

25th November 2013**Agenda Item: 12****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR JOINT COMMISSIONING,
QUALITY AND BUSINESS CHANGE****TEAM MANAGER POST IN ADULT CARE FINANCIAL SERVICES****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the extension of a temporary Team Manager post in Adult Care Financial Services for sixteen months from 1 December 2013 until 31 March 2015.

Information and Advice

2. Adult Care Financial Services (ACFS) undertakes a number of key functions relating to payments. These include undertaking financial assessments to determine the amount of contributions service users are required to make; collating income from service users and third parties; making payments to care providers and to people who have a Direct Payment. In addition, ACFS takes on appointeeship and deputyship roles for approximately 800 service users who lack mental capacity and are unable to manage their own finances.
3. The additional Team Manager post was originally established for a three month period with approval from the Corporate Director, Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection. The Adult Social Care and Health Committee then approved an extension of this post on 3 September 2012 for a further nine months, until 30 June 2013. Due to the time taken to recruit to the post however the additional Team Manager was not appointed until December 2012, therefore the 12 months approval expires at the end of November 2013.
4. This additional post was needed as the workload within ACFS had increased following the introduction of the Fairer Contribution to Care policy and Personal Budgets. This necessitated the dual running of two charging policies as some service users had not been transferred on to a Personal Budget. This transition process and the changes in the charging policy had resulted in increased queries and comments from service users and carers. This in turn had generated more complaints. It had been acknowledged by the Team Manager that the information and advice sent out from ACFS needed to be reviewed to provide greater clarity for service users.
5. The additional Team Manager post was established to improve advice and information on charging and it enabled the substantive Team Manager to focus on the development of IT systems to provide electronic solutions to reduce manual processes and duplication.

6. Since this time a range of initiatives have taken place to improve information to the customer, this has included:
- drop in sessions in libraries
 - service users and volunteers have had training to increase their understanding of the social care charging systems and cascaded their knowledge to other service users
 - an advisory group made up of service users and carers meet regularly to suggest better ways for ACFS to communicate
 - links with front line teams have improved, with workers being invited to visit ACFS to learn how to improve their practice to aid the commissioning process
7. The additional Team Manager has also focused on the following:
- electronic file storage
 - more effective work processes in the Direct Payments Team
 - addressing complaints, with assistance from staff and Team Leaders, to ensure a rapid and considered response leading to improved interactions with service users and carers. This has helped to prevent escalation of complaints to such bodies as the Local Government Ombudsman
8. As part of the organisational review of services within the County Council, ACFS delivered £100,000 savings in 2010/11 and in 2011/12 delivered a further £150,000 of savings. In the current structure there are 41 FTE posts and four teams; the Residential Assessments Team, Community Assessments Team, Visiting Team and Customer Finance Team.
9. During the last 12 months ACFS has undergone a Lean + review to support the streamlining of systems and the reduction of manual processes. This will enable further savings and efficiencies of £93,000 in 2014/15 and £121,000 in 2015/16. By March 2015 there will be a new structure reducing down to two teams with a reduction in posts from 41 FTEs to 34 FTEs, subject to the consultation process to commence following approval of Policy Committee on 13 November 2013.
10. There will also be a need for new information and advice to be made available to the public, in relation to the changes proposed for charging and funding in the Care Bill and Welfare Reform Bill. This will require IT and business process developments and training and support for staff responsible for implementing the changes.
11. It is imperative that all these improvements and changes are embedded, whilst at the same time achieving the required savings and efficiencies. In order to facilitate new ways of working, whilst at the same time reducing the number of staff, it is recommended that this additional post is extended until 31 March 2015.

Other Options Considered

12. Consideration has been given to whether the substantive Team Manager could implement the new structure with reduced capacity as well as implementing new ways of working and changes proposed in the Care Bill and Welfare Reform Bill. However, there is considerable risk that the level of work required would not be achieved without the support of an additional Team Manager post.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

13. Retention of the temporary Team Manager post for a further 16 months until March 2015 would enable improved customer care to be embedded in ACFS whilst at the same time implementing a new structure and achieving savings and efficiencies of £214,000.

Statutory and Policy Implications

14. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

15. The additional cost of the Team Manager post is £68,313 for 16 months at Pay Band D, scp 42-47 (£45,476-£51,235). The extension would be funded from existing ICT reserves.

Human Resources Implications

16. This report proposes to extend the following post on a temporary basis until 31 March 2015:
- 1 FTE (37 hours) Team Manager post, Pay Band D, scp 42-47 (£45,476-£51,235). The post is to carry approved car user status.

Implications for Service Users

17. ACFS staff provide information, advice and support to service users and carers on a daily basis. Much of the communication relates to the articulation of complex financial information. There have been significant improvements in the information provided to service users and it is imperative that this continues during a time of significant change in relation to welfare benefits. The extension of the temporary Team Manager post will enable the required changes to be made whilst ensuring that there is minimal disruption to service users and carers.

Ways of Working Implications

18. The ACFS team will be moving to Trent Bridge House in early 2014 and the streamlining of systems will support flexible working.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) It is recommended that the Adult Social Care and Health Committee approve the extension of the temporary Team Manager post, Pay Band D, scp 42-47 (£45,476-£51,235) in Adult Care Financial Services for a period of 16 months from 1 December 2013 until 31 March 2015. The post is to carry approved car user status.

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Constitutional Comments (KK 7/11/13)

19. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee.

Financial Comments (CLK 13/11/13)

20. The financial implications are contained within paragraph 15 of this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Report to the Adult Social Care and Health Committee on 3 September 2012
- Job Description for the post

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

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