

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 11

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, TRANSFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENT

WHOLE FAMILY SAFEGUARDING PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress made in the Whole Family Safeguarding Programme.
2. The report also seeks approval of the following:
 - a) to extend the social work apprenticeship programme by establishing the following posts:
 - 10 FTE Social Work Apprentices (Hay Band A)
 - b) to establish a multi-disciplinary safeguarding team in Newark and Sherwood
 - c) to develop an edge of care team for vulnerable adolescents by establishing the following posts:
 - 0.5 FTE Team Manager (Hay Band D)
 - 2 FTE Parent & Family Workers (NJE Grade 5)
 - 3 FTE Youth Workers (JNC Qualified point 20-23)
 - d) to develop a kinship support service by establishing the following posts:
 - 1 FTE Team Manager (Hay Band D)
 - 2 FTE Social Workers (Hay Band B)
 - 1 FTE Kinship Practitioner (NJE Grade 5)
 - 0.5 FTE Social Work Support Officer
 - e) to transfer the following posts from the Transformation and Change team to the Service Improvement Group:
 - 2 FTE Project Managers

- 3 FTE Project Officers.

Information

3. In December 2021 a report was brought to Children & Young People's Committee to describe the Whole Family Safeguarding programme vision, key aims, expected benefits, and resource requirements to support the delivery of the programme. To recap, the broad aims of the programme are to achieve the following:
 - children will experience stability and consistent relationships, to enable them to feel safe and to thrive
 - families will be provided help and support from a range of professionals in integrated teams that meet parental needs as well as children's, so that more children and young people can live safely at home and in their communities
 - friends and family and foster carers will experience better training and support so that more children who are in the care of the Local Authority will experience living in homes that are family-based and local
 - teenagers and their families will receive more tailored support that recognises the risks young people may experience from outside of the family home, so that more young people are able to stay living in their community
 - those young people that do need residential care will live locally and receive care and support that effectively meets their diverse needs as individuals
 - having practitioners with different skills and expertise in teams working in a strengths-based way will enable a refocussing of the role of social workers and improve the quality of holistic support provided to families.
4. This report describes the progress that has been made since December in developing a range of proposals to enable these outcomes to be achieved, and thus seeks approval to establish a range of design sites to trial new ways of working to better support vulnerable children and families.

Stable Workforce

Social Work Apprenticeship Expansion Programme

5. In November 2020, Children and Young People's Committee approved the introduction of a three-year apprenticeship programme for child and family social workers. This recognised that apprenticeships offer the opportunity for people who often have extensive experience of working with vulnerable children and who have roots in Nottinghamshire, to develop a career in social work. The first cohort of four apprentices started in January 2021 and are progressing well, in placements within frontline child protection teams.
6. It is now proposed that the scheme is expanded to establish two further cohorts of apprentices, with five starting in September, and a further five the following year. This would therefore establish a rolling apprenticeship programme which upon qualification would lead to an increase in the number of qualified social workers who will graduate each year, to support with succession planning and recruitment. Training costs for the apprenticeships will be met through the apprenticeship levy. This scheme would form part

of the Skills Development and Employment Opportunities Strategy, approved by December's Personnel Committee.

7. As with the current programme, each Social Work Apprentice will replace an agency Social Work Assistant to develop a more sustainable operating model. In the longer-term agency Social Workers will be replaced by the newly-qualified Social Workers exiting the apprenticeship programme.
8. In order to deliver this sustainable model five apprentices will be recruited in 2022/23, with a further five recruited in 2023/24. The three-year apprenticeships will provide qualified Social Workers from 2025/26 onwards.

Posts to be established:

Year	Post	Grade/Band	Cost including running expenses	FTE	Total cost
2022/23	Social Work Apprentice	Hay Band A	£39,079	5	£195,396
2023/24	Social Work Apprentice	Hay Band A	£39,079	5	£195,396
					£390,790

