

Equalities Analysis in Lambeth

Proposal Title *

IICSA Action Plan

Author

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Please provide name of lead author and/or those within project team who may be required to contribute to this assessment

Who will sign off the assessment?

Paul Bates

Please indicate who will be involved in approving this assessment. This will need to be signed off by the Director

Q1a. What is changing?

The council is developing and implementing an action plan in response to the July 2021 report regarding Lambeth, published by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). The action plan is one of the key recommendations made in the report, alongside the suggestion that the action plan be published within six months of the report date.

The action plan encompasses a diverse set of actions and deliverables separated into seven thematic groupings to ensure that the findings and recommendations from the report are fully addressed. These include Voice of the Child and Organisational Culture.

Primarily the action plan will be delivering cross-council assurance and service improvement activities, along with significant culture change. The focus of these activities is on reviewing, quality assuring and where necessary updating processes, practices and procedures already in place. Actions will be undertaken by the organisation through existing service operations and change programmes.

The key objective of the action plan is to ensure children's views and voices and their safety is truly at the heart of our decision-making at all levels of the organisation. The action plan aims to achieve this by:

- reflecting the learnings from our past failures to children in our care;
- strengthening the current processes, policies, systems and procedures that safeguard children in our care and care leavers;
- strengthening our leadership and governance and,
- transforming our organisational and political culture.

What is the most significant or key change taking place? Can you indicate the type of change in your response (e.g. policy/decision/strategy/ service/procedural/ geographic/procurement etc.) so it is clear what is being equalities assessed? Why is this change happening? What do you aim to achieve? Can you clearly indicate what decision-makers are being asked to take a decision on?

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Here you will need to describe clearly and briefly what this change is about (i.e. service change, policy review/update, decision)? Compared against what we do currently, what will be different? Can you explain what will happen if this is approved and when will it be implemented? How will the EIA inform your business case, tender specification, for example?

Q1b. Who will be involved in approving this decision?

Cabinet, the Leader, Lead Member for Children's Services, Strategic Director
Children's Services, Chief Executive

Who else will be involved in signing-off this decision?

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Please detail any project sponsors, (Head of Service, Directors cabinet member/s, legal, partners) Note: Any reports that go to anyone needing to take decisions must refer to this equalities analysis so they can consider the effects of the proposals on different groups before and during decision-making.

Q2a. What do we know about the people who will be impacted by this change?

Key stakeholder groups identified as being potentially impacted by the implementation of the action plan:

Children looked after

We hold data including protected characteristics on all children looked after. The data held shows that a disproportionately high number of children in our care are from Black, Asian or Multi Ethnic backgrounds, when compared to the Lambeth populace overall. In addition, significant numbers of children in our care have a disability or additional health and educational needs.

Of 376 Children Looked After in Lambeth (July 2021):

- 55% are male and 45% are female
- 11% are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
- 30% have a disability
- 52% are Black, Black British, 24% mixed origin, 16% White, 4% Other/not stated, 3% Asian, Asian British
- 87% are in good or outstanding schools
- 27% have an Education, Health and Care Plan
- 35% have a mental health assessment score showing cause for

concern and triggering referral to Children Looked After Mental Health Service

Care leavers

We hold data including protected characteristics on young people who have left the care of Lambeth. Similarly to data held on children looked after it reflects a high proportion of young people from Black, Asian or Multi Ethnic Backgrounds.

Of 370 Care Leavers in Lambeth (July 2021):

- 66% are male and 34% are female
- 25% have a disability
- 62% are Black, Black British, 14% mixed origin, 16% White, 7% Other/not stated, 6% Asian, Asian British
- 74% 17-18 yr olds, 63% 19-21 yr olds, 70% 18-25 yr olds in employment education or training
- 85% within 20 miles
- 83 remained with foster carer (age 18), 30 remained with foster carer (19-20 yr olds)
- 86% 17/18 in suitable accommodation
- 80% 19-21 in suitable accommodation

Councillors

EDI information held on councillors is limited to age and sex, with the majority of councillors being male.

All council staff

EDI information including protected characteristics is held on all council staff. This shows the majority of the workforce identifying as Black, Asian or Multi Ethnic and the majority of the workforce as female. There are relatively low numbers of council staff with a disclosed disability or LGBTQ+ identity.

- 59% of the workforce identify as being Black, Asian or Mutli Ethnic
- 60% of the workforce identify as female
- 9.6% of the workforce have disclosed having a disability
- 8% of the workforce have disclosed that they identify as LGBTQ+

Commissioned services and contractors

We do not hold EDI data on our commissioned services or contractors.

