

**18 June 2012****Agenda Item: 10****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE****CHANGES TO THE STAFFING STRUCTURE OF THE CHILDREN'S SOCIAL  
CARE SERVICE****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the proposed changes to the staffing structure of the Children's Social Care Service.

**Information and Advice**

2. Over the last 18 months Children's Social Care has been working hard to improve the service it provides to the most vulnerable children and families in Nottinghamshire, by better understanding our performance management information, listening to our front line staff and increasing our capacity.
3. A new organisational structure has been proposed to ensure that we have the right numbers of staff in the right places working flexibly, and that all our front line staff receive the supervision and support they need to work effectively with vulnerable children, young people and families.
4. The new staffing structure proposed supports the new operating model for Children's Social Care which was endorsed by the Council's Cabinet in January 2012. The new staffing structure will be supported by a workforce development strategy that incorporates a development programme for first line managers, and a revised key performance indicator set in line with the Children's Safeguarding Performance Information set which has recently been out to consultation by the Department for Education (DfE).
5. The new organisational structure also supports the Munro Review of Child Protection recommendations that staff within children's social care are enabled to better use their professional judgement and encourages decision making as close to the front line as possible, supporting professional practice.
6. Proposals for the new staffing structures in Children's Social Care were published in February 2012, with a consultation period running to the end of March – a total period of just over 6 weeks.
7. To support staff in making a contribution to the consultation a dedicated intranet site was created and publicised with staff as the source of background information to the

proposals, the proposed structure charts and options for making a consultation submission.

8. During the period of the consultation, a total of 21 submissions were received through the intranet web form. In addition, submissions were received on behalf of the team of Advanced Social Work Practitioners and a formal response was received jointly from Unison and the GMB.
9. Within the context of the transformation programme, the Service Director for Children's Social Care has met with the Trade Unions on 11 August 2011, 26 September 2011, 3 November 2011, 12 December 2011, 7 March 2012 and 18 April 2012. Following discussions on 7 March it was agreed that the consultation period would be extended to the end of March 2012, and a series of regular meetings are now planned in advance which will further inform the decision making process.
10. Three events were also held in February 2012 with around 250 members of staff and managers taking up the invitation to attend, which was also extended to the Trade Unions. The events were structured around a presentation from the Service Director, and a structured group exercise to identify the positive and negative aspects of the proposals for children and families, any concerns from a staff perspective and any possible omissions from the proposals.
11. Feedback from the events was generally positive about the proposals and none of the submissions received during the consultation fundamentally affect the proposed arrangement of services.

### **Proposed staffing structure for the Children's Social Care service**

12. The proposed new staffing structure for Children's Social Care is attached as **Appendix A**.
13. Corporate Leadership Team agreed in February to a temporary exemption from the County Council's organisational design principles, as part of the transition to the new operating model. This was against the context of the continued high demands on the service, the rising numbers of children in care and the stabilisation of performance in relation to safeguarding, which resulted in the removal of the DfE Improvement Notice.
14. In addition to this, there are continuing challenges in the recruitment and retention of first line managers. A workforce development programme tailored for this cohort of staff is being developed under the auspices of the Council's Leadership and Development Programme, which should improve both the retention and performance of this group of managers, and lead to better support and supervision to frontline social workers. To reflect the significant increase in front line staff which has taken place over the last two years, sufficient capacity is being created in the Children's Services Manager layer (an additional 1.5 fte) to maintain a safe service during the transition to the new operating model. Within the Through Care Service this capacity will ensure accountability for children entering and exiting the care system.
15. The proposed staffing structure will be implemented in a phased approach during 2012-2013 and will be reviewed during the following year 2013-2014.

