

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

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| EQIA Title | Regional Procurement for innovative Children’s Residential Home provision |
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| Responsible Officer | Christy Holden - ST SC |
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Type of Activity

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| Service Change | No |
| Service Redesign | No |
| Project/Programme | No |
| Commissioning/Procurement | Commissioning/Procurement |
| Strategy/Policy | No |
| Details of other Service Activity | No |

Accountability and Responsibility

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| Directorate | Children Young People and Education |
| Responsible Service | Integrated Children's Services |
| Responsible Head of Service | Caroline Smith - CY SCS |
| Responsible Director | Sarah Hammond - CY SCS |

Aims and Objectives

Local authorities, as part of their Sufficiency Duty must take steps to secure, as far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within its areas to meet the needs of children they are looking after. The proposed decision directly relates to this duty by aiming to provide additional placements with new emerging models of care.

The South East Sector Led Improvement Programme (SESLIP) is a membership group of all single/upper-tier local authorities in the South East that aims to:

- improve outcomes for children and young people across the South East
- establish a culture of honest and constructive dialogue and challenge within and between authorities
- demonstrate the capacity and capability of the sector to achieve a coherent and consistent self-improving system

The Department for Education (DfE) Project “Phase 2” is funded by the Department for Education as part of its “Improving Sufficiency Planning to Increase Stability and Permanence for Looked after Children” Programme and aims to develop a procurement approach and pack for new and innovative provision for looked after children with a particular focus on the following key elements:

- Flexible, creative provision designed to meet the needs of complex children, including options to ‘step across’ various forms of provision (e.g. residential to fostering)
- Keeping children local, as close to their home address as possible
- Working with providers who already offer both residential and fostering services and with small providers, developing joined up partnerships, enabling movement between each as appropriate to need
- Exploring options for considering lifetime costs for placements, the potential to invest in more intensive early interventions, with a view to improving outcomes and potentially reducing longer term costs
- Including measures of progress for children placed based on assessment at the point of placement (regularly reviewed up until placement end using an evidence-based assessment tool)
- The model will be developed collaboratively between local authorities and providers, finding innovative and creative ways to procure, drawing on relationship commissioning models. It will focus on the competitive advantage to be leveraged by working together, developing better ways to support children

and young people.

The Project membership at this stage is three local authorities: Kent, West Sussex and Portsmouth. There are additional local authorities who are interested in joining the project as it progresses.

The beneficiaries of this procurement are the children in care for whom the Council has a corporate parenting responsibility. We would not expect to move any children that are already in settled placements as a result of the outcome of the procurement.

Within the Kent boundary, there are of 75 residential children's homes with a total of 336 beds. Kent has 42 children placed in Kent (excluding those under the Disabled Children's Teams) as at 30 September 2021. The placements in Kent against the overall capacity shows that KCC occupies 12%. This does not allow KCC to have any leverage within the market and as a result relies on local relationships between the homes and the Total Placement Service. There are a further 33 children (excluding those under the Disabled Children's Teams) placed in residential children's homes outside of Kent.

As part of the Council's standard contractual terms and conditions, service providers will be required to have an Equality and Diversity policy and meet the requirements of all related legislation. This is monitored as part of contract compliance on an annual basis. Social workers have a responsibility under relevant care planning legislation to monitor their placements to ensure that all their needs are being met and that individual outcomes are being achieved.

Section B – Evidence

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| Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity? | Yes |
| It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way? | Yes |
| Is there national evidence/data that you can use? | Yes |
| Have you consulted with stakeholders? | Yes |
| Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with? | |
| The Market: Soft market engagement through the Summer of 2021 with a range of providers demonstrated that there is interest and capacity for providers to tender for any opportunity | |
| Children and Young People: KCC's Participation Team developed a short film demonstrating children's experience of residential care. The SESLIP Project also engaged with Children and Young People on a regional basis, and locally with Kent. | |
| Our Partners: West Sussex and Portsmouth Commissioning Teams and Operational Teams are actively involved in the development of the procurement. | |
| KCC's Internal Teams: The Total Placement Service and Corporate Parenting Leads have been involved and engaged in the Project. | |
| Has there been a previous Equality | No |

