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:	Choice of Accommodation Policy
Related EIAs:	None
EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	The service affected is Hampshire County Council's Adults' Health and Care Service, specifically the commissioning, procurement and placement arrangements for residential and nursing care home services delivered through the Care Home Framework. The framework supports long-term accommodation and care for older people and adults with care and support needs.
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	The Care Home Framework is Hampshire County Council's commissioning and contracting arrangement for purchasing residential and nursing care services. The framework enables the Council to source high-quality, person-centred care home placements for eligible adults, including older people and adults with disabilities, while ensuring compliance with the Choice of Accommodation Policy, supporting market sustainability, and achieving value for money. It sets out the standards, terms and processes through which approved care providers deliver services on behalf of the Council.
New/changed service/policy/project	No substantive changes are proposed to the Care Home Framework. This EIA has been undertaken to review the equality impacts of the existing framework,

	which has been operational for approximately two years, and to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of Hampshire residents with protected characteristics.

Engagement
No specific consultation has been undertaken for this Equality Impact Assessment as it relates to the review of an existing Care Home Framework that has been operational for approximately 2.5 years. Evidence has instead been drawn from ongoing contract management, service monitoring, provider engagement, resident and family feedback, demographic data and operational experience. The assessment has not identified any significant adverse equality impacts associated with the continued operation of the framework.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The Care Home Framework has a significant impact on people aged 65 and over, as older people are the primary users of residential and nursing care services. Hampshire has an older population profile than England overall, with 16.9% of residents aged 70 years and over compared with 13.7% nationally, and 1.2% aged 90 years and over compared with 0.9% nationally. Hampshire's population is also continuing to age, with the greatest population growth forecast among people aged 80 years and over between 2024 and 2031. The Care Home Framework supports access to high-quality residential and nursing care for older people whose assessed needs can no longer be met in their own homes. Through approved provider arrangements, the framework promotes dignity, safety, person-centred care, and choice of accommodation. No adverse impacts specific to older people have been identified through the operation of the framework. Given the reliance of this age group on care home services, ongoing monitoring of quality, access to placements, resident outcomes and feedback will continue to ensure the framework remains responsive to the needs of older people. Whilst the majority of individuals accessing residential and nursing care services are aged 65 years and over, the framework is not restricted by age. Younger adults aged 18-64 with eligible care and support needs, including learning disabilities, physical disabilities, autism, acquired brain injuries, or long-term health conditions, may also access services through the framework where residential or nursing care is assessed as the most appropriate option. The framework supports equitable access based on assessed need rather than age. Where care home provision is not suitable for a younger adult's needs or preferences, alternative commissioned

	services are available, including supported living, extra care housing, shared lives arrangements and other community-based support options. Assessment and care planning processes help ensure individuals are directed to the most appropriate service to meet their needs.
Mitigation	

Disability

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The Care Home Framework has a significant impact on disabled people, as many individuals accessing residential and nursing care have physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, autism, mental health needs, long-term health conditions, conditions associated with ageing such as dementia. Census data shows that 5.8% of Hampshire residents reported a condition or illness that limits their day-to-day activities a lot. The framework supports access to appropriate care and accommodation based on assessed need and promotes person-centred care, independence, dignity and wellbeing. Providers operating under the framework are expected to meet relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, including making reasonable adjustments and providing accessible services to support residents with a wide range of disabilities. The framework also supports continuity of care and enables individuals with complex needs to access residential or nursing care services that are appropriate to their circumstances. This can have a positive impact on quality of life, safety, health outcomes and social inclusion. No adverse impacts specific to disabled people have been identified through the ongoing operation of the framework. However, as disabled people are a core user group of care home services, ongoing monitoring of accessibility, service quality, placement availability and resident outcomes will continue to ensure that services remain responsive to individual needs. Some individuals requiring residential or nursing care may have highly specialised or complex needs, including advanced dementia, profound learning disabilities, autism, acquired brain injuries, severe physical disabilities, significant mental health needs or behaviours that challenge. Availability of specialist placements can at times be more limited than standard residential provision. Where suitable placements are not immediately available through the framework, Hampshire County Council works with providers, health partners and neighbouring authorities to identify alternative arrangements that meet assessed needs. This may include sourcing placements outside an individual's preferred locality, developing bespoke support arrangements, or utilising specialist provision outside the framework where appropriate.

	The Council continuously monitors provider capacity, demand trends and market sustainability to mitigate risks relating to service availability and ensure eligible individuals can access appropriate care.
Mitigation	

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The Care Home Framework applies equally to all individuals requiring residential or nursing care, including people who are transgender or who have undergone, are undergoing, or propose to undergo gender reassignment. Census 2021 data shows that 0.35% of Hampshire residents identified their gender as being different from that registered at birth. The framework supports person-centred care and requires providers to treat residents with dignity, respect and fairness, regardless of gender identity. Individuals should be supported to express their identity, maintain their privacy, and access services free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation. No evidence has been identified that the operation of the Care Home Framework has a negative impact on people who share this protected characteristic. The framework is expected to have a positive impact by promoting inclusive care and ensuring that providers meet their responsibilities under equality legislation and regulatory standards. Ongoing contract monitoring and feedback mechanisms provide opportunities to identify and address any concerns should they arise.
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The Care Home Framework is primarily used to commission residential and nursing care services for older people and adults with eligible care and support needs. As a result, pregnancy and maternity are not characteristics commonly associated with the main population accessing these services. The framework applies equally to all individuals and does not create barriers to accessing care on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity. It is also expected to support the needs of residents, visitors, family members, carers and staff who may be pregnant or on maternity leave by promoting fair and non-discriminatory practices.

