

2nd November 2020

Agenda Item: 11

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL WORK

CHANGES TO THE STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN THE SERVICE IMPROVEMENT GROUP

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to disestablish a 1 FTE temporary Public Health and Commissioning Manager (Hay Band D) post and to establish the following temporary (one year fixed term) posts within the Service Improvement Group:
 - 1 FTE Project Manager (Hay Band D - subject to job evaluation)
 - 1 FTE Programme Officer (Hay Band B – subject to job evaluation)
 - 1 FTE Social Work Practice Consultant - Workforce Development (Hay Band C).

Information

Support for Improvement Activity

2. The Service Improvement Group within Children and Families leads on the implementation of activity to improve the quality of social work practice in Nottinghamshire, enabling improved outcomes, financial efficiencies and supporting the response to areas for improvement identified by the regulator, Ofsted. Implementation of the Department's strengths-based practice model is a key priority for the group, coupled with implementing a range of initiatives to improve the recruitment and retention of experienced child protection social workers.
3. It has been identified that additional staffing capacity is required in order to facilitate the required improvements. Currently, the Group contains 1 FTE Public Health and Commissioning Manager (Hay Band D) post which was transferred across from Public Health in April 2020. The responsibility of this postholder was to manage the You Know Your Mind project aimed at improving the mental health outcomes for looked after and care experienced young people. This project activity has now moved into business as usual within the looked after and leaving care service, and the focus of the role has shifted primarily to reviewing the department's approach to kinship care (children being looked after by friends or extended family members), which was a key area for improvement

identified by Ofsted, and is an area of significant national policy focus. It is proposed that this post is disestablished and 1 FTE Project Manager (Hay Band D – subject to job evaluation) post is established, recognising the change in responsibilities.

4. The kinship project is currently being supported by a graduate management trainee who is allocated to the project until December 2020. It is recognised that there is a significant amount of project activity that will extend beyond this timeframe, and as such it is recommended that 1 FTE Programme Officer (Hay Band B – subject to job evaluation) post is established to support this work on an ongoing basis.
5. Establishing these two project posts will provide additional capacity within the department to enable it to respond to changing improvement priorities as they emerge. The posts are proposed to be established on a temporary basis for an initial period of one year, recognising that the Council is embarking on a review of the organisational structure for supporting Transformation and Change, which will in time have implications for both the corporate and departmental structures in support of transformation, change and service improvement.

National Assessment and Accreditation of Social Workers

6. Nottinghamshire is part of a national programme to develop the knowledge and skills of child and family practitioners (social workers) and supervisors (managers) so that they can become validated through the national assessment and accreditation of social workers (NAAS) programme. The programme involves the Local Authority endorsing the knowledge and skills of staff, who are then able to complete an assessment with the aim of becoming accredited. The Authority currently has 16 members of staff who have completed the assessment, with 23 people waiting for assessment centres to reopen; they were put on hold in April 2020 due to Covid 19.
7. The Authority received a grant of £280,000 to increase continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for social workers and managers, and to embed the skills and competencies required by the NAAS within processes such as career progression, supervision and employee development and performance reviews (EPDRs). This resource has so far funded access to additional resources for social workers such as Community Care Inform, a bespoke set of online resources targeted at areas of practice the Authority has identified as areas of improvement.
8. It has now been determined that one additional FTE Social Work Practice Consultant (Hay Band C) post specialising in workforce development is required to align the current CPD offer for social workers and managers with the requirements of the NAAS and the development of the strengths-based practice model. It is anticipated that the postholder will work closely with the Children's Workforce Development Manager, the Principal Child and Family Social Worker and the Workforce and Organisational Development team to ensure that the offer and approach to CPD is aligned with the Council's People strategy. It is proposed that the post is established on a fixed term basis for one year.

Other Options Considered

9. The alternative option is no change, however, this would result in insufficient capacity to drive forward the improvements required by Ofsted.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. Additional capacity is required to ensure improvements in practice are achieved through improvements in the recruitment and retention of social workers, and through focused project activity aimed at improving the consistency and quality of social work practice.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance 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, smarter working, sustainability and the environment 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

12. The total cost of these posts in a full year is £161,857 plus £3,600 one-off set-up costs. £103,859 will be met from the Divisional Improvements budget and £61,598 from DfE NAAS Grant monies specifically for this purpose.

Human Resources Implications

13. Recruitment to the proposed posts will be subject to the Council's usual enabling and recruitment processes.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Committee:

- 1) approves the disestablishment of 1 FTE temporary Public Health and Commissioning Manager (Hay Band D) post
- 2) approves the temporary establishment (one year fixed term) of the following posts within the Service Improvement Group:
 - 1 FTE Project Manager (Hay Band D - subject to job evaluation)
 - 1 FTE Programme Officer (Hay Band B – subject to job evaluation)
 - 1 FTE Social Work Practice Consultant - Workforce Development (Hay Band C).

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Constitutional Comments (KK 16/10/20)

14. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee.

Financial Comments (SAS 21/10/20)

15. The total cost of these posts in a full year is £161,857 plus £3,600 one-off set-up costs. £103,859 will be met from the Service Improvements budget of £411,635 and £61,598 from DfE NAAS Grant monies.

HR Comments (BC 30/9/20)

16. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. New posts that have been established will be subject to the agreed job evaluation and recruitment processes.

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.

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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