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| Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years? | |
| Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity? | Yes |
| Section C – Impact | |
| Who may be impacted by the activity? | |
| Service Users/clients | Service users/clients |
| Staff | No |
| Residents/Communities/Citizens | No |
| Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing? | Yes |
| Details of Positive Impacts | |
| <p>Development of specific contracts for adolescents aged 10-16 will mean children in care can remain in the County and be supported and enabled to integrate socially and develop emotionally within the community. Future residential provision will achieve this by continuing to support the education of children in care as well as maintaining appropriate links with family and connected persons.</p> <p>Additional benefits from carrying out this activity include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enabling access to a wide range of residential placement types from registered, good quality providers • Improving placement stability supported by effective matching • Exhibiting strong collaboration and partnership working to ensure the child’s needs and outcomes are central • Demonstrating the involvement of the child or young person ensuring their voice is heard and listened to through participation in decision making (where appropriate) • Demonstrating effective and efficient communication to support placement finding <p>The proposal will not impact negatively on children, young people and their families currently receiving these services. The planning and modelling of a new contract will enable us to improve the way we meet a diverse range of needs and achieve the required outcomes by ensuring that the services we commission and purchase from the sector are fit for purpose and in line with the Council’s new Commissioning and Procurement requirements. This will be monitored and evidenced through the robust contract management arrangements and the statutory care reviews. In addition, Residential Providers are inspected by Ofsted, and the Council regularly monitors the ratings and takes this into consideration should any under-performance or quality requires a sanction process. Continuity of service provision will be ensured by having a transition and mobilisation plan in phase.</p> <p>The residential supply market in Kent has seen considerable growth over the last few years. The market also can experience some limited instability through periodic ownership changes including equity company buy-outs and parent company changes. Ofsted inspection outcomes will also impact on which providers the Council chooses to work with.</p> <p>This project focuses on children and young people it finds most difficult to place. They have one or more of the following capabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged between 10 and 16, although needs to include some flexibility • 70:30 male: female • Have often experienced exploitation, usually criminal, sometimes sexual • Have long histories of neglect and exposure to domestic abuse and other forms of childhood trauma • Sometimes will need to be placed in an emergency | |

| Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions | |
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| 19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age | |
| Are there negative impacts for age? | Yes |
| Details of negative impacts for Age | |
| This project focuses on children aged 10-16, although there will need to be some flexibility. | |
| Mitigating Actions for Age | |
| Needs relating to age will be identified in the child's care plan and included in referrals. Children who are not referred for this specific service and are best matched to a children's home will still be able to access residential provision | |
| Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age | Christy Holden |
| 20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability | |
| Are there negative impacts for Disability? | Yes |
| Details of Negative Impacts for Disability | |
| This project is for complex adolescents aged between 10-16. Children who are managed by the Disabled Children and Young People's Service will not be excluded from this provision if that is where they will be best matched, however it is not targeted for Disabled Children and Young People. | |
| Mitigating actions for Disability | |
| Where those children are disabled, they will not be excluded from this service, however there are other tailored services that are more likely to deliver good outcomes to disabled children. | |
| Responsible Officer for Disability | Christy Holden |
| 21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex | |
| Are there negative impacts for Sex | No |
| Details of negative impacts for Sex | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Mitigating actions for Sex | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Responsible Officer for Sex | Not Applicable |
| 22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender | |
| Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender | No |
| Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender | Not Applicable |
| 23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race | |
| Are there negative impacts for Race | No |
| Negative impacts for Race | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Mitigating actions for Race | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race | Not Applicable |
| 24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief | |
| Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief | No |
| Negative impacts for Religion and belief | |

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| Not Applicable | |
| Mitigating actions for Religion and belief | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief | Not Applicable |
| 25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation | |
| Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation | No |
| Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation | Not Applicable |
| 26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity | |
| Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity | No |
| Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity | Not Applicable |
| 27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships | |
| Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships | No |
| Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships | Not Applicable |
| 28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities | |
| Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities | No |
| Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities | |
| Not Applicable | |
| Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities | Not Applicable |