16. The changes to the arrangement of service areas are as follows:

### **Social Work Services**

17. The proposed changes to the structure of social work services are to support our principles around the management of entry to, and exit from, the children's social care system. There are no changes to the existing establishment of team managers or social workers, with their number being re-distributed across the new arrangement of services.
18. The development of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will be the front door for children's social care, replacing the 'reception' element of our current model of Reception and Assessment Services North and South. The social work establishment within MASH will be four team managers and eight social workers. The full organisational structure for the MASH will be the subject of a separate report to Committee prior to the implementation of this element of the service, which is expected to take place in November 2012. Line management of the existing Emergency Duty Team will transfer from the Children's Services Manager (Placements, Panels and EDT) to the Children's Service Manager.
19. District teams will deal with child protection, assessment and care planning, with an establishment of 29.5 fte team managers and 155 fte social workers in teams covering Ashfield, Mansfield, Newark & Bassetlaw and Broxtowe, Gedling & Rushcliffe. The line management of the Mansfield District Child Protection Team will be located in Social Work Services South to give an even balance of responsibility and resources between the Group Managers for Social Work Services North and South.
20. A Through Care Service will provide a clear focus on permanence for children in the care system, ensuring they are not left to drift. The team structure within the service will include a Permanence (adoption) team, a Looked After Children (permanent fostering) team, a Leaving Care team and a Court Work team. The Leaving Care team is a change in nomenclature for the existing Aftercare service.
21. In order to provide sufficient management capacity to support the transition to the new structure, and in recognition of the increase in the overall establishment of the division (by 26 Social Workers, 5 Team Managers, 11 Advanced Social Work Practitioners, 7 Locality Support Workers, 2 Independent Reviewing Officers and 2 Child Protection Co-ordinators in the last two years) it is proposed that a 2 year temporary Service Manager post is created within social work services. This post would support the creation of the new Through Care service.

### **Children's Disability Service**

22. All aspects of social work for disabled children, occupational therapy, short breaks, sitting and befriending and our residential facilities for disabled children and young people have already been aligned within the integrated Children's Disability Service by delegated decision CF/2012/00008.
23. The proposed structure moves line management of the Occupational Therapy (OT) Team from the Children's Services Manager (Regulated Services Provision) to the Children's Service Manager (Children's Disability Service). This places operational management of

both frontline social work and OT teams under one Children's Service Manager, ensuring joined up decision making, accountability and service delivery to families. The proposed structure also increases management capacity of the Occupational Therapy Team Managers from 1 fte to 2 fte in recognition of the increased demand placed upon OT services, the increase in the number of staff (an additional 3 Occupational Therapists and 2 Occupational Therapy Assistants were established in 2011) and introduces more equitable distribution of direct reports for managers. This increase can be funded through existing budgets in the Children's Disability Service.

24. The Children's Service Manager (Strategic Lead for Personalisation) will increase from 0.5 fte to 1.0 fte, the additional 0.5 fte being funded from the Early Years and Early Intervention budget. This joint post will focus on developing services across levels 2-4 for children with disabilities as part of the Council's response to the personalisation agenda.
25. In keeping with this dedicated approach to children with disability and their families, it is proposed within the structure that the Disabled Children's Access to Childcare (DCatch) provision move from the present matrix managed and cross funded arrangement between Social Care, SEND and Early Years, to one service structure, under the line management of the jointly created Children's Service Manager (Strategic Lead for Personalisation). Funding arrangements will remain as they are, managed through the Children's Disability Service.
26. The Service Improvement function within Children's Social Care will henceforth be renamed the Practice Support Unit. Line management of the Practice Support unit will transfer to the Group Manager responsible for the Children's Disability Service in a timescale to be determined. The role of Commissioning Officers will be re-named Practice Support Officers, and the role of Advanced Social Worker Practitioner re-named Practice Consultant, in line with the naming convention used in the national Munro Review of Child Protection. The service will focus on providing practice support.
27. The arrangements for supporting Framework-i are retained in the Practice Support Unit, including the establishment of a permanent post of specialist report writer. It has been agreed that this post, which has been established in the CFCS Data Management Team on a temporary basis, be transferred to the Children's Framework-i team, due to the focus of the role. There is capacity in the divisional budget to make this specialist post permanent to continue to support the efficient provision of management information from Framework-i.
28. There will be an increase in the establishment of Practice Consultants, from 11 fte to 19 fte. 12 Practice Consultants will be allocated to district teams where they will have case holding responsibilities and provide practice support to front-line staff as directed by Team Managers. Six Practice Consultants will be retained centrally to continue to provide mentoring with a focus on practice support.
29. Practice Consultants will rotate between the district teams and the central team to ensure they keep in touch with front-line practice. Practice Consultants will be managed by the post of Principal Child and Family Social Worker (currently the role of Team Manager (Advanced Practitioners). This role in the local authority was also recommended by the Munro Review.

