

Midlothian



Midlothian Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of Budget Proposals

2016

Name of Budget Saving	Reduction in purchase of external foster care placements
Department and service area	Children's Services
Completion Date	
Lead officer	Joan Tranent

Aims and Objectives

1. Does the proposed budget saving affect people?

Yes ☒

No ☐

2. What is/are the reason(s) for your proposed budget saving?

External Foster placements currently cost Midlothian Council an excessive amount of money every year. Whilst we regularly review each child in placement through our statutory duties, we do not believe in terminating a placement purely on the grounds of finance. Therefore we have projected

costings of how much we can save over the coming years if we commit to not placing any child/ren in an external foster placement from here-on in. We have calculated the savings based on the young person remaining in care until the age of 21 thereby meeting our legal obligation and duty under the Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

3. Impact

Which of the protected characteristics* will the proposed budget saving have an impact upon?

Equality Target Group*	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Relevant evidence/information
Age	By promoting young people to remain in placement until 21 this will offer more opportunities to them post school, thereby giving them security and peace of mind as they transition into adulthood	If the young person chooses not to stay in their foster placement until 21 they can of course return to Midlothian. Experience suggests this often happens when the Young Person is in crisis with no forward planning in place. This can have a detrimental impact upon their future prospects as they transition into adulthood.	
Disability			
Gender Reassignment			
Marriage & Civil Partnership			

Pregnancy and maternity			
Race			
Religion or Belief			
Sex			
Sexual Orientation			

1. How will the implementation of the proposed budget saving be communicated to those affected by any changes?

The current placements shall come to a natural end. With regard to any future placements we shall ensure we do not commit to further external foster placements and this will be supported with our vision and ethos to ensure that we maintain all children and young people within Midlothian

5. How will you monitor the impact of the changes proposed? When is the budget due to be reviewed?

The budget reductions shall commence in 17/18 and we shall monitor and review the reduction in placements on a quarterly basis. In addition we shall ensure that our ongoing fostering recruitment campaign continues to meet the need and demands we require, thus increasing the number of our own Foster Carers within Midlothian.

6. Please use the space below to detail any other matters arising from the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process.

Placing children and young people out-with Midlothian is not conducive to promoting our ethos where we are committed to care for and educate all children and young people within Midlothian. Whilst there are some success stories of positive external fostering placements, there are equally as many placement break downs which often require us to accommodate young people on an emergency basis and return them to Midlothian with little or no preparation or planning. We know from experience that more often than not most young people return to their family environment post 16 years of age with no real sense of belonging and with no future planning in place thereby resulting in them transitioning into adulthood with no further education or work prospects. Maintaining and committing to all children and young people being cared for and educated in Midlothian will result in more positive outcomes for all.

Please send an electronic copy of completed forms to lesley.crozier@midlothian.gov.uk