



Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) ("the Act"), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give 'due regard' to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid 'due regard' to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
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Title:	Hampshire Advocacy Services
Related EIAs:	None

EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Hampshire Advocacy Services
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	Advocacy services support someone or act on behalf of an individual to represent their views, interests and wishes within formal processes, assessments, hearings and interactions with other groups and organisations on a range of subjects that affect them and their lives. The current contract provides both statutory and non-statutory advocacy services with Hampshire and IOW Integrated Care Board (HLOWICB), Frimley Integrated Care Board and Children's Services providing financial contributions.
New/changed service/policy/project	The current contract ends on 31 March 2024, and a new advocacy service contract is therefore required to ensure continuity of statutory service provision.

Engagement
The plan is to undertake Service User Engagement using a variety of methods – letters, online and postal questionnaires, attendance at key meetings, facilitation of focus groups to ensure that the views of current clients and/or their nominated or authorised person/carer are objectively identified, that we manage the engagement process in an impartial and robust manner and identify key service user objectives/outcomes which will be incorporated into the new service delivery model post April 2024.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive

Rationale	<p>This contract covers all ages, both older and younger adults cohorts and children's, and therefore will be available to anybody eligible in Hampshire across all care groups.</p> <p>Whilst the service is not designed to directly impact age, we expect the service to serve a range of adults across a wide range of ages. To ensure there is no discernible negative impact on any group or individual regardless of their protected characteristics, including age, the service will report on the demographics of the population they provide a service to. Statutory advocacy must be provided under the following pieces of legislation: Mental Health Act 1983 (MHA), Children Act 1989, Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) and the Care Act 2014. Eligibility for advocacy is determined by each individual piece of legislation which is prescriptive in terms of who it does (and does not) apply to.</p> <p>As set out in the KPIs, the provider must report on all advocacy referrals by age bracket, ensuring we have oversight that the service is being provided to the numbers we expect based on the Hampshire demographic.</p> <p>The service provides statutory advocacy to Children, with numbers stable over the 3 years of the current contract, with 79 new cases in Year 1, 71 in Year 2 and 89 in Year 3.</p>
Mitigation	

Disability

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>This contract is pan-disability, accessible for those in Hampshire across all care groups resulting in a positive impact for those with a disability.</p> <p>Statutory advocacy must be provided under the following pieces of legislation: Mental Health Act 1983 (MHA), Children Act 1989, Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) and the Care Act 2014. Eligibility for advocacy is determined by each individual piece of legislation which is prescriptive in terms of who it does (and does not) apply to.</p> <p>The service user consultation and inclusion of qualified area expertise will result in a service specification built around those that the service will be provided for. Having views of the service users will help ensure that the service will meet the requirements of those using the service, and will reflect their views/wishes on current/previous experiences, resulting in a focused and fit for purpose contract.</p>

	<p>The provider is also contractually expected to adhere to the Suicide Prevention Guidance, set out by Public Health England, where it states:</p> <p>"Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-leading science, research, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services."</p>
Mitigation	

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>This contract provides advocacy services for all those eligible in Hampshire across all care groups, and therefore gender reassignment will not be impacted.</p> <p>As part of the KPI reporting, the provider will report on demographics of received referrals for those that are:</p> <p>Female, male, gender neutral, non-binary, prefer not to say, Transgender - Female, Transgender - Male, unknown/undisclosed</p>
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	<p>This contract provides advocacy services for all those in Hampshire across all care groups, and therefore will not impact pregnancy & maternity.</p> <p>Non-statutory advocacy delivered by this service does however, support parents who have LD and/or Autism whose children may be subject to formal processes. Helping them to exercise their rights as parents and providing advocacy during these processes when required.</p>
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>This contract provides advocacy services for all those in Hampshire across all care groups, and therefore will not impact race.</p> <p>The service specification also requires the provider to meet certain quality standards as described within the specification and set out as key documents in the appendix, , these requirements are governed by the terms of the contract. This includes the Advocacy Charter, set out by the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTI). By agreeing to this, the advocacy provider must:</p> <p>Have an up to date Equality and Diversity Policy that recognises the need to be pro-active in tackling all forms of inequality, discrimination and social exclusion so that all people are treated fairly.</p> <p>Ensure advocates' time will be allocated equitably.</p> <p>Ensure advocates make reasonable adjustments to ensure people have appropriate opportunity to engage, direct and benefit from the advocacy activity.</p> <p>The provider must also adhere to Hampshire County Council's Inclusion Strategy, where it states we want to "support people from all different communities and backgrounds".</p>
Mitigation	

