

13 February 2013**Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE****PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES TO THE STAFFING STRUCTURE AND
BUDGET FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT AND EQUALITY TEAM****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the implementation of a revised staffing structure for the Achievement and Equality team and revisions to budget proposals in response to a reduction in service income in 2013-14.

Information and Advice**Background – Financial pressures related to removal of grant funding and academy conversions**

2. The Achievement and Equality team (A&E team) sits within the Children, Families and Cultural Services department. The team provide direct support and intervention to Black and Minority Ethnic (including Gypsy, Roma, Traveller) children, young people and their families across the County, with its key functions being to improve educational attainment/achievement and engagement with and access to key services, including education. The team works with schools, colleges, and early years' settings, providing training, advice and guidance and delivering bespoke intervention programmes
3. Currently there are three district teams covering Newark/Bassetlaw, Mansfield/Ashfield, and Broxtowe/Gedling/Rushcliffe each led by a District Manager and comprising 2 full time equivalent (fte) Specialist Teaching Assistants and 3 fte Consultants. In addition, there is a County-wide team led by the Team Manager and comprising 1 fte Traveller Education Welfare Officer and 3 fte Community Link Workers. The Senior Specialist Teaching Assistant divides their time equally between the County-wide team and the Mansfield/Ashfield team. The three District Managers also report directly to the Team Manager.
4. The A&E team is currently funded through the Local Authority Revenue budget (£326,305) and the Dedicated Schools' Grant (DSG) (£783,435, of which £150,000 represents former Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) funding). The number of academy school conversions and associated legislative obligations on local authorities to devolve funding directly to these schools, combined with the termination of EMAG funding by central government, has resulted in a reduction of the team's DSG budget from

2013/14. Based on the current estimation of the rate of academy conversions at 51%, the DSG element of the A&E team's budget will be reduced to £310,383. The DSG element of the team's budget is likely to be further reduced in 2014/15 should more Nottinghamshire primary schools also begin to convert to academy status. It is not currently possible to predict the rate of any such conversions and the consequent budgetary reductions. However, it is reasonable to assume that this element of the current budget is unlikely to remain static in 2014/15. Given the above, the budget gap for 2013/14 is £473,052.

- 5 This continuing financial uncertainty will require the team to review current working practices and the scope of its future remit. Given the anticipated future financial challenges, the current staffing proposals are an interim measure to allow the team to explore a range of options going forward from 2014. These are likely to involve more radical changes, with a full review of job roles; terms and conditions; and different operating models considered, including the possibility of commissioning services from other providers.

Consultation with Staff and Trade Unions

6. Staff were informed of the financial challenge for 2013/14 at a meeting on 26 September 2012. In addition to this team members were formally notified that, due to the scale of the challenge, all posts would appear on the Council-wide Section 188 notice published on 31 October 2012. All team members have been actively encouraged to contribute ideas related to the future design and priorities of service provision. A formal consultation meeting was held on 19 December 2012 at which management presented proposals designed to meet the budget reductions. The meeting was attended by all staff and representatives from three trades unions. Staff were encouraged to respond to management proposals during the formal consultation period that closed on 25 January 2013.

Proposals for Staffing Changes

7. To enable the Achievement and Equality team to achieve the required cost reductions to meet the budget gap of £473,052, the following staffing structure changes are proposed.
 - a reduction in the number of District Manager posts from 3 fte to 2 fte
 - a reduction in the number of Consultant posts from 9 fte to 3 fte
 - a reduction in the number of Specialist Teaching Assistant posts from 5.5 fte to 3.5 fte
 - the deletion of the Senior Specialist Teaching Assistant post
8. The current structure chart is attached at **Appendix 1** and the proposed structure is attached at **Appendix 2**.

Other options considered

9. These proposals have been constructed following an assessment of a range of other options including the current team being disbanded and roles being attached to other team structures within the Council. It is felt that the proposals to keep a team, albeit reduced in size, together at this point will produce the most effective service outcomes.

Reason for recommendations

10. These recommendations are formulated around the need to present a balanced budget for 2013/14

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

12. It is inevitable that the current programme of work will be reduced in line with the resources available in the future. Every effort will be made however to ensure that priority is afforded to those in most need and that direct frontline activity is safeguarded where possible.

Financial Implications

13. There is an identified need for savings of £473,000 in 2013-14. The proposals to introduce the new structure shown in **Appendix 2** will achieve this and enable a balanced budget to be constructed for the next financial year.

Equalities Implications

14. As part of the process of making decisions and changing policy, public authorities are required by law to think about the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics (as defined by equalities legislation) and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.
15. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are a means by which a public authority can assess the potential impact that proposed decisions / changes to policy could have on the community and those with protected characteristics. They may also identify potential ways to reduce any impact that a decision / policy change could have. If it is not possible to reduce the impact, the EIA can explain why. Decision makers must understand the potential implications of their decisions on people with protected characteristics.

16. An EIA has been undertaken and is available as a background paper. Decision makers must give due regard to the implications for protected groups when considering this report.

Crime and Disorder Implications

17. The recommendations take account of the Council's duties to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and to prevent youth offending and re-offending under the Crime and Disorder Act (1998).

Safeguarding of Children Implications

18. These recommendations will ensure that the most vulnerable Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) children, young people and their families continue to receive the current levels of support provided by the team as key frontline posts have been maintained. The team will continue to undertake work with schools/settings and across the Children, Families and Cultural Services department in relation to prejudice-related bullying. There will also be continued collaboration with partners such as the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator, Community Safety team, Children Missing Education Officer, Elective Home Education team, the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board, and Children's Social Care on a range of specific issues which relate particularly to BME communities.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the Committee approves the proposed changes to the Achievement and Equalities team structure and the budget for 2013-14.

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Constitutional Comments (NAB 1.2.13)

19. The Early Years and Young People's Sub-Committee has authority to approve the recommendations set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (KLA 01/02/13)

20. The financial implications are set out in paragraphs 7, 8, & 13, and in the appendices attached.

Background Papers

Equality Impact Assessment.

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.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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