

# Equality Impact Assessment

## Context

1. under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Essex County Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ie have due regard to:
  - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
  - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
  - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
  - age
  - disability
  - gender reassignment
  - marriage/civil partnership
  - pregnancy/maternity
  - race
  - religion/belief
  - gender
  - sexual orientation.
3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy.
6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. The EqIA will be published [online](#):
8. All **Cabinet Member Actions, Chief Officer Actions, Key Decisions** and **Cabinet Reports must be** accompanied by an EqIA.
9. For further information, refer to the EqIA guidance for staff.
10. For advice, contact:  
Shammi Jalota [shammi.jalota@essex.gov.uk](mailto:shammi.jalota@essex.gov.uk)  
Head of Equality and Diversity  
Corporate Law & Assurance  
Tel 0330 134592 or 07740 901114



## Section 1: Identifying details

**Your function, service area and team:** Policy and Strategy

**If you are submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team:** People Commissioning

**Title of policy or decision:** Children and Young People Plan 2016


**Officer completing the EqlA:** Nicola Park, Strategy and Policy Advisor  
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**Date of completing the assessment:** 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016

## Section 2: Policy to be analysed

2.1	<p><b>Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?</b></p> <p>New – this Children and Young People’s Plan (the Plan) replaces the previous iteration which was in place between 2013 and 2016, refreshed in 2015</p>
2.2	<p><b>Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):</b></p> <p>Owned by the Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership, the Children and Young People’s Plan is the key strategic multi-agency document setting out Essex’s ambitions for children and young people and how agencies intend to work together to bring these about.</p> <p><b>What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)?</b></p> <p>Following an extensive period of consultation the Plan sets out five priorities and six outcomes. These reflect what children, young people, parents, carers and practitioners told us was important to them, to their families and for their communities and what their hopes were for their futures. These are:</p> <p><u>Priorities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stable, resilient, safe families</li><li>• Emotionally healthy</li><li>• Physically healthy</li><li>• Involved and connected</li><li>• Positive futures</li></ul> <p><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children and Young People are well looked after and safe with their basic needs being met within resilient families</li><li>• Children and Young People are emotionally healthy and make good decisions</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people are engaged in positive activities and are physically healthy</li> <li>• Children, young people and families positively support each other within their communities</li> <li>• Children and young people achieve in good quality education, training and work opportunities</li> </ul> <p>These outcomes are applicable to <b>all</b> children and young people. It is however acknowledged that different children and young people will achieve these outcomes in different ways. The Plan supports a person centred approach to planning and empowering children, young people and families to control and determine how they will achieve these outcomes and what this will look like for them. The Plan identifies the need for a children's workforce which is appropriately skilled to work in partnership with families to help them achieve this.</p> <p>The Plan is a high level strategic document and therefore sets out the vision around these priorities and outcomes and broadly describes how the Partnership will work together in bringing these about. It establishes six strategic systems objectives via which the Partnership will establish the appropriate conditions to support the achievement of the priorities. The <u>objectives</u> include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Protect the most vulnerable</i> – strengthening safeguarding</li> <li>• <i>Close the gap for the vulnerable</i> – identifying groups experiencing disadvantage and providing interventions to break cycles of poor outcomes</li> <li>• <i>Promote resilience and positive choices</i> – providing people with the information they need to make positive choices about their lives, promoting resilience and reducing dependence on public services</li> <li>• <i>Achieve better from the use of collective resources</i> – maximising on and using collective resources more efficiently to achieve better outcomes</li> <li>• <i>Maximise the use of community assets</i> – developing communities to provide better opportunities for residents to think, act and play together</li> <li>• <i>Develop the system's workforce and culture</i> – ensuring that we have a fit for purpose workforce that is skilled in working with families to identify their strengths and in empowering them to take control of their own futures</li> </ul> <p>The Plan contains a 'system vision' which established a set of core principles which it expects agencies will work by – these contain the commitments to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep and engage children, young people and families at the heart of all we do; and</li> <li>• Be inclusive and non-discriminatory, appreciating and understanding different cultures</li> </ul> <p>Essentially the Plan is a document which has at its heart the promotion of equality, and community cohesion and the closure of gaps in outcomes for different groups; overall the equality impact of this document is intended to be highly positive.</p>
2.3	<p><b>Does or will the policy or decision affect:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>service users</b></li> <li>• <b>employees</b></li> <li>• <b>the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?</b></li> </ul> 