	No adverse impacts relating to pregnancy and maternity have been identified through the operation of the Care Home Framework. Ongoing contract monitoring and provider compliance with equality legislation help ensure that individuals are treated fairly and with dignity and respect
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The Care Home Framework has the potential to impact people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds who require residential or nursing care services. Hampshire's population is becoming increasingly diverse, with 7.4% of residents identifying as belonging to an ethnic group other than White in the 2021 Census, an increase from 5% in 2011. Diversity is particularly evident in some areas of the county, including Basingstoke and Deane and Rushmoor. The framework supports equitable access to care services and promotes person-centred care that takes account of an individual's cultural background, language, traditions and dietary requirements. Providers operating under the framework are expected to deliver services that are inclusive, respectful and free from discrimination. The framework can have a positive impact by helping to ensure that people from different ethnic backgrounds can access appropriate residential and nursing care that meets their assessed needs while respecting their cultural identity and preferences. No adverse impacts relating to race have been identified through the operation of the Care Home Framework. Ongoing contract monitoring and feedback from residents and families will help ensure services continue to meet the needs of Hampshire's diverse population.
Mitigation	

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The Care Home Framework has the potential to affect people of all religions and beliefs who require residential or nursing care services. Census 2021 data shows that 51.5% of Hampshire residents identified as having a religion, with Christianity being the most commonly reported faith, while 42.8% reported having no religion. Hampshire is also home to residents from a range of other faith groups, including Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist communities. The framework supports person-centred care and seeks to ensure that individuals' religious beliefs, faith practices and cultural preferences are considered as part of care planning and delivery. This may include support for religious observance, access to faith leaders, dietary

	requirements, and opportunities to practise religion or belief where appropriate. The framework is expected to have a positive impact by promoting dignity, respect and inclusion, ensuring that residents are able to maintain their beliefs and practices while receiving care. Providers are expected to deliver services in a way that is free from discrimination and responsive to the diverse needs of residents. No adverse impacts relating to religion or belief have been identified through the operation of the Care Home Framework. Ongoing monitoring and feedback from residents and families will help ensure that services continue to meet a diverse range of religious and cultural needs.
Mitigation	

Sex

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The Care Home Framework affects both men and women who require residential and nursing care services. Hampshire's population consists of slightly more females (51%) than males, and women generally form a higher proportion of older age groups due to longer life expectancy. This means women are likely to represent a significant proportion of people accessing care home services. The framework supports equitable access to residential and nursing care regardless of sex and promotes person-centred care based on an individual's assessed needs. Providers are expected to deliver services in a way that upholds dignity, respect and equality, ensuring that care is free from discrimination and responsive to individual preferences and requirements. The framework is intended to have a positive impact by supporting access to appropriate care and accommodation for both men and women. No evidence has been identified that the operation of the framework disadvantages people on the basis of sex. Ongoing contract monitoring, quality assurance arrangements and resident feedback will continue to help ensure that services remain inclusive and responsive to the needs of all residents.
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The Care Home Framework affects people of all sexual orientations who require residential or nursing care services. Census 2021 data for Hampshire indicates that 91.3% of residents identified as heterosexual or straight, 1.2% as gay or lesbian, 1.1% as bisexual, and 0.3% as another sexual orientation.

