

# Equality Impact Assessment

## 1. Topic of assessment

<b>EIA title:</b>	Front Door and Bridging Project
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<b>EIA author:</b>	Amy Tomlins Project Manager
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## 2. Approval

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date approved</b>
<b>Approved by<sup>1</sup></b>	Liz Ball & Ian Vinall	January 2014

## 3. Quality control

<b>Version number</b>	1.0	<b>EIA completed</b>	January 2014
<b>Date saved</b>	16/01/14	<b>EIA published</b>	February 2014

## 4. EIA team

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job title (if applicable)</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Role</b>
Amy Tomlins	Project Manager, Public Value Programme, CSF	SCC	Analysis based on working knowledge of the Project and Children's Services.
Victoria Cannizzaro	Strategy and Commercial Manager, Public Value Programme, CSF	SCC	Analysis and PVP Perspective
Geoff Joddrell	HR Advisor CSF	SCC	HR Perspective for Children's Social Care.
Helen Glanfield	Senior HR Advisor C&C	SCC	HR Perspective
CSF Directorate Equalities Group	-	SCC	Reviewed the EIA November 2013.

## 5. Explaining the matter being assessed

<b>What policy, function or</b>	The Front Door and Bridging project is part of a wider change programme in Children's Services which is linked to the Public Value
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<sup>1</sup> Refer to earlier guidance for details on getting approval for your EIA.

<p><b>service is being introduced or reviewed?</b></p>	<p>Programme as part of the wider Early Help approach.</p> <p>The Front Door and Bridging project is focused on the review and delivery of the ‘front door’ of Children’s Services, which is the initial way in which contacts about children come into Children’s Services from the public and other agencies.</p> <p>The project aims to understand the current process, where and how cases enter and leave the system, and develop a new way of working. This needs to take into account government legislation and guidance on best practice as well as meeting the levels of demand for our services and ensuring a joined up approach throughout the system.</p> <p>The project will have an impact on staff across Children’s Services and in the Children’s Team within the Contact Centre. The impact on residents and services users is not expected to be significant at the point of contact, the positive impact will be made for these groups further into the process by improving the timeliness and quality of support.</p>
<p><b>What proposals are you assessing?</b></p>	<p>This document is assessing the proposals for reshaping the front door to Children’s Services.</p> <p>The first phase of this included the assessment of plans to move Contact Centre Children’s Team staff who are currently part of a central Contact Centre, so that they form part of the area teams within Children’s Services (North East, North West, South East, South West). This phase is now complete and the EIA has been amended following the feedback and decisions made.</p> <p>The EIA has now been reassessed to also include next phase of the work which involves engagement with Children’s Services area teams around changing the structure of teams and the possible impacts this could have on the staff and service users.</p> <p>These two things have been combined in one EIA as they combine to make one project.</p>
<p><b>Who is affected by the proposals outlined above?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Service users and their carers or families</b> – These changes will affect service users and residents who use the Surrey County Council Contact Centre. This is because the services and processes being reviewed as part of this project have a direct relationship with residents and service users. These changes are expected to have a positive impact on service users as the project aims to improve the process for contacts coming into the service and how they are dealt with to improve effectiveness and efficiency.</li> <li>• <b>Council staff</b> – These changes will affect council staff whose job roles, locations or work processes may change as a result of the proposals outlined above.</li> </ul> <p>Staff in the Children’s team of the Contact Centre will be the most</p>

affected by the plans as their location, roles and work processes will change as well as becoming part of Children's Services in the CSF Directorate (transferring from Customers & Communities Directorate). Affected staff (within Children's Services) will mainly be those in the 'Duty and Assessment' and 'CIN' teams. These teams will no longer exist in their current form, instead they will be combined with the roles from the contact centre to form a 'Referral, Assessment & Intervention Service' (RAIS).

Staff in these teams will remain in current work locations and roles, however, the way the social workers despatch their duties and their line management may change dependent on which part of the RAIS they work in.

Other teams across Children's Services are also being engaged with as part of the process as they work directly with the affected teams. This includes the CP, LAC and Countywide teams who work directly with the CIN and Duty and Assessment Teams, and will continue to work directly with the proposed RAIS.

- **External organisations** – These changes will affect external partner organisations Children's Services teams work with in looking after and safeguarding children their contact will now be more direct with the local area teams. In addition, under the proposals, external organisations will need to work differently with Children's Services with new ways of working being looked at as part of the wider Children's Services PVP and the wider Early Help approach, with the aim to improve our contact and referral processes which inevitably impact on our partners.

