closure of designated children's centres.

Consultation

Has a consultation been carried out?

Yes

3.2.1 All affected staff and their union representatives have been consulted on the staffing implications of the proposed model.

3.2.2 At the start of the staff consultation, ten briefings were held across the county with all affected staff in scope of the review. There is ongoing consultation on the detailed staffing proposals and the proposed human resource (HR) processes for implementing change, should the proposal be agreed. Questions have been captured and a frequently asked set of questions and answers has been circulated to staff via email and have been placed on the restructure web page for Hampshire County Council staff. An additional six staff briefings have also taken place more recently to provide further support regarding the staffing implications.

Staff have been encouraged to provide comments and feedback through:

- Staff briefings – held in April, May and June 2016.
- Team meetings – managers were asked to hold focused discussions in team meetings on the proposed model and to collate responses and questions.
- Emails to their relevant human resources teams.
- Trade union representatives or elected staff representatives

3.2.3 Recognised trade union and employee representatives have been fully informed of the proposals through a s.188 notice which was issued on 11 April 2016. There have been meetings throughout the consultation period with union representatives and they have raised concerns that echo those identified by staff, particularly in relation to the proposed level of reduction of staff, the impact upon lower paid female staff, the funding of voluntary redundancy and concerns about access to and a reduction in service provision.

Statutory considerations

Impact

Age	High
Disability	Low
Sexual orientation	Low
Race	Low
Religion and belief	Low
Gender reassignment	Low
Sex	High
Marriage and civil partnership	Low
Pregnancy and maternity	Low

Other policy considerations

Poverty	High
Rurality	Low
Other factors	None
If other please describe	

Geographical impact

All Hampshire

Have you identified any medium or high impact?*

Yes

No

Equality statement

Impact Upon Staff

5.20 The proposed FSS model would operate out of 11 FSS hub buildings, with one located in each district, with the addition of outreach service/delivery sites across districts, including mobile outreach. The implications for staff are that this would reduce full time equivalent staff (fte) from 267.16 to 129.63. (This includes caretakers and cleaners and this figure indicative as at the start of the staff consultation).

5.21 Staff from the three organisations (Hampshire County Council, Action For Children and 4Children) who currently provide early help services would be affected. They have been consulted in relation to the changes.

5.22 If the decision is taken on 1 July 2016 by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services to move forward with the proposals, decisions would be made about EVR2 applications. The remaining staff from Action For Children and 4Children would then transfer into Hampshire County Council under TUPE Regulations.

AGE - Impact before mitigation - HIGH

Impact after mitigation - MEDIUM

5.23 Specific issues:

Relative to the Hampshire County Council average, early help services currently employ a higher percentage of younger staff. 75% of early help staff employed by Hampshire County Council are between the ages of 30-54, which is significantly more than the County Council average of 63.6%. 4Children and Action For Children employ a higher proportion of staff aged between 16-29, at 23% and 14% respectively, compared to the County Council average of 12.1%.

5.24 Mitigating actions:

An option to reduce the impact on staff would be to offer enhanced voluntary redundancy (EVR), which would be open to all eligible staff in scope of the review, who have more than two years of service.

SEX - Impact before mitigation - HIGH

Impact after mitigation - MEDIUM

5.25 Specific issues:

Staff who are involved in providing early help services are predominantly female, to a much greater extent than the County Council average of 64%. The data shows that of the staff providing early help services, 90% employed by Hampshire County Council, 100% employed by 4Children and 98% employed by ActionForChildren are female.

5.26 Mitigating actions:

The staff and trade union consultation was designed to ensure that all staff, regardless of sex, are equally consulted on the proposals. Furthermore, the EVR2 scheme would be open to all eligible staff and consideration of all applications would be carried out fairly regardless of the gender of the applicant and would take account of personal circumstances such as caring responsibilities. The terms of the EVR scheme represent a significant enhancement ameliorating the adverse impact of the overall reduction in staff numbers.

POVERTY - Impact before mitigation - HIGH

Impact after mitigation - MEDIUM

5.27 Specific issues:

The majority of staff who provide early help services in Hampshire County Council work in relatively low paid positions. 77% of staff at 4Children and 57% of staff at Action-For-Children earn up to £17,583. Of those who work for the County Council, 64% earn between £19,455 and £27,126, which is less than the national average salary of £27,600 ¹⁰.

5.28 Mitigating actions:

One of the proposals that staff have been consulted on is that all staff in scope of the review could be appointed onto Hampshire County Council's EHCC2007 terms and conditions, within the proposed new service. From an initial review of salaries and benefits, it appears that staff currently employed by Action-For-Children and 4Children would be financially better off if appointed onto EHCC2007 terms and conditions.

5.29 The opportunity for eligible staff to apply for EVR2 would provide a severance package to those individuals who are at risk of redundancy over and above what they would be entitled to receive in a compulsory redundancy situation.

5.30 For staff who are not successful in securing a position within the new proposed service, there would be access to employment support, such as CV writing, to support them to find alternative employment.

5.35 For the groups which are categorised under the EIA criteria listed there is low or no impact

- Gender Re-assignment
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Religion
- Race ¹¹ -
- Disability ¹² -

Summary for Staff

5.36 Hampshire County Council officers have worked to ensure that all staff have had a continued opportunity to engage with the process and voice concerns through consultations and briefings. Measures are in place to support staff through any potential transition, including a formal consultation process and an EVR2 scheme. Staff who were not successful in securing a position within the proposed service, would have access to support to help increase their ability to find alternative employment. The unions have been fully consulted on these proposals. Through consultation it is intended that the project ensures proportionality in achieving the legitimate aims of saving £8.5 million. This is necessary to meet the County Council's savings targets in Transformation 2017, whilst providing a fully integrated and targeted early help service; the continued provision of which (subject to the consultation) is thought to be best secured by the rationalisation necessitated by external economic factors outside the County Council's control.

Date to review actions 01 Jul 2016

Final decision date

Final decision date due 01 Jul 2016
Decision to be made by Executive Member