What does your information tell you about the people who will be affected by this change? Are protected groups impacted? What information do you hold on the protected characteristics of the people affected by the change? (Age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, health, socio-economic, language) Are there any gaps or missing information?

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This is an opportunity for you to share what you understand about the people who will be affected by what is being proposed whether now and/or potentially in the future. Do you know whether they are from protected groups? What

does your service level profile data tell you about them? What if anything does your current and previous consultations, surveys, complaints, contract monitoring data, equalities data monitoring (including from partners and other service areas) reveal about these people and their needs or issues that may be connected/relevant to this change? Are there any gaps in your data? **If yes**, please note we are under a legal duty to be properly informed before making a decision. If the relevant data is not available we are under a duty to obtain it and this will often mean some consultation with appropriate groups is required. You will need to provide a reason or justification for why you have missing data/information. You may have to address this by including plans to generate this information within your action plan and responses to questions 3a, 3b and 4.

Q2b. How will they be impacted by the change?

The action plan will be delivering service improvement, assurance, and constructive culture change. We anticipate that this would lead to overall positive or neutral impacts for all identified groups to varying degrees.

Children looked after and care leavers – positive impact

The overarching aims of the action plan underpin positive equalities impacts for children looked after, in particular responding to the inquiry findings that Black and ethnic minority children were overrepresented in Lambeth's children's homes and faced additional hardships with some subject to overt racism alongside discrimination.

We know that a high proportion of children looked after are Black, Asian or Multi Ethnic, which is disproportionately high to overall borough ethnicity makeup. The plan makes sure we have mechanisms in place which are sensitive to and allow our children looked after to share their unique experiences, impacted by their identity and intersectionality.

The plan also gives strong commitment to amplifying the voice of the child and working collaboratively to devise and monitor approaches and strategies to safeguarding and building strong relationships.

We also expect positive impacts for our children and young people to be felt through commitments in the action plan to continue the development and implementation of our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, and ensuring that Lambeth has a recognised culture and practices which empowers staff to flag and challenge discriminatory practice and be effective advocates within our communities and to those who use our services.

This drive toward an inclusive workforce will be crucial in delivering positive equalities impacts for our children and young people, as consultation with children and young people looked after made clear that the ability to build meaningful relationships with social workers would enable them to feel confident discussing experiences and increase the likelihood of making a disclosure.

Councillors – positive impact

Although we do not collect comprehensive equalities data for councillors and so the impact of the plan on any one characteristic within this group would be difficult to gauge, we anticipate that the commitments within the action plan to the ongoing development and implementation of Lambeth's EDI action plan alongside fostering a culture of supportive challenge for councillors to operate within would underpin an overall positive equalities

impact.

All council staff – positive impact

Findings from the IICSA report were clear that racism and sexism had been issues for council staff during the periods investigated. Thusly actions within the plan which may impact council staff are primarily concerned with the ongoing development of an inclusive and collaborative working culture with transparent and supportive working practices. This is encompassed in several of the action plan themes, with specific actions including ongoing work on the organisational development strategy, and EDI action plan, with new dashboards in place to monitor progress against an honest and supportive culture.

Not all equalities characteristics are routinely and consistently disclosed by council staff, making impact in some areas difficult to assess. We anticipate however that the ongoing commitment to EDI and working culture within the action plan would lead to increased reporting in time.

Commissioned services and contractors - neutral impact

Actions within the plan that involve our commissioned services and contractors centre on continuing to improve services and outcomes for our children and young people through review of current working practices and frameworks. We do not therefore anticipate there being any equalities impacts affecting this group.

Would you assess the impact as positive, adverse, neutral? Do you have any uncertainty about the impact of your proposal? Is there a likelihood that some people will more impacted than others? Can you describe the ways in which they will be affected? How might this change affect our 'general duty'?

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Q3a. How do you plan to promote and deliver any positive impacts of the proposal?

Our action plan programme will have a dedicated communications workstream that will promote positive impacts of the action plan to key stakeholders, wider community and the public, with strong consideration for the equality characteristics that have been identified.

Particular consideration will of course be given to communicating with our children looked after and care leavers as the primary cohort affected by the action plan. All actions affecting children looked after and care leavers are held in one workstream led by Children's Services, and we will ensure strong collaborative working between workstreams to ensure all messaging and communication is accessible and appropriate.

Key actions within the plan which support measurement and tracking of positive outcomes include the development of an integrated performance dashboard to monitor progress against organisational development objectives, alongside the commissioning of an independent peer review of organisational culture within Lambeth.