Mitigating actions against possible risks have been planned to ensure a smooth transition period for service users, staff and external organisations. For example, the phone number will remain the same to allow consistency in how people contact the service. Additionally, the work is not being done in isolation but in conjunction with a wider change programme<sup>2</sup>, in particular the Early Help workstream which is looking at how the whole system works.

## 6. Sources of information

### Engagement carried out

The proposals for the reshaping of these services have been fully informed by staff engagement activities. To date, this has included:

- Monthly face to face engagement with Organisational Managers Group (OMG) in

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<sup>2</sup> The [Public Value Programme](#) is a directorate wide programme for Children, Schools and Families looking at how we can work together with our partners and ensuring our services are outcome focused and as cost effective as they can be.

Children's Services. This covers all team managers across the service who are responsible for cascading information and ensuring their teams are fully aware of activities and plans.

- Circulation of notes and plans via email to staff to support face to face engagement.
- Promotion of confidential email address for any questions or concerns from staff across the Children's Services Project.
- Focused engagement sessions with affected teams during September – October 2013.
- Set up and regular updating of internal S-net page to provide staff with relevant information and news updates.
- Information shared through CSF Communications newsletters.
- Formal consultation period with Children's Team Contact Centre staff during November 2013.
- HR 1:1 sessions available for staff to book to discuss concerns/raise queries.
- Dedicated agenda item at team meetings for teams to discuss thoughts/concerns/raise queries during the consultation period.
- Engagement Period (2 weeks) with Area Teams within Children's Services. All staff invited to a 1 ½ hour sessions with their area head to explain proposals with an open invite to Trade Unions and HR Representatives to attend where possible.

#### **Data used**

In addition to engagement with staff, national policy, guidance and legislation in relation to vulnerable children and families have been key in driving and informing the direction of this work.

Nationally, there is a focus on early help, timely intervention, family support and the importance of robust safeguarding arrangements.

Working Together 2013, the multi-agency statutory guidance, and the new Ofsted regulatory framework published in September 2013 provide the vehicle and mechanism through which the operational and strategic implementation and effectiveness will be measured.

The Working Together 2013 guidance clarifies the responsibilities of professionals towards safeguarding children and strengthens the focus away from processes and onto the needs of the child. This includes:

- the implementation of the single assessment;
- ensuring decisions are made at an earlier point by a qualified social worker;
- reducing the number of interfaces for the family, and
- a child-centred approach where services should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

The new Ofsted Inspection Framework (September 2013) places an emphasis on the decision making at all stages of a child's journey. This means that the Children's Service has to demonstrate that the management of its 'front door' arrangements are robust and key decision making is the domain of qualified social care staff .

As a directorate, Children, Schools and Families has four key priorities it is focusing on which reflect residents' priorities, current challenges, and areas where investment is needed now to realise future ambitions. These priorities are:

1. Potential;
2. Prevention;
3. Participation, and
4. Protection.

In focusing on these areas with partners through an Early Help approach, in terms of prevention and early intervention, we are aiming to ensure that services for children and families will be local and better co-ordinated, by increasing local knowledge and links to local agencies by placing all support alongside social work teams.

In addition to national guidance, data from within the Children's Service has been analysed. A comprehensive report has been written outlining the key aspects of the process as part of the project's Research Workstream. For example, current data shows that within the Contact Centre, the initial decision point lies with the Referral Information Officer. However, with up to 70,000 contacts a year, time available to assess each individual contact is very limited. From April to September 2013, 57% of contacts have ended up being recorded as no further action (NFA) while 17% of contacts progressed to a referral. Different sources of referral however have variable rates of contacts progressing to a referral.

### **Summary of Staff Engagement Sessions**

During September a series of engagement sessions took place which encompassed all arms of the Children's Service and the Contact Centre. The feedback from these sessions contributed to the shaping of service realignment to meet with the new legislative requirements.

The sessions emphasised the support for local arrangements where the interface with partners can be developed, the time from contact to referral is reduced and social care staff use professional expertise to gate keep contacts and make key decisions about children who are vulnerable and at risk of harm. Feedback set out the opportunities provided by bringing together an early help / multi agency hub, working with partners and other professionals to effectively signpost and contribute to the single assessment process to inform the delivery of a range of interventions.

Engagement as part of the formal Consultation with contact centre staff also lead to a number of changes being made to the proposals to support staff, this included the Children's Services Senior Management Team agreeing to honour the existing RIO grade and job profile. This will mean that those currently in RIO posts will be able to transfer to the service on their current pay and job description.