	<p>The Plan is a strategic document whose primary audience is the children's workforce from systems leadership to practitioner level. The Plan provides guidance to the workforce about: the principles they should be working to, how they should be engaging with one another, what they should be seeking to achieve through the work they do and the focus this work should have. Children and families who receive services from these workers or from services which are commissioned by the leaders and managers should see the impact of this in the service that they receive. The focus of the Plan is on the identified most vulnerable groups and they should therefore see/feel the impact of this most significantly.</p> <p><b>Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?</b></p> <p>As above – the Plan should guide organisations in how they deliver their services, it should also provide a framework upon which organisations may approach increased joint working and co-operation with other organisations.</p>
2.4	<p><b>Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?</b></p> <p>As a high level plan the document outlines only in broad terms the types of activity that will be undertaken by agencies to implement the objectives; more detail around this will be developed through delivery plans which will be drawn up at County and locality level following agreement of the document. As such it is not possible to specify at this stage what the likely implications of the Plan will be in terms of changes to resources. Broadly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is intended that activity will be delivered within existing resource envelopes</li> <li>• The Plan encourages more efficient and effective use of existing resources</li> <li>• The Plan encourages agencies to consider how they might better pool or combine resources – for example through sharing buildings, seconding staff, jointly funding projects and initiatives</li> </ul>
2.5	<p><b>Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?</b></p> <p>The Plan is fully aligned to the principles of the Essex Vision 2013-17 and contributes in particular to addressing the challenges outlined in that document of: increasing educational achievement and enhancing skills, improving public health and wellbeing, safeguarding vulnerable people and keeping communities safe and building community resilience.</p> <p>The Children and Young People's Plan is a key enabler of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018 and has particular relevance to the achievement of the priorities under 'Starting and developing well' and 'Living and working well'.</p> <p>The Plan relates to the Council's Corporate Outcomes Framework 2014-2018 and all 7 of the corporate outcomes and associated commissioning strategies.</p> <p>The development of the Plan has included a review the existing suite of multi and single agency plans and strategies which are relevant to this area of activity. The objectives and actions from within these documents have been mapped to ensure an appropriate read across and to avoid duplication.</p>



## Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation<sup>1</sup>

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1

### What does the information tell you about those groups identified?

The Plan affects **all** children, young people and families in Essex. The Plan has been informed through an analysis of the Joint Area Strategic Needs Assessment as well as extensive consultation with practitioners. This activity has helped to identify key under performing groups of young people and key priority areas where Essex is not performing as well as we would like, this has fed through into the selection of objectives.

Essex has a population of 1,393,000, approximately 296,683 (21.1%) being under the age of 18. Whilst a relatively affluent county, there are pockets of high deprivation particularly in the south and north and approximately 14.7% of children are living in poverty. Children and Young People from minority ethnic groups account for 8.5% of all Children and Young People living in the area, compared with 21.5% in the country as a whole. The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language in primary schools is 5.7% (the national average is 18.1%) and in secondary schools is 4.1% (the national average is 13.6%). Key highlighted trends are:

- Child in poverty – decreased (14.70%)
- Young People not in Education, Employment and Training – decreased (4.6%)
- Percentage of children achieving a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage – increased (67.70%)
- Percentage of children achieving level 4+ at GCSE – increased (81%)

Although only a few key statistics have been identified in the Plan, it uses the Essex Joint Area Strategic Needs Assessment as its key supporting document – and this and its associated chapters include a full overview of relevant data and analysis for the population as a whole: [www.essexinsight.org.uk](http://www.essexinsight.org.uk). Data has also been interrogated at a locality level and this has informed the selection of specific priorities for Locality Board Plans.

The groups identified as vulnerable in the Plan, which are intended to be the focus of activity are children and young people:

- In Care or Leaving Care
- With a Child Protection Plan
- With a Child in Need Plan
- Who are Young Offenders
- Living in low income families

<sup>1</sup> Data sources within EEC. Refer to Essex Insight:  
<http://www.essexinsight.org.uk/mainmenu.aspx?cookieCheck=true>  
with links to JSNA and 2011 Census.



- With Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Affected by domestic violence
- With long term health conditions
- At risk of sexual exploitation
- With parents with mental health needs
- At risk of engaging in youth violence
- With parents in prison
- Who are homeless or in temporary housing
- With caring responsibilities
- Not in full time or mainstream education
- Who have migrated to Essex (from within or outside the UK)
- Not in Education, Employment or Training
- Who go missing and/or runaway

The identification of these groups is drawn from numerous sources including local data, national and international research and guidance and consultation with practitioners and families.



