 Regulatory Policy Committee	Opinion	
Impact Assessment (IA)	Amendments to Children's Homes Regulations 2001	
Lead Department/Agency	Department for Education	
Stage	Final	
IA number	-	
Origin	Domestic	
Expected date of implementation (and SNR number)	April 2014 (SNR 7.)	
Date submitted to RPC	23/10/2013	
RPC Opinion date and reference	04/12/2013	RPC13-DfE-1800(2)
Overall Assessment	GREEN	
<p>RPC comments</p> <p>The IA is fit for purpose. The IA says that it is a regulatory proposal that would impose a net cost to business (an 'IN') with an Equivalent Annual Net Cost to Business of £2.59 million. Based on the information provided this is a reasonable assessment of the likely impacts.</p>		
<p>Background (extracts from IA)</p> <p>What is the problem under consideration? Why is government intervention necessary?</p> <p>There are concerns about the safety of looked after children living in children's homes. Children placed in homes outside their home communities are especially vulnerable, being more likely to run away and placed at risk of sexual exploitation. Information on home quality and safety is often difficult to observe by placing authorities, the responsibilities of providers and hosting and placing authorities is not clear, and relationships between actors in the system are not as close as they could be. Intervention is necessary to protect and improve the welfare of this vulnerable group of society.</p> <p>What are the policy objectives and the intended effects?</p> <p>For an improved system, which provides high quality professional care, providing a proportionate response to the severe needs of children relying on children's homes' support so that they are effectively safeguarded and have access to the full range of services they will need to enable them to reach their potential.</p> <p>The Department's preferred option will require:</p> <p><i>" better practice in the sector so that the most vulnerable children are effectively safeguarded; communication between placing and host authorities and homes will be improved; better documentation about the quality and services offered by homes will be in place; and homes will be equipped with staff with the qualifications and skills to respond to vulnerable children."</i></p>		

Comments on the robustness of the OITO assessment

The IA says that it is a regulatory proposal that would impose a net cost on business (an 'IN') with an Equivalent Annual Net Cost to Business of £2.59 million. This appears to provide a reasonable assessment and is consistent with the current Better Regulation Framework Manual (paragraph 1.9.10).

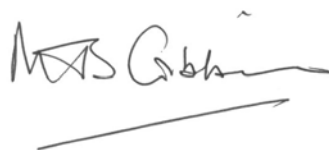
Comments on the robustness of the Small & Micro Business Assessment (SaMBA)

The proposals regulate business but are planned to come into force before 1 April 2014 and therefore the SaMBA is not applicable. However, the IA has provided an assessment of how the proposals will affect 208 micro businesses (paragraphs 63 - 69).

Quality of the analysis and evidence presented in the IA

The IA proposes to improve the provision of high quality care within the Children's Homes system ensuring that the most vulnerable children are effectively safeguarded. The proposals will impose a cost on business as a result of the required improvements. Specifically, these relate to the development of missing persons policies (a one-off cost of £618,000); the undertaking of risk assessments on the area surrounding the home (a cost of £618,000 per annum); providing a detailed statement of purpose (a cost of £500,000 per annum); and ensuring that an independent monitoring visit takes place annually (a cost of £1,887,000 per annum). The IA provides a reasonable analysis of the impacts of these changes and is adequately supported by evidence gathered through consultation.

Signed



Michael Gibbons, Chairman