Additionally the most recent engagement sessions with staff in the area teams have presented back the feedback taken on board from staff to date in order to gauge further opinion on how plans for the new service are progressing.

## 7. Impact of the new/amended policy, service or function

### 7a. Impact of the proposals on residents and service users with protected characteristics

The work around the Contact Centre role in receiving contacts and referrals is a change to an internal process rather than to how the actual service is delivered to the resident or service user even though this is resident facing the phone number called and the service received at the first point of contact is intended to remain the same.

The aim of the work is to have a positive impact on the service user/customer. The impacts on residents and service users will be across the board and not specifically because of any protected characteristic. The changes are expected to improve the service, which all residents can access, overall by increasing the timeliness and quality of response after a resident has made contact.

Protected characteristic <sup>3</sup>	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
<b>Age</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for residents and service users relating to age.	No specific negative impacts identified for residents and service users relating to age.	<p><b>Contact Centre role:</b> All contacts will be dealt with in the same way as they currently are regardless of protected characteristics of the individual, therefore no specific impact is identified for this protected characteristic.</p> <p><b>Assessment and Intervention role:</b> Although how the teams will work will change this will have positive impacts but not specifically for any protected characteristic.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for residents and service users relating to disability.	No specific negative impacts identified for residents and service users relating to disability.	See above.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for residents and service users relating to gender reassignment.	No specific negative impacts identified for residents and service users relating to gender reassignment.	See above.

<sup>3</sup> More information on the definitions of these groups can be found [here](#).

<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for residents and service users relating to pregnancy and maternity.	No specific negative impacts identified for residents and service users relating to pregnancy and maternity.	See above.
<b>Race</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for residents and service users relating to race.	No specific negative impacts identified for residents and service users relating to race.	See above.
<b>Religion and belief</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for residents and service users relating to Religion and belief.	No specific negative impacts identified for residents and service users relating to religion and belief.	See above.
<b>Sex</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for residents and service users relating to Sex.	No specific negative impacts identified for residents and service users relating to sex.	See above.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for residents and service users relating to Sexual orientation.	No specific negative impacts identified for residents and service users relating to sexual orientation.	See above.
<b>Marriage and civil partnerships</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for residents and service users relating to marriage and civil partnerships.	No specific negative impacts identified for residents and service users relating to marriage and civil partnerships.	See above.
<b>Carers<sup>4</sup></b>	No specific positive impacts identified for residents and	No specific negative impacts identified for residents and	See above.

<sup>4</sup> Carers are not a protected characteristic under the Public Sector Equality Duty, however we need to consider the potential impact on this group to ensure that there is no associative discrimination (i.e. discrimination against them because they are associated with people with protected characteristics). The definition of carers developed by Carers UK is that 'carers look after family, partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. The care they provide is unpaid. This includes adults looking after other adults, parent carers looking after disabled children and young carers under 18 years of age.'

	service users relating to carers.	service users relating to carers.	
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## 7b. Impact of the proposals on staff with protected characteristics

The proposals are not expected to have any negative impact specifically due to any protected characteristics. All changes will be made in line with SCC's corporate policies and guidance.

Protected characteristic	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
<b>Age</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to age.	In relation to Contact Centre staff, staff who are older or towards the end of their career may feel more reluctant to make significant changes to the location they work in and potentially spend more time travelling.	Any recruitment, progression or slotting already confirmed has been and will continue to be, on merit, and not age-related criteria. For contact centre staff, voluntary severance was offered as an option in the consultation process. Where possible, roles in other teams within the contact centre, which are remaining in Kingston, have been made available for staff in the Children's Team to apply for.
<b>Disability</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to disability.	<b>For staff transferring from the Contact Centre only:</b> New working structures will mean relocation for some staff, which could impact on people with mobility needs. This may negatively impact on staff who have mobility problems and may need to change the way in which they travel to work i.e. Through the use of public transport and accessibility. This would also include indirect impact on disabled family	Accommodation needs of staff will be considered during any selection process. Parking will be checked for disabled staff who require it.  Any need for reasonable adjustments will be maintained and transferred.  Reasonable adjustments will be offered including alternative formatting of documents if necessary.  Any recruitment, progression or slotting already confirmed has been and will continue to be, on merit, and not disability-related criteria. The preference form has the opportunity to list any required reasonable