Strengths-based Practice

Older Adolescents on the Edge of Care

9. 37% of all children becoming looked after in 2020/21 were aged between 14 and 17 compared with 24% in 2018/19. For some of these young people, coming into care has been an unsuccessful very high-cost option. Characteristics of the adolescents for whom care was not successful include:
 - involvement in crime
 - involvement in gangs
 - adolescents who were previously regularly missing from home
 - beyond parental control - involved in risk-taking behaviour
 - isolated from their peer group
 - not in school, college, training, or employment.
10. For many of this group of adolescents, patterns of risk-taking behaviour, missing episodes, involvement in crime and gangs continue and sometimes worsen while in care. Some adolescents have never accepted care as an option and remained in the community. For these adolescents there is the opportunity for an alternative strength-based approach.
11. In order to better meet these young people's needs, it is proposed to establish a dedicated and responsive multi-disciplinary team to work intensively with these young people, by developing creative support options that build on a young person's strengths and address risks, whilst also providing intensive support to the young person's parents/carers. There is research evidence from a number of local authorities that demonstrates that such an approach both improves young people's outcomes but also reduces the need to come into

care. Modelling indicates that by reducing the need for 12 to 16 young people to come into care, financial costs of between £1.5m and £1.8m would be avoided by 2025/26.

12. It is proposed that the following posts are established to form the edge of care team:

Post	Grade/Band	Cost	FTE	Total cost
Team Manager	Hay Band D	£55,217	0.5	£27,609
Youth Worker	JNC Qualified point 20-23	£41,594	3	£124,781
Parent and Family Worker	NJE Grade 5	£32,835	2	£65,670
				£218,060

13. It is also proposed that there is a family/activity budget of £1,000 per young person, totalling £18,000 and running expenses budget of £10,940. Therefore a total cost of £247,000.
14. The impact of the design site will be evaluated using the What Works Centre for Children’s Social Care “Practice in Need of Emerging Evidence” approach. Learning from the design site will inform the ongoing development of the approach.

Multi-disciplinary Safeguarding Teams

15. The second design site proposed to be established is the implementation of a multi-disciplinary team approach to supporting children in need of help and protection. The approach is drawn from the national Family Safeguarding model introduced by Hertfordshire County Council, and involves professionals from adult substance misuse, domestic abuse, and adult mental health working together with children’s social workers, to provide holistic support to children and young people at risk of harm in the family home.
16. The new model will be based on the following commitments. There will be:
- a person-centred approach which will be guided by the voice of the child
 - a shared vision and plan for working with children and families
 - equal recognition and respect of everyone’s role
 - retention of specialist roles, knowledge and skills
 - information sharing between agencies
 - a model of group supervision.
17. Other local authorities who have successfully implemented a similar model have seen benefits in terms of:
- improved engagement of families
 - improved morale of staff
 - reduction in Child Protection Plans
 - reduction in children coming to care
 - cost avoidance.
18. A design site will be set up as a proof of concept for the approach, and this will be located in Newark and Sherwood district, in the Newark District Child Protection Team, with a

planned go live date of April 2022. Following the evaluation of the design site, recommendations will be developed for a phased roll out of the approach across the County.

19. The new approach can be delivered within existing staffing resources.

Kinship Support Service

20. A key ambition of the Whole Family Safeguarding programme is to ensure that children and young people who need to be looked after should live in a family home wherever possible, ideally within their wider family group or by a close family friend. This is sometimes referred to as kinship care. Whilst some kinship carers in Nottinghamshire receive excellent quality support, this is not consistently the case, with prospective adopters and foster carers currently able to access a greater level of support. The proposal therefore is to develop a Kinship Support Service which will provide tailored assessments, training and support to kinship families, enabling the Local Authority to better meet statutory obligations around special guardianship orders.

21. This approach will:

- improve the assessment, oversight and support for children in care placed with family members
- ensure that sufficient support is available to kinship carers (pre- & post-order), comparable to that currently offered to foster carers & adopters, and in line with the 2005 Special Guardianship Regulations
- support more people to become kinship carers, including foster carers with existing long-term placements and Family & Friends foster carers.

22. It is therefore proposed that the following structure is established:

Post	Grade/Band	Cost	Current FTE	Revised FTE	New posts	Total cost
Team Manager	Hay Band D	£60,018	0	1	1	£60,018
Social Worker	Hay Band B	£49,179	0	2	2	£98,358
Kinship Practitioner	NJE Grade 5	£35,691	1	2	1	£35,691
Financial Responsibility Worker ¹	NJE Grade 5	£35,691	2.5	2.5	0	£0
Social Work Support Officer	NJE Grade 4	£30,284	0	0.5	0.5	£15,142
						£209,209

23. This approach has the potential to avoid cost through the reduction in numbers of children being placed in external foster care or residential care, modelled at £2.6m over the period to 2025/26.