## **Access to Resources**

30. The proposed changes support the Council's move towards a model of commissioning services and allow us to evaluate our own provider services for Best Value.
31. A new group called 'Access to Resources' will be formed, replacing the current Regulated Services Group. This group will retain management responsibility for the following service areas: placements, fostering, adoption, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the three mainstream residential children's homes and the secure accommodation unit.
32. In addition, line management of some existing services will transfer to the Access to Resources Group so that all provider services are within a single management structure.
33. Management responsibility for the Family Intervention Project team will transfer to a new temporary post of Troubled Families Coordinator. This post is grant funded and has been created in accordance with the central Government programme to provide targeted interventions that will successfully transform the lives of troubled families, defined as families whose children are not attending school, who are involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour, families not in work and those families that create high costs for public sector. The Troubled Families Co-ordinator is deemed central to the success of the local programme and required to be sufficiently senior at a strategic level to achieve their responsibilities; to draw up and refresh the list of troubled families of concern across Nottinghamshire, bring partners and their resources together and ensure that the services available, including European Social Fund provision, are fully integrated in the local programme.
34. The existing Children's Services Manager (Family Support) post (0.5 fte), will take on management of the Family Assessment and Contact service that was recently established by delegated decision CF/2012/00021. In order to meet the increased need to provide court ordered contact between looked after children and their birth parents, a further three Locality Support Workers (LSWs) will be established within this team, taking the establishment to 24 fte. LSWs will henceforth be known as Contact Support Workers to better reflect the role they undertake. This increase will be funded through the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
35. The establishment of the Family Resource team will increase by 4.5 fte to 16 fte in the new structure, as part of the strategy to ensure that only children who need to come into care do so and that children are supported to return home as quickly as possible when it is safe to do so.
36. In order to support the increase in service areas managed through the Access to Resources Group, it is proposed that a 2 year temporary 0.5 fte Service Manager post is created.

## **Safeguarding and Independent Review**

37. An increase in Child Protection Co-ordinator capacity was agreed in delegated decision CF/2012/00025, to reflect the demand created by the number of children on child protection plans.

38. A new post of Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations has also been created in the new structure. Whilst very positive about the operational arrangements in the service, the recent Ofsted Inspection (September 2011) identified an area of improvement relating to the LADO function: to improve the strategic lead and challenge functions of the LADO. This post will therefore lead the implementation of the allegations and concerns procedures about professionals who work with children (predominantly non-education), and take the lead role in coordinating the department's response to civil claims arising from Children's Social Care, including the response to historical child abuse as well as claims arising from other circumstances. It has been agreed that 75% of the cost of the post will be met from the Children's Social Care division's budget, with 25% of the funding coming from the Environment and Resources department's budget.

### **Social Worker Trainee scheme**

39. The Social Worker trainee scheme is being reduced to a financially sustainable level of 2 per year (a total of 8 trainees on a 4 year scheme in total) by 2014-15. Current trainees will complete the scheme and take up a post with the Council, subject to suitable vacancies being available.

### **Other Options Considered**

40. Other options considered retaining the existing structure and adding new teams with specific specialist service areas. This option would retain a high level of duplication of services, which would deliver a less cost efficient service, and would result in a more limited improvement in outcomes for children and young people and their families in Nottinghamshire.

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

41. The proposals set out in this report, if approved, will enable the Children's Social Care Service to sustain the improvements already made and move towards an operating model that will deliver a financially sustainable service that improves outcomes for children and young people.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

42. 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.

### **Human Resources Implications**

43. Population of the new structure will be done through the County Council's enabling process. To inform the process social workers will be invited to state their preference for where and in which type of team they would like to work in the new structures. The preference exercise will enable us to identify where people would like to work and for staff to highlight any issues, such as caring responsibilities or health considerations, that need to be factored into decision making.

