

# Diversity impact assessment

Appendix 1

<b>TITLE</b>
Advocacy Service for Parents with Children in or on the Edge of Care
<b>DATE</b>
May 2026
<b>LEAD OFFICER.</b>
John Taylor, Service Manager for Commissioning and Placements
<b>1 Summary description of the proposed change</b>
What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
Following a procurement process at the end of the current Advocacy for Mothers contract the new Advocacy for Parents contract will be awarded to the provider named in Exempt Appendix 1.
<b>2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment</b>
E.g. Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. E.g. Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile
This assessment is based on the contract management and quarterly and annual reporting of the previous service as well as consultation exercises undertaken with service users by the provider

<b>3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?</b>
Is it likely to: Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't <b>(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)</b>

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
<b>Age</b>	No	No	No
<b>Disability</b>	No	No	No
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	No	No	No
<b>Marriage/civil partnership</b>	No	No	No
<b>Pregnancy/maternity</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Race</b>	No	No	No

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Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
<b>Religion/belief</b>	No	No	No
<b>Sex</b>	No	No	No
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	No	No	No
<b>Care experience</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Other (e.g. low income groups)</b>	No	Yes	Yes

#### 4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

The service is focused on parents with children in or on the edge of care. A number of these parents will be care experienced themselves. Following the Families First agenda, the service aims where possible to safely keep children in their family setting. The role of advocates is to provide non-judgemental support to allow vulnerable people to better engage with services that are available to support them. Without the support of advocacy, in many cases these parents would not access this service due to previous negative experience or a lack of trust.

#### 5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

All referrals to this service come via Medway's Children's Services and are triaged by the Family Partnerships co-ordinator. This should ensure equity of opportunity for all families with services allocated based on need.

This approach to using advocacy in this way is quite unique and there are a limited number of providers in the South East who could deliver this service. This is evidenced by only 2 bids were received during the procurement process.

This service has been developed based on the learning from the previous service, evaluated over the last 4 years. It has a demonstrable track record of success supported by positive feedback from service users.

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## 6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Contract Mobilisation Meeting	John Taylor	June/July 2026
Weekly referral triage meetings	Gemma Wilby MDS Team	Weekly from service mobilisation
Quarterly Contract Monitoring Meetings	John Taylor	Quarterly from 1st July 2026

## 7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

The recommendation is to proceed with the award of the Advocacy for Parents with Children in or on the Edge of Care to the provider named in Exempt Appendix 1.

## 8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

**Assistant Director**

**Date of authorisation**