¹ 2.5 existing FRW posts will be transferred from the Family Service

Service improvement resource in the Children & Families Department

24. A report was taken to the Improvement & Change Sub-Committee in March 2021 which set out the ambition for project professionals to be allocated directly to departments, in order that core service improvement could continue to be delivered alongside the corporate-led cross-cutting programmes such as a Whole Family Safeguarding.
25. The agreed allocation was for two Project Managers and three Project Officers to support departmental service improvement priorities. To date, there has been insufficient capacity within the Transformation and Change Group to fulfil the commitment for there to be service improvement capacity available to the department to support improvement activity such as the implementation of the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy. Given that the policy landscape around children's services is developing at pace, with the implications of the levelling up agenda, alongside the forthcoming publications of the national reviews of children's social care and support for special educational needs and disabilities, it is necessary to ensure that the department has the capacity to be responsive to such changes. As such it is proposed that these five posts are transferred from the Transformation and Change Group to the Service Improvement Group.
26. Posts to be established:

Post	Grade/Band	Cost	FTE	Total cost
Project Manager	Hay Band C	£52,591	2	£105,182
Project Officer	Hay Band A	£40,212	3	£120,636
				£225,818

Other Options Considered

27. No other options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

28. To enable the Council to drive forward the Whole Family Safeguarding Programme at pace whilst continuing to deliver core service improvement activity in the Children and Families department.

Statutory and Policy Implications

29. 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

30. The total cost of the Social Work Apprentices, edge of care team, multi-disciplinary team and kinship support service is £846,999. This will be contained within the 2022/23 Youth, Families and Social Work budget of £51.845m

31. Funding for the service improvement posts totalling £225,818 will met by the Strategic Development Fund in 2022/23.

Human Resources Implications

32. Posts to be established are listed in **paragraph 2**, and the detail of the posts is contained within the body of the report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Committee:

- 1) approves the extension of the social work apprenticeship programme by establishing the following posts:
 - 10 FTE Social Work Apprentices (Hay Band A)
- 2) approves the establishment of a multi-disciplinary safeguarding team in Newark and Sherwood
- 3) approves the development of an edge of care team for vulnerable adolescents by establishing the following posts:
 - 0.5 FTE Team Manager (Hay Band D)
 - 2 FTE Parent & Family Workers (NJE Grade 5)
 - 3 FTE Youth Workers (JNC Qualified point 20-23)
- 4) approves the development of a kinship support service by establishing the following posts:
 - 1 FTE Team Manager (Hay Band D)
 - 2 FTE Social Workers (Hay Band B)
 - 1 FTE Kinship Practitioner (NJE Grade 5)
 - 0.5 FTE Social Work Support Officer (NJE grade 4)
- 5) approves the transfer of the following posts from the Transformation and Change team to the Service Improvement Group:
 - 2 FTE Project Managers (Hay Band C)
 - 3 FTE Project Officers (Hay Band A).

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Service Director, Transformation & Improvement

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (LW 15/02/22)

33. Children and Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (LCD 17/02/22)

34. The total cost of the Social Work Apprentices, edge of care team, multi-disciplinary team and kinship support service is £846,999. This will be contained within the 2022/23 Youth, Families and Social Work budget of £51.845m.
35. Funding for the service improvement posts totalling £225,818 will met by the Strategic Development Fund in 2022/23.

HR Comments (BC 23/02/22)

36. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. Posts will be appointed to in line with the agreed employment 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.

[Delivering the Whole Family Safeguarding Programme – report to Children & Young People's Committee on 13th December 2021](#)

[Changes to the staffing establishment in Children's Social Care to establish a Social Work Apprenticeship Programme – report to Children & Young People's Committee on 30th November 2020](#)

[Nottinghamshire County Council Skills Development and Employment Opportunities Strategy – report to Personnel Committee on 15th December 2021](#)

[Transformation and Change, and Performance, Intelligence & Policy Teams restructure – report to Improvement and Change Sub-Committee on 22nd March 2021](#)

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1554