44. There are no reductions in posts proposed within the new structure, however it should be noted that Social Work Assistants are only being retained in the Children's Disability Service, re-designated as Key Workers. Social Work Assistant posts in the After Care service have been converted to Personal Advisor posts by delegated decision CF/2012/00044, which was approved by the Corporate Director on 15 May, to ensure that the job descriptions of all the staff undertaking the role and functions of the Personal Adviser for care leavers meets current statutory guidance and to ensure that pay for these staff within the service is equitable. Proposals for the remaining Social Work Assistant roles (11 fte posts) are being developed, and although the Social Work Assistant posts will be deleted there are comparable roles in the new structure for the number of staff in post, for example, the increase in Family Resource Workers and Contact Support Workers noted in this report.
45. Some jobs will see a re-focus of their role in line with the principles of the new operating model, for example, moving from the current Reception and Assessment service to a new District Child Protection Team. Job descriptions have been reviewed to provide flexibility across these services and it is not envisaged that work will alter significantly enough to require new job evaluations to be carried out. Although not ostensibly changed, job descriptions for Children's Services Managers, Team Managers and Social Workers have been amended to reflect the names of the new services and teams and been converted to the corporate template. Job descriptions are available as background papers to this report.

## Financial Implications

46. The new organisational structure will be met by existing staffing budgets in Children's Social Care.
47. Table 1 below details the cost pressures in 2012-13 and 2013-14 which will be incurred during the transition to the new operating model. It is proposed that these temporary costs be met from the Children's Workforce Development Grant.
48. After 2014-15 the new operating model will deliver a saving on existing staffing costs.

**Table 1 Organisational structure cost pressures/savings**

| Change                     | Post                         | Costs              |                    |                    |                     |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|                            |                              | 2012-13            | 2013-14            | 2014-15            | 2015-16             |
| 1.5 more                   | Children's Services Managers | £52,907.00         | £79,360.50         | £26,454.00         | £0.00               |
| 8 More                     | Practice Consultants         | £235,829.00        | £353,744.00        | £353,744.00        | £353,744.00         |
| 4.5 more                   | Family Resource Workers      | £83,664.00         | £125,496.00        | £125,496.00        | £125,496.00         |
| 11 less                    | Social Work Assistants       | -£102,256.00       | -£306,768.00       | -£306,768.00       | -£306,768.00        |
| 10 less                    | Trainee Social Workers       | -                  | -                  | -£296,680.00       | -£296,680.00        |
| <b>Total costs/savings</b> |                              | <b>£270,144.00</b> | <b>£251,832.50</b> | <b>-£97,754.00</b> | <b>-£124,208.00</b> |

## Implications for Service Users

49. The implementation of the revised staffing structure will result in a service that will be more responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable children and families and focussed on the delivery of better outcomes for those requiring the support of the care system.

## **Equalities Implications**

50. 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.
51. 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.
52. 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.

## **Safeguarding of Children Implications**

53. The new structure in Children's Social Care will strengthen safeguarding arrangements through multi-agency information sharing in the MASH, improved partnership working through the creation of specialised child protection teams based closer to their communities, dedicated services for Looked After Children and increased capacity in the Safeguarding and Independent Review Group.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1) That the proposed staffing and delivery structure for Children's Social Care, as outlined in the report and attached appendix, be agreed for phased implementation during 2012-13.

**Steve Edwards**

**Service Director, Children's Social Care**

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## **Constitutional Comments (KK 21/05/12)**

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

## **Financial Comments (NDR 29/05/12))**



55. The financial implications are set out in paragraphs 46 to 48 of the report

### **Background Papers**

All Delegated Decision Records referred to in this report

Job descriptions for Service Managers, Team Managers, Social Workers and Personal Advisors.

Munro Review of Child Protection (May 2011)

Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding Services (October 2011)

Report to Cabinet - Transforming Children's Social Care (January 2012)

Report to Corporate Leadership Team - Children's Social Care Future Operating Model (January 2012)

Children's Social Care Organisational Structure Consultation Pack (February 2012)

Formal consultation response to recognised Trade Unions (April 2012)

Equality Impact Assessment – Children's Social Care Transformation Programme (May 2012)

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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