How might the principles of fairness, equality of opportunity and positive relationships be further promoted as a consequence of this proposal? How do you propose to measure your positive outcomes and the benefits outlined to find out if these have been achieved?

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Is there a possibility that you will need to treat certain people differently, to enhance positive outcomes because of greater need; disadvantage; experience of less favourable outcomes, etc.? What opportunities exist to support Lambeth's statutory duty to promote equalities? How does this contribute to your departmental service plan and/or the council's corporate priorities?

Q3b How do you plan to address and mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal?

It is not anticipated there will be any negative equalities impacts as a result of the action plan.

The action plan will be delivered using programme methodology that will undertake impact analyses as needed throughout delivery of the plan, with emphasis on the themes of Voice of the Child, Organisational Culture and Social Work Practice.

The programme management will develop and sequence plans to optimise the positive impacts identified and mitigate or reduce any negative impact should it become apparent.

Dependency management will be undertaken with other related or cross council programmes and projects using the Programme Performance service. By doing this we aim to reduce any potential negative impact of this action plan on others already in progress across the business. As although we do not foresee any negative equalities impact from this action plan in its own right, we must ensure it does not impede other workflows which may be delivering positive impacts in this area.

Risk management will be implemented in accordance with Lambeth's risk management strategy.

The governance of the action plan has been set across four workstreams, each led at Strategic Director level, and with broad representation across all directorates. This will enable strong council wide oversight and early identification of any negative impacts not identified previously.

What impact has this evidence had on what you are proposing? What can you do differently that might lessen the impact on people within the timeframes i.e. development-implementation? Who can help you to develop these solutions?

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What actions can you take to reduce the impacts that you have identified? Are your actions SMART?

Specific, significant, stretching

Measurable, meaningful, motivational

Agreed upon, attainable, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented

Realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented

Time-based, time-bound, timely, tangible, trackable

Who will be responsible for making sure these happen? How can you show you have taken these steps? What evidence can you provide? **Please note** developing mitigating actions is an essential part of the EIA process. These should be comprehensive and clearly align with the issues identified. If there are significant **negative impacts without mitigation it is the responsibility of the decision maker/sponsor** to challenge and request officers go back to the drawing board.

Q4. How will you review/evaluate your proposal, mitigating actions and/or benefits? Who will be responsible for this?

The delivery and oversight of the action plan will have a strong multi-layered governance structure, through both internal measures (with ultimate review at Cabinet) and that commissioned externally, including through the Lambeth Safeguarding Children Partnership via independent scrutiny of social care practice within discreet reviews and evaluations, as well as a commissioned LGA Peer Review on organisational culture.

Outcome metrics and measures will be developed by the programme managers alongside business leads and owners of deliverables will be assigned so that there is accountability and resilience, and to mitigate drift and non-delivery.

The deliverables in the action plan will be quality assured by workstream leads who are all members of the executive management team, with a programme team in place to track deliverables, outputs and outcomes and provide regular monitoring and reporting. Progress of the action plan will report into the IICSA Board chaired by the Chief Executive.

We will use mature feedback mechanisms to measure benefits: surveys, social care audits, supervision, visits, peer reviews.

Who will you be accountable to for the above actions/outcome? How will those responsible know these actions have worked? What performance indicators will you use to demonstrate this? Are there any other forms of evidence you can use to support this assessment of their effectiveness?

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Section to be completed by Sponsor/Director/Head of Service

Outcome of equality impact assessment

- No adverse impact, no change required
- Low adverse impact, minor adjustment required
- Significant adverse impact, further action required
- Significant impact identified unable to mitigate fully
- Unlawful in/direct discrimination, stop and

rethink

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No adverse impact, no change required - No potential for discrimination or negative impact identified opportunities to promote equality addressed

Low adverse impact, minor adjustment needed - Adjustments needed to address negative impact all actions detailed within Q3a

Significant adverse impact, further action required - The analysis has identified some potential for negative impact or some missed opportunities to promote equality which it may not be possible to mitigate fully. If you plan to continue with proposals you will need to be satisfied that your officers have shown due regard and taken all necessary steps (as detailed within Q3a) to remove and/or alleviate any negative impacts (e.g. gathering supplementary data, consultation, specific action taken, etc.) to better promote equality and have included these within any implementation and/or service plans. It may be advisable to seek further advice including legal, where significant impact has been found.

Unlawful in/direct discrimination, stop and rethink - Equality analysis shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. **Do not proceed.**

Comments from Sponsor/Director/Head of Service

Submit for approval

Pending

Executive Approval

Pending

Attachments

Close