3.2

**Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?**

The Plan has been subject to a six week public consultation which resulted in 234 responses. We have also undertaken small group engagement sessions with parents and carers, primary age and older children and practitioners (encompassing approximately 700 stakeholders). Any comments received through this activity have been fed through into the development of the Plan. As the Plan at this stage is very much a vision statement the majority of comments have either been approving of or suggesting amendments or additions to the priorities, outcomes and objectives. Overall there has been a high level of endorsement of these (ranging in the public consultation from 86-100% approval). Practitioners have identified that they believe the Plan will be a useful tool in encouraging agencies to work better together to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable groups, comments in the public consultation included:

- *'It suggests opportunities to liaise closely with other organisations to work together as a wider unit to provide support to children, young people and their families.'*
- *'[It] aspires to support all parents by strengthening communities and providing targeted and early support.'*
- *'[It provides] assurances that when things go wrong provision will be made to support vulnerable families.'*
- *'It is very inclusive.'*

The main more negative comments received in the public consultation feedback requested further clarification in respect of the meaning and intention of the priority originally named in the consultation document 'socially connected' and the objective originally termed 'behaviour change for resilience and positive choices'. Other respondents asked for further detail on how the Plan would be implemented and how this would be managed in the context of reducing financial resources.

Changes have been made to the final Plan to respond to these areas of concern. This has included renaming socially connected to better articulate its meaning (now called 'involved and connected') and changing 'behaviour change' to 'promote resilience and positive choices'; this is intended to highlight the importance of enabling individuals to make their own choices to change their behaviour rather than behaviour change being enforced upon them. Section 8 of the Plan regarding implementation has also been amended to include additional explanation of the process for developing and implementing delivery plans at both County and Locality level. In relation to concerns about the financial context, although the original document did articulate that this was a challenge the foreword of the document has been updated to underline that this is recognised by the Partnership and that the key focus must be on identifying what greater value can be achieved from within existing resources. This issue is further expanded on by the objective about achieving better



	from the use of collective resources.
3.3	<p><b>If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary. Please include any reasonable adjustments, e.g. accessible formats, you will provide as part of the consultation process for disabled people:</b></p> <p>As we are not yet at the stage of developing detailed proposals for implementing or responding to the Plan we have not yet done any more detailed consultation. Appropriate consultative activity will be undertaken to accompany each specific proposal, programme of work etc that is developed to implement the Plan.</p>





## Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age	<p><b>Positive</b> – the Plan seeks to specifically promote the wellbeing of children and young people, to protect them from harm, to establish the conditions to enable them to have positive futures and to increase their opportunities to interact with and be valued members of their communities. This includes all children from pre-birth to 19 or 25 where the young person has Special Educational Needs or Disabilities; the work undertaken with young people is intended to provide strong foundations for their entry to adulthood (thus extending the positive impact across the age ranges).</p> <p>The Plan also seeks to promote community cohesion and the integration of children, young people and their families within their local communities. It additionally supports the increased use of volunteering. It is anticipated that this will result in improved engagement between people of different ages and may assist with the overcoming of any negative perceptions that older residents may have of younger – concerns about anti-social behaviour etc (and vice versa).</p>	H (dependent on specific activities undertaken)



Disability – learning disability	<p><b>Positive</b> – the Plan identifies children and young people with disabilities as a vulnerable group. It therefore prompts agencies to consider the particular needs of this group (amongst others) when responding to the systems objectives; in particular the joint agency activity that could be engaged in to improve outcomes. There are already positive examples of agencies working together to improve outcomes for young people with disabilities under previous versions of the Children and Young People’s Plan (for example work to implement SEND reforms under the Children Act 2014 to jointly recommission the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service). Activity currently being undertaken by the Partnership focuses on developing increasing integration between health and social care services and on improving support for those with health needs in the community.</p> <p>The Plan contains specific priorities for <i>‘emotionally healthy’</i> and <i>‘physically healthy’</i>.</p>	H (dependent on specific activities undertaken)
Disability – mental health	<b>Positive</b> – as above	H – as above
Disability – physical disability	<b>Positive</b> – as above	H – as above
Disability – sensory impairment (visual, hearing and deafblind)	<b>Positive</b> – as above	H – as above



Gender	<b>Neutral</b> – the Plan does not outline any specific initiatives to improve outcomes for specific genders, gender specific considerations are however likely to be identified when selecting activities to implement the Plan – for example activities to respond to ‘ <i>close the gap for the most vulnerable</i> ’ may, for educational outcomes, consider issues related to the under-performance of white ‘working class’ boys; activities under ‘ <i>protect the most vulnerable</i> ’ related to sexual exploitation may consider the different strategies needed to respond to the specific vulnerabilities of boys and girls in this area; activity to improve parenting may consider fathers as a distinct group.	L – at this stage
Gender reassignment	<b>Neutral</b> – this issue is not identified in the Plan.	L
Marriage/civil partnership	<b>Neutral</b> – the Plan promotes children being brought up in safe, stable and resilient families irrespective of the marital status of the parents.	L
Pregnancy/maternity	<b>Positive</b> – the Plan is very much aligned with corporate priorities to ensure that children get the best start in life and many of the suggested activities listed are geared towards improving parenting and support for expectant and new parents within communities.	H (dependent on specific activities undertaken)