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>This contract provides advocacy services for all those in Hampshire across all care groups, and therefore will not impact religion or belief.</p> <p>The service specification also requires the provider to meet certain quality standards as described within the specification and set out as key documents in the appendix, , these requirements are governed by the terms of the contract.. This includes the Advocacy Charter, set out by the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTI). By agreeing to this, the advocacy provider must:</p> <p>Have an up to date Equality and Diversity Policy that recognises the need to be pro-active in tackling all forms of inequality, discrimination and social exclusion so that all people are treated fairly.</p> <p>Ensure advocates' time will be allocated equitably.</p> <p>Ensure advocates make reasonable adjustments to ensure people have appropriate opportunity to engage, direct and benefit from the advocacy activity.</p>
Mitigation	

Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>This contract provides advocacy services for all those in Hampshire across all care groups, and therefore will not impact sex. The KPIs within the reporting of the contract requires the provider to report on the demographics of received referrals and open cases, on a quarterly basis. This ensures oversight that the service being provided is in line with the wider</p>

	<p>demographic of those living in Hampshire.</p> <p>Within the latest reporting of the current contract, the service was provided to</p> <p>1342 Women</p> <p>1225 Men</p> <p>with a ratio of 134:123. This is roughly in line with the Hampshire demographic of 100:98.5 (100 females to 98.5 males).</p>
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>All advocacy is provided free of charge to the person and regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race or marital status. Advocacy can be provided in a person's home (or via technologies such as ZOOM, or Skype where appropriate) or place of their choosing so will not disadvantage people living in rural areas or who find travelling difficult.</p> <p>Within the KPIs of the contract, the provider must report on the demographics of those referrals received, broken down by:</p> <p>"Asexual", "bisexual", "heterosexual", "homosexual/gay/lesbian", "don't know", "prefer not to say", "prefer to self-describe", "unknown".</p> <p>Approximately 3.1% of Hampshire's demographic identify themselves as either "Homosexual/Gay/Lesbian", "Bisexual" or "Other Sexual Orientation" (not including heterosexual). The latest reporting from the current contract shows the 0.71% of the service provided is to those identifying as either "Homosexual/Gay/Lesbian", "Bisexual" or "Other Sexual Orientation". While this isn't in line with the Hampshire demographic, 51.5% of those accessing the service chose either "Unknown" or "Prefer Not to Say".</p>
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>All advocacy is provided free of charge to the person and regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race or marital status.</p> <p>Being married or in a civil partnership will not preclude someone from accessing advocacy where they are deemed eligible. Data regarding marital status is not recorded by the service as it has no material bearing on the services delivered.</p>
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>All advocacy is provided free of charge to the person and regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race or marital status.</p> <p>If someone is financially disadvantaged it is possible advocacy may improve their financial situation by ensuring they access and receive services for which they are eligible, including benefits and concessions available to them. Advocacy would also represent their needs so, if travel or accessing assessment locations was challenging due to their financial circumstances and advocate would/could make requests for reasonable adjustments on their behalf.</p>
Mitigation	

Rurality

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>All advocacy is provided free of charge to the person and regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race or marital status. Advocacy can be provided in a person's home (or via technologies such as ZOOM, or Skype where appropriate) or place of their choosing so will not disadvantage people living in rural areas or who find travelling difficult.</p> <p>As per Hampshire County Council's "Service Hampshire" strategic plan for 2021-2025, the plan focuses on four strategic aims, which the provider must adhere to. Two of those being "People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities" and "People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment", meaning there will be no disparity in rural areas.</p>
Mitigation	

Geographical Impact:All Hampshire

Equality Statement

Additional information:

None

Overview Statement:

A summary assessment to show that due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been paid, which is undertaken when a full EIA is not needed:

EIA reference number: 00452

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