

Section A - EQUALITY ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

You must complete this in conjunction with reading Equality Analysis Guidance

Name of Policy/Decision/Project/Activity:

Together for Children Sunderland Limited – 2021/22 Cost Reduction Initiatives – Transformation Programme and Cost run-rate reductions.

Date: 19/11/2020

Version Number: v0.1

Equality Analysis completed by:

Name: Steve Renwick

Job title: Director of Finance

Responsible Officer or Group:

Name: Jill Colbert

Is the Activity:

New/Proposed ()

Changing/Being Reviewed (x)

Other ()

Part 1. Purpose and Scope

Together for Children Sunderland Limited (TfC) began operations on the 1st April 2017; the company, limited by guarantee, delivers children's services on behalf of Sunderland City Council and is owned by Sunderland City Council but controlled by an independent board to ensure operational independence.

Children's Services in Sunderland are presently under "Direction" from the Department for Education (DfE) and the considerable progress of TfC continues to be externally monitored and evaluated against the recommendations made by Ofsted.

As part of the Council family, TfC is required to make cost reductions in 2021/22; part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. In order to avoid any detriment to services provided to vulnerable families and children, cost reductions have been focused on service transformation and redesign together with reductions in support costs.

The Transformation Programme is underpinned by funding support from the DfE of £1.2m in 2019/20 and £914k in 2020/21 and the cost run-rate exercise has its genesis in 2018/19 and is an ongoing diligence and challenge initiative.

The overall desired outcome for the targeted cost reductions is:

- the delivery of better services to children and families across Sunderland by using scarce resources to optimum effectiveness;
- to focus more on prevention through developing edge of care facilities which prevent the need for statutory intervention;
- optimising partnerships with key stakeholders such as the CCG and University.

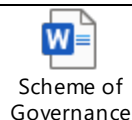
Strong governance will be wrapped around these initiatives with the Company's Senior Leadership meeting specifically on a monthly basis as a Programme Board and regular updates to the Performance Improvement Board which has representation from the Council as well as partner organisations.

Underpinning the governance and associated reporting is a strong Performance analysis which captures improvement from baselines as well as trend analysis with useful benchmarking to national and regional indices. In this latter context, the Company is driving transformative initiatives using an expansive viewpoint and using best practice elsewhere, suitably tailored, to craft a Sunderland-specific solution to the challenges of keeping young people safe.

Intelligence and Analysis

All service Transformation is designed and co-produced with service professionals with cognisance of the voice of the child as accessed through the TfC Participation and Engagement team and the Change Council comprising young people.

Service delivery is governed by a Company-wide Scheme of Governance (embedded below) which cross references all aspects of decision making to the relevant statute, Services Contract requirement and/or other regulation(s).



In this regard, legislation including the Children Act 2004, The Children and Families Act 2014, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and multiple other pieces of primary and amended legislation apply to the Company's operations, as well as statutory guidance. Compliance and observance of legislation and guidance is closely monitored and reported within the Company.

Also relevant is the UN Convention on the Rights of Children. The Convention has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights. Every child has rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status.

The Convention must be seen as a whole: all the rights are linked and no right is more important than another. The right to relax and play (Article 31) and the right to freedom of expression (Article 13) have equal importance as the right to be safe from violence (Article 19) and the right to education (Article 28).

In addition to the above-noted panoply of legislation, the Company has the highest regard for compliance with data-related legislation including the Data Protection Act 2018 (which incorporates GDPR requirements) and the Caldicott Guardian requirements.

Gaps in intelligence and information

TfC has no material influence over any planning applications or processes that allow private care providers to enter Sunderland and set up provision and is rarely aware in advance of planned developments. There is a risk that when new providers enter the city they bring available beds for other LAs which then in turn puts additional pressure on wider children's services.

There may be implications from the post-Brexit arrangements that impact on care providers, which are difficult to quantify or anticipate – for example, on the price of food and commodities, workforce and wider infrastructure costs.

Visits will be arranged to other agencies that have improved practice in any of the relevant fields and significant collaboration and networking with other LAs to share ideas, test solutions and so on.