Race	<p><b>Neutral</b> – as with gender the Plan does not identify any specific activities or issues in relation to race however it is anticipated that when taking forward specific activities to implement the Plan agencies and Local Boards would consider the needs of different BME groups and whether there were specific activities needed to respond to these. For example, in promoting resilience and community engagement whether there are any specific cultural or language issues which may be preventing different groups from engaging with their local communities or from accessing available support.</p> <p>Families migrating into Essex from outside of the UK are identified by the Plan as a vulnerable group; the particular needs of this group will therefore be considered in activity progressed under the Plan.</p>	L – at this stage
Religion/belief	<p><b>Neutral</b> – this is not identified as a particular issue in the Plan however in engagement activity to develop the Plan the role of religious organisations in supporting the implementation of the Plan and in being part of the ‘children’s workforce’ has been identified – including the potential role of these organisations to reach out to families who may otherwise be hard to reach. The specific role these organisations can play and how they are engaged in local activity will be considered by Local Boards and by the County Board in establishing delivery plans.</p>	L



Sexual orientation	<p><b>Neutral</b> – as with gender and race this is not identified specifically within the Plan however specific issues which may be experienced by LGBT children and young people or parents will be considered in developing delivery plans. For example is there evidence to show that LGBT young people are doing worse at school as a result of potential anxiety over bullying or do LGBT parents feel excluded from becoming engaged in community groups which may be potential sources of support to them?</p>	L
<b>Cross-cutting themes</b>		
<b>Description of impact</b>	<p><b>Nature of impact</b> Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)</p>	<p><b>Extent of impact</b> Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)</p>
Socio-economic	<p><b>Positive</b> – during engagement activity to develop the Plan socio-economic disparities have been identified as key reasons for impeding the opportunity of some children and young people to achieve the same positive outcomes as their peers. Children living in low income families and who are homeless or in temporary accommodation are identified as key vulnerable groups. As such both the County Board and Local Boards will be considering the specific needs of these groups in developing their delivery plans. There is significant diversity across Essex in terms of poverty and other socio-economic factors, the Partnership has four Locality Partnership Boards and this enables the development of localised delivery plans which will respond to a more sophisticated understanding of the particular needs of each local area – for example particular issues experienced by rural and coastal communities.</p> <p>Under the previous version of the Plan Local Boards have already been proactively addressing child poverty and have existing local plans, work groups and programmes of activities; these will likely continue under this iteration.</p>	H (dependent on specific activities undertaken)



<p>Environmental, eg housing, transport links/rural isolation</p>	<p><b>Positive</b> – Issues associated with housing, transport and rural isolation have been frequently identified during engagement activity to develop the Plan as significant issues which contribute to gaps in outcomes between certain groups of children and young people. At a basic level living in poor housing can significantly impact on the safety and health of young people, frequently moving house can impact on their educational achievement and having poor transport links or living in rural areas can result in social isolation of parents and children and young people, impacting on mental health, children’s social development and on their ability to access sources of support. As with socio-economic issues the particular concerns within each locality will be identified by Local Boards in developing their own local delivery plans.</p> <p>The Partnership Board recognises that to some extent these issues are outside of its direct remit however it is committed to working with other partnerships and agencies which may have more direct influence over them, highlighting the significance of the issues. The Partnership is also committed to further strengthening its engagement with district, borough and city councils, who have more direct influence over the housing, and who are already represented on the Partnership Board.</p> <p>The Plan’s strategic objective of ‘maximise the use of community assets’ is directly intended to impact on the quality and use of local environments to ensure that local assets such as parks and green spaces and community buildings are being used to their best advantage to give families opportunities to think, act and play together. This is intended to encourage families who may currently feel isolated (physically or emotionally) to overcome this disadvantage and feel more engaged and safe outside of their home.</p>	
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## Section 5: Conclusion

		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqlA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	No x	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If ' <b>YES</b> ', use the action plan at <b>Section 6</b> to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.



## Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.





## **Section 7: Sign off**

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.  
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service:

Date:

Signature of person completing the EqlA:

Date:

## **Advice**

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqlA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqlA for your records. If this EqlA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.