		members for whom the staff have caring responsibilities for.	adjustments which will be considered to ensure no or minimal negative impact. There is no other specific impact identified for this protected characteristic.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to gender reassignment.	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to gender reassignment.	Any recruitment, progression or slotting already confirmed has been and will continue to be, on merit, and not criteria related to gender reassignment. There is no specific impact is identified for this protected characteristic.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to pregnancy and maternity.	<b>For staff transferring from the Contact Centre only:</b> New working structures will mean relocation for some staff, which could impact on people with caring/parenting responsibilities and other needs.	Staff on maternity leave to be taken into consideration when implementing any new structures. Full consultation and engagement will take place with these staff. There is no other specific impact identified for this protected characteristic.
<b>Race</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to race.	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to race.	Any recruitment, progression or slotting already confirmed has been and will continue to be, on merit, and not criteria related to race. There is no specific impact is identified for this protected characteristic.
<b>Religion and belief</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to religion and belief.	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to religion and belief.	Any recruitment, progression or slotting will be on merit, and not criteria related to belief or faith. There is no specific impact is identified for this protected characteristic.
<b>Sex</b>	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to sex.	No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to sex.	Any recruitment, progression or slotting already confirmed has been and will continue to be, on merit, and not criteria related to sex. There is no specific impact is identified for this protected characteristic.

<p><b>Sexual orientation</b></p>	<p>No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to sexual orientation.</p>	<p>No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to sexual orientation.</p>	<p>Any recruitment, progression or slotting already confirmed has been and will continue to be, on merit, and not criteria related to sexual orientation. There is no specific impact is identified for this protected characteristic.</p>
<p><b>Marriage and civil partnerships</b></p>	<p>No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to marriage and civil partnerships.</p>	<p>No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to marriage and civil partnerships.</p>	<p>Any recruitment, progression or slotting already confirmed has been and will continue to be, on merit, and not criteria related to marital or civil partnership status. There is no specific impact is identified for this protected characteristic.</p>
<p><b>Carers</b></p>	<p>No specific positive impacts identified for staff relating to carers.</p>	<p><b>For staff transferring from the Contact Centre only:</b> Changes to working location may have a negative impact on those with caring responsibilities due to potential additional travel time and the ability to react quickly to needs of dependents at short notice.</p>	<p>Where staff are transferring from the contact centre, the Preference Form used as part of the consultation process asked staff to confidentially identify any existing caring commitments they have which may impact on their ability to travel to a different location, in line with council policies for staff with caring responsibilities. This was taken into account when allocating staff to area teams.</p>

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

## 8. Amendments to the proposals

Change	Reason for change
Amendment made to preference form.	To take into account impact of location change for staff with caring responsibilities or reasonable adjustment requirements of staff with disabilities.
Children's Services Senior Management Team agreeing to honour the existing RIO grade and job profile. This will mean that those currently in RIO posts will be able to transfer to the service on their current pay and job description.	Acknowledgement of the need to retain key skills during this critical time of change. After slotting existing staff, all existing and new vacancies will be recruited to using the Advice, Support and Information Officer job profile
Addition of the social work staff (phase 2) into the considerations. See Section 5 'What proposals are you assessing?'	Planned part of the project.

## 9. Action plan

Potential impact (positive or negative)	Action needed to maximise positive impact or mitigate negative impact	By when	Owner
Staff may leave the organisation or current role during the change process.	Ongoing HR and Union support is being offered to affected staff to support them through the process. Plans in place to provide bank or temporary staff to Contact Centre if retention becomes a problem.	Ongoing	Project Sponsors
Offers an opportunity for staff to be part of a Children's Service area team to support career progression.	Appraisals will continue to record development needs and progression	Ongoing	Children's Services

## 10. Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated

Potential negative impact	Protected characteristic(s) that could be affected

## 11. Summary of key impacts and actions

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

<b>Information and engagement underpinning equalities analysis</b>	<p>Extensive engagement with staff through face to face and electronic means.</p> <p>Consideration of national policy drivers, internal data analysis and feedback from staff engagement.</p>
<b>Key impacts (positive and/or negative) on people with protected characteristics</b>	<p>Potential negative impact has been identified for staff with caring responsibilities or with the need for disability related reasonable adjustments. A plan is in place to mitigate against this possible negative impact.</p> <p>There is no specific impact identified for the other protected characteristics.</p>
<b>Changes you have made to the proposal as a result of the EIA</b>	<p>Addition to Contact Centre preference form of section around existing caring responsibilities/reasonable adjustments.</p>
<b>Key mitigating actions planned to address any outstanding negative impacts</b>	<p>Ongoing offer of HR and Union support to staff throughout the process.</p> <p>Plan in place for provision of bank or temporary staff if it is not possible to retain existing members of staff during, or immediately following the process.</p>
<b>Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated</b>	<p>N/A</p>