	The framework supports equitable access to care services regardless of sexual orientation and promotes person-centred care that respects individuals' identities, relationships and personal circumstances. Providers are expected to deliver services that are inclusive, uphold dignity and respect, and are free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation The framework is expected to have a positive impact by helping to ensure that people can access residential and nursing care in an environment where they feel safe, respected and able to maintain important personal relationships. Providers should recognise and respond appropriately to the needs of LGBTQ+ residents as part of delivering person-centred care. No adverse impacts relating to sexual orientation have been identified through the operation of the Care Home Framework. Ongoing contract monitoring, quality assurance activities and feedback from residents and families will help ensure services remain inclusive and responsive to the needs of all individuals.
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The Care Home Framework affects people who are married, in a civil partnership, widowed, divorced, or single who require residential or nursing care services. Census 2021 data shows that 50.9% of Hampshire residents are married, while 6.6% are widowed or a surviving civil partner. The framework supports person-centred care and recognises the importance of maintaining family relationships, personal connections and support networks. Care planning and placement arrangements should take account of individuals' relationships and, where appropriate, support residents to maintain contact with spouses, civil partners, family members and carers. The framework applies equally regardless of marital status or civil partnership status and is not considered to create barriers to accessing residential or nursing care services. No evidence has been identified that the operation of the framework disadvantages individuals because they are married or in a civil partnership. Ongoing contract monitoring and quality assurance arrangements will continue to ensure that residents are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, regardless of their relationship status.
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	Although poverty is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, it is an important consideration for this assessment. Hampshire is one of the least deprived authorities in England overall; however, there are pockets of significant deprivation across the county. Around 4% of Hampshire residents aged 60 and over experience income deprivation, and inequalities exist between different areas of Hampshire. The Care Home Framework supports eligible adults to access residential and nursing care based on assessed need rather than personal financial circumstances. The framework helps ensure consistent access to quality care services, promotes transparency in commissioning arrangements, and supports the availability of placements across Hampshire. Individuals experiencing financial disadvantage may benefit from the framework through access to council-funded placements where eligible. The framework also supports a sustainable care market, helping to maintain the availability of services for residents who rely on publicly funded care. No adverse impacts relating specifically to poverty or socio-economic disadvantage have been identified through the ongoing operation of the framework. However, the Council will continue to monitor service accessibility, placement availability and market sustainability to ensure that vulnerable residents are not disproportionately affected. Access to residential and nursing care is determined through statutory assessment and eligibility criteria rather than an individual's ability to pay. Where individuals are eligible for local authority funding, financial circumstances are considered through established charging and financial assessment processes in line with relevant legislation. There is no fixed limit on the number of council-funded placements available through the framework. Where local capacity pressures arise, the Council works with framework providers and, where required, alternative providers to secure suitable placements. This helps ensure that eligible residents are not denied access to care because of financial disadvantage or temporary market constraints.
Mitigation	

Rurality

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	Hampshire contains a mix of urban and rural communities, with population density varying significantly across the county. Residents living in rural areas can face additional challenges in accessing services, including increased travel distances and reduced availability of local provision. The Care Home Framework supports access to residential and nursing care across Hampshire and surrounding areas through a network of approved providers. This helps to maximise placement opportunities and supports individuals to access accommodation that meets their

	assessed needs while taking account of personal preferences and family connections where possible. The framework is expected to have a positive impact on people living in rural communities by maintaining a broad range of care home providers and supporting continued access to commissioned services across the county. However, due to the geography of Hampshire, some individuals may have fewer care home options available within their immediate locality compared with residents of more urban areas. No significant adverse impacts associated with rurality have been identified through the operation of the framework. The Council will continue to monitor provider capacity, geographic coverage and placement patterns to ensure that residents in rural communities can access appropriate care and support. Residents living in rural communities may have fewer care home options available within their immediate locality due to provider distribution and capacity constraints. Where preferred local services are unavailable or fully occupied, the Council works with individuals, families and providers to identify suitable alternative placements. Placement decisions continue to take account of personal preferences, family relationships, community connections and the principles set out within the Choice of Accommodation Policy. Where placements outside an individual's immediate locality are necessary, efforts are made to minimise disruption and maintain important support networks wherever possible.
Mitigation	

Geographical Impact:All Hampshire

Equality Statement

Additional information:

The operation of the Care Home Framework is monitored through Hampshire County Council's contract monitoring and quality assurance processes. Resident feedback is gathered annually as part of contract monitoring activities.

Providers are required to submit evidence relating to residents' experiences of care, including completed "I Statements" surveys through which residents are asked to comment on outcomes such as whether they feel safe, well looked after, respected and supported to maintain their independence and wellbeing. Providers are also required to share details of complaints received and how these have been resolved.

As part of monitoring arrangements, providers are asked to demonstrate how they engage with residents, relatives and carers, including whether resident and/or relative meetings are held, how these are organised, attendance levels, key themes discussed and feedback received. This information helps the Council understand residents' experiences, identify areas for improvement and monitor whether services continue to meet the needs of people with different protected characteristics.

Providers are also required to maintain accessible complaints and whistleblowing procedures to ensure that residents, relatives, visitors and staff are able to raise concerns. Information gathered through surveys, complaints, engagement activities and contract monitoring informs ongoing review of service quality, equality impacts and opportunities for continuous improvement.

Individuals are informed of accommodation options through the Brokerage Team. Placement recommendations are made using a structured selection process that considers the individual's assessed needs, preferences, family views, geographical requirements, environmental needs, accessibility for family and friends, specific requirements, assessment timescales, and the proposed start date.

In line with Hampshire County Council's placement process, individuals are initially offered a suitable Tier 1 (in-house) placement where one is available and able to meet their needs. The individual, or their representative, is provided with information about the home and has the right to accept or decline the offer.

If the Tier 1 placement is declined, or if no suitable Tier 1 vacancy is available, a Tier 2 placement that best meets the selection criteria is offered. Only 2 placement options are presented at a time, allowing the individual or their representative to consider whether it meets their needs and preferences.

Where a suitable placement cannot be secured through Tier 1 or Tier 2 provision, Hampshire County Council may arrange a Tier 3 spot-purchased placement with an alternative provider. Throughout the process, individuals and their representatives are involved in decision-making and retain the right to decline an offered placement, with their views and preferences taken into account alongside assessed care and support needs.

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: 01215

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