

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	The purpose of the report is to propose a model for the future delivery of some adoption related services as a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) comprising Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council. The proposal is in line with government policy and will ultimately support an increase in family finding for children whose plans are to be adopted.
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
Adopt South is expected to have a potential 2,350 customers. Of these it is projected that 35 % of these would be Southampton those that would previously have received their service from Southampton Adoption Service. Within the region the number of potential customers is as follows The model seeks to build on the current good practice within each authority to further improve performance and deliver a more cohesive, efficient and effective service for some of our most vulnerable children and their families. The new RAA, to be known as Adopt South, will continue to work with its existing Voluntary Adoption Agency partners and other key stakeholders to help shape the new service.	
Summary of Impact and Issues	
In June 2015, the Department for Education (DfE) published 'Regionalising Adoption' and asked all adoption agencies in England to consider how to work much more closely together on a regional basis. This was enacted as the Education and Adoption Act 2016, which advised authorities and voluntary adoption agencies to join together to form Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs). The Government's view is that structural change will improve the process for	

children and adopters leading to improved numbers of children being adopted, an improved experience for adopters and improved timeliness overall. The DfE expects the RAA programme to deliver consistently good and innovative adoption practice that ensures improved life chances for children.

In late 2015, the four authorities in the Adopt South grouping (Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council, Isle of Wight Council and Hampshire County Council) were awarded DfE funding to undertake work to establish a model for regional adoption in the area, with an expectation that this would be fully embedded by no later than 2020. The authorities have engaged actively since 2016 in a programme of work to develop a model that fulfils the criteria put in place by the DfE for a Regional Adoption Agency; that does not represent an unacceptable risk to any of the authorities involved; retains flexibility to enable authorities to respond to future policy; and, most importantly, is considered to provide genuine opportunities for improving the outcomes for children and families.

A model is now recommended that sets out a clear operating model, service offer, structural model and financial framework.

Potential Positive Impacts

There will be increased regional resources for marketing and recruitment of adopters leading to a greater number of adopters being recruited for those children within the region with a plan for adoption. There will be an increased offer in respect of post adoption support for those families who are eligible.

The anticipation is that working at a regional level will improve the services available to prospective and approved adopters, by making a wider range of advice and support available; and will improve prospects for children waiting for adoption by increasing the pool of adopters available in the region. It is not expected to be detrimental to any groups as there is no change to policy underpinning adoption and no changes to arrangements for accessing services.

Responsible Service Manager	Dorenda Chapman Service manager adoption Fostering
Date	3 rd July 2018
Approved by Senior Manager	Jane White
Date	3 rd July 2018

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	<p>Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency</p>	<p>The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will be put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency.</p>
Disability	<p>Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency</p> <p>The location of Adoption Panels may change with the need for some to travel further to attend</p>	<p>The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will be put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p>

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		<p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency. Consideration will be given to the siting of Panels to minimise travel time for those attending. These will take place in buildings that have suitable access and facilities.</p>
Gender Reassignment	<p>Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency</p>	<p>The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will be put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency.</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency</p>	<p>The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will be put in place in the next</p>

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		<p>phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency</p>	<p>The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will be put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency.</p>
Race	<p>Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency</p>	<p>The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies</p>

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		<p>and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will in put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency.</p>
Religion or Belief	Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency	<p>The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will in put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency.</p>
Sex	Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and	The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes

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	the Regional Adoption Agency	<p>provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will in put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency.</p>
Sexual Orientation	Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency	<p>The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will in put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency.</p>
Community	Service users will need to	The Adoption and Care

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Safety	understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency	<p>Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will be put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency.</p>
Poverty	Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency	<p>The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will be put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the</p>

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	<p>Adoption Allowances are set at different across the four partnership areas</p>	<p>regional nature of the agency.</p> <p>These will be uniform across the Region so that applicants will have clarity as to the adoption allowance offer.</p>
Health & Wellbeing	<p>Service users will need to understand that their personal information can be shared between the Local authority and the Regional Adoption Agency</p>	<p>The Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 makes provision for information to be shared between Local Authority Agencies and Regional Adoption Agencies. Protocols will be put in place in the next phase outlining the mechanism for this to take place.</p> <p>The data management systems and processes will need to comply with all necessary legislative responsibilities.</p> <p>Marketing and recruitment information will be clear as to the regional nature of the agency.</p>
Other Significant Impacts	<p>The decision at this stage is to merge management processes and practice across the authorities rather than change policies or access to services. There may be changes to policy recommended to members as part of the wider development of the project.</p>	<p>These would be subject to an EIA in their own right as part of the discrete decision-making process</p>

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