Single year Spending Review and subsequent Local Government Finance Settlement received on 17 December 2020; detail is awaited and uncertainty hereof prevails about the settlement for children's services.

Finally, the lasting impact of the ongoing Pandemic on health and the economy will not be known fully until the medium term and this will engender uncertainty into any planning and this the realisation of benefits.

Additional Impacts

There are no additional impacts envisaged on the wider community or stakeholders at this stage. If proposals develop that may include developing a new or increased residential Childrens home provision, a separate consultation would be undertaken to take account of any impact on the community.

This would include the procurement implications of additional services being commissioned from the local VCS and third sector.

More generally the proposals represent a range of benefits largely by keeping a greater proportion of children in Sunderland, through:

- Increased economic activity in the city with more carers and staff with an income to dispose of;
- CYP staying within Sunderland, making use of existing services rather than requiring payment for services outside of Sunderland;
- Potential better use of existing capital assets through the re-purposing of existing care homes or facilities; and
- Improved discharge pathways from in-patient specialist psychiatric care and other types of specialist provision.

Part 2. Analysis of Impact on People

Characteristic	List of Impacts		
	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Age	<p>Whilst the business is inherently child-focused, a key aspect of the duty of care we discharge is to support families wherever possible; kinship carers and other guardians of all ages.</p> <p>Any review or redesign of edge of care and/or Residential Care facilities will have this balanced approach as a key tenet.</p>	Continuous improvement rather than maintenance is being sought.	No adverse impacts anticipated.
Disability	Any redesign of services will take full cognisance of disability issues and the Company's Children with Disability team has significant expertise upon which the reviews can draw – good outcomes are envisaged.	As above	No adverse impacts anticipated.
Gender/Sex	Increased provision of types of care that can be better matched to a young person's gender.	As above	As above
Marriage & Civil Partnership		As above	No adverse impacts anticipated.
Pregnancy and maternity	Mother and baby facilities/initiatives as well as the Pre-Birth Team founded in 2020 are inherently supportive of pregnancy and maternity and thus positive outcomes should accrue from developing these services.	As above	.As above
Race/Ethnicity	Increased provision of types of care that can be better matched to a young person's racial and ethnic identity.	As above	As above

	Sunderland has a small BME population but CYP of different ethnic origins are represented in the looked after population but it can be harder to find appropriate matches to meet their cultural needs.		
Religion/belief	An increased provision of types of care can be better matched to a young person's religious and faith based beliefs.	As above	As above
Sexual Orientation	Increased provision of types of care that can be better matched to a young person's sexual identity – currently there is very little residential provision for young people who identify as LGBT. The Change Council, voice of the young person, has instigated a special interest group in this regard.	As above	As above
Gender identity	Increased provision of types of care that can be better matched to a young person's self-identified gender.	As above	As above

Part 3. Response to Analysis, Action Plan and Monitoring

In this section please outline what actions you propose to take to minimise the negative, and maximise the positive, impacts that have been identified through the analysis. By considering and implementing these actions the policy or action can be refined to make sure that the greatest benefits are achieved for the people of Sunderland. The performance monitoring process should also be set out to explain how ongoing progress is going to be followed to make sure that the aims are met.

From the analysis four broad approaches can be taken, (No major change; continue with the policy/action despite negative implications; adjust the policy/decision/action; or stop the policy/action). Please indicate, using the list below, which is proposed.

No Major Change (☒)

Continue Despite Negative Implications (☐)

Adjust the Policy/Decision/Project/Activity (☐)

Stop (☐)

Action Plan

ACTION	WHO	WHEN	MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS
Transformation Board meets monthly with reporting to the SLT, Board and Performance Improvement Board	SLT PMO	Monthly	SLT suite of Programme documentation Board and PIB reports
Comms around need for cost reductions and the Transformation Programme	Comms	Bi-Monthly	Email and media bulletins
As and when the Spending Review and Local Government Financial settlement detail is known, investment decisions can be assessed for affordability.	Director of Finance TfC and Exec Director of Corporate Services SCC to liaise	When Settlement detail is announced	Email and media bulletins

