

19 December 2016

Agenda Item: 08

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE

CHANGES TO THE STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN THE FAMILY SERVICE

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval for changes to the staffing establishment of the Family Service in light of ongoing operational pressures.

Information and Advice

2. The Family Service delivers elements of the Council's Early Help offer and supports the delivery of Children's Social Care functions. As part of the service offer the service manages access to 257 units of accommodation and support available throughout Nottinghamshire for vulnerable young people. The service can be accessed by Looked After Children moving on from, or as an alternative to, residential settings or foster placements, 16-17 year olds that present as homeless or are vulnerably housed and Care Leavers up until their 21st birthday. The service provides emergency accommodation for those young people presenting in housing crisis.
3. Since the commencement of the Family Service in November 2015 there has been close monitoring of the workload of the Team Manager who is tasked with assessing referrals and negotiating with providers over their placement and ongoing support needs. It has been necessary over the last six months to procure significant amounts of agency worker time to deal with the volume of work and a projection of future need does not show this reducing. There has also been an evaluation of the type of posts required to fulfil this function and it has been agreed that a lower graded Senior Professional Practitioner can appropriately fulfil the role including decisions regarding the safeguarding of children.
4. Committee is therefore asked to consider:
 - disestablishing the 1 full time equivalent (fte) post of Homelessness Operational Manager (Team Manager, Hay Band D) from 31 March 2017
 - establishing 2 fte posts of Senior Professional Practitioner (Hay Band C) from 1 April 2017 fixed term until 31 March 2020.

A structure chart showing the proposed changes is attached as **Appendix 1**.

5. The maximum cost of the 2 fte Senior Professional Practitioner posts would be £96,000 per annum inclusive of all on-costs. This additional cost is manageable without a significant risk of overspend, and will enable the provision of a safe service for children.

6. The Family Service also contains the Council's Youth Offending Team functions. A report was brought to Committee in July to alter the staffing establishment in the service in line with the financial constraints in future years. A further assessment of staffing need has concluded that it would be preferable to have a slightly higher availability of qualified staff in order to meet the needs of the Courts in terms of report writing. Committee is therefore asked to consider:
- disestablishing a 0.4 fte post of Youth Justice Service Officer (Scale 5) from 31 March 2017
 - establishing a 0.2 fte post of Youth Justice Case Manager (Hay Band A/B) from 1 April 2017.

Structure charts showing the current and proposed structures are included as **Appendices 2 and 3**.

7. This change will create a saving of £3,000 which will be used to contribute to budget pressures within the service.

Other Options Considered

8. A range of staffing options have been considered taking into account the responsibilities and accountabilities of these roles. It has been concluded that two Senior Professional Practitioners give the required staffing resource to safely undertake the homelessness role. A further review of youth justice staffing has prompted minor alterations to the structure.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

9. The recommendation supports the delivery of the Youth Homelessness Plan for Nottinghamshire and ensures that vulnerable young people with an immediate housing need can be supported swiftly and with due regard to their safety and protection. The change to Youth Justice staffing supports timely delivery to the Courts in line with statutory duties.

Statutory and Policy Implications

10. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, 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.

Implications for Service Users

11. Implications for service users have been fully assessed and the staffing proposals will ensure their needs are fully met.

Human Resources Implications

12. There are no immediate staffing implications as a result of this change. Recruitment to the posts will be through the Council's normal Human Resource procedures.

Financial Implications

13. The ongoing use of agency staff in order to meet and safely manage the homelessness workload does not provide good value for money and so it is necessary to establish posts at this stage. The net change to staffing costs will be £41,000 per annum which will be met from within the service's existing budget allocation.
14. This change to Youth Justice staffing will create a saving of £3,000 which will be used to deal with budget pressures within the service.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That the changes to the staffing establishment of the Family Service, as detailed in paragraphs 4 and 6 of the report, be approved.

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Constitutional Comments (LM 25/11/16)

15. The recommendations in the report fall within the Terms of Reference of the Children and Young People's Committee.

Financial Comments (CDS 25 /11/16)

16. The financial implications of the report are set out in paragraphs 13 and 14 above.

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.

Changes to the staffing establishment in the Family Service – report to Children and Young People's Services on 18 July 2016.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0900