

**14<sup>th</sup> January 2019****Agenda Item: 8****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, LEARNING AND  
SKILLS****TEMPORARY CHANGES TO THE STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN THE  
VIRTUAL SCHOOL TEAM****Purpose of the Report**

1. The report seeks approval to establish an additional temporary 1 full-time equivalent (fte) Achievement Officer (Hay Band A) post in the Virtual School team, in order to provide sufficient resources to successfully deliver the extended statutory requirements related to Children Previously in Care.

**Information**

2. The *Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children (February 2018)* guidance has placed extended duties on local authorities for the provision of advice and guidance with regard to Children Previously in Care (CPiC). Whilst these are lesser duties than apply regarding Children in Care, they nonetheless draw down on the existing capacity of the Virtual School team.
3. In the light of these extended statutory responsibilities, the Local Authority has been provided with non-recurrent additional grant funding for two years.

**Actions Taken**

4. The Virtual School has been through a process to generate an associate list of independent providers from which it could allocate the work arising from these extended statutory duties. However, no interest was generated.
5. The intention is to use the grant funding to generate resources which could satisfy the statutory requirement to provide advice and guidance with regard to Children Previously in Care, to the parents of these children, to schools, and to professional colleagues. A system of access to telephone consultation during working hours would operate over the period of the grant funding with a view to incorporating this service into the ordinary practice of the Virtual School team thereafter.
6. Collaborative work with professional colleagues in the Support After Adoption Team has begun to ensure a coordinated approach to the provision of advice and guidance, including through the establishment of a shared platform to access resources.

7. In the absence of access to associate capacity, the recommendation is to establish an additional 1 fte Achievement Officer post (Hay Band A; £37,554 including on-costs) to join the existing team of 4 Achievement Officers who form part of the Virtual School team. The terms and conditions for this additional fixed term post would be the same as for the existing Achievement Officers.

### **Other Options Considered**

8. No other options have been considered at this time.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

9. To ensure the Council is able to meet its statutory duty in respect of Children Previously in Care.
10. To support continued development of the Virtual School's service to ensure good outcomes for children and young people in care and previously in care.

### **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 cost associated with this additional post is £37,554 per annum plus running costs of approximately £1,100 to cover ICT equipment etc. and will be paid for from the Department for Education grant which is £43,728 for 2018-19. A further amount is to be received for 2019-20 and the funding allocation will be notified in February 2019. It is assumed that this will be sufficient to fund the post for the second year.

### **Human Resources Implications**

13. The suggested additional staffing is proportionate to the additional statutory requirements and the need to establish processes and resources which will enable these duties to be carried out by the Virtual School team when the grant funding ends.
14. Recruitment to this proposed post will be subject to the Council's usual recruitment processes.

### **Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications**

15. Safe recruitment policy and procedure will be followed and new staff will be subject to the Council's usual safeguarding training and induction processes.

## **Implications for Service Users**

16. Parents, schools and professional colleagues with responsibilities for the education of Children Previously in Care will have timely access to advice and guidance.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the establishment of an additional 1 fte Achievement Officer (Hay Band A) post in the Virtual School team, on a two-year fixed term basis from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019, be approved, in order to provide sufficient resources to successfully deliver the extended statutory requirements related to Children Previously in Care.

**Marion Clay**

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## **Constitutional Comments (KK 12/12/18)**

17. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee.

## **Financial Comments (SAS 19/12/18)**

18. The financial implications of the report are contained within paragraph 12.

## **HR Comments (BC 11/12/18)**

19. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. The post will be recruited to in line with the agreed vacancy control and recruitment procedures.

## **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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