

17 December 2018**Agenda Item: 6****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL
WORK****UPDATE ON SUPPORTING IMPROVEMENTS IN CHILDREN'S SOCIAL
CARE****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report provides an update on the implementation and impact on the following measures which were approved by the Committee on 18th June 2018 to support improvements in the quality of social work practice:
 - a request from contingency made to Finance and Major Contracts Management Committee
 - the permanent establishment of current social work support officers and senior social work support officers posts
 - an increase in the permanent establishment of social work support officers and senior social work support officer posts
 - the establishment of a fixed term project team to embed new approaches to supporting improvements in social work practice including case progression.

Information

2. A request from contingency to fund the additional Social Work Support Officer posts was approved by Finance and Major Contracts Management Committee.
3. The existing 20.5 fte Social Work Support Officers (Grade 4) and 2 fte Senior Social Work Support Officer (Grade 5) posts have been given permanent contracts.
4. A recruitment process has been undertaken to the additional permanent 20.5 fte Social Work Support Officer (Grade 4) and 1 fte Senior Social Work Support Officer (Grade 5) posts. Preferred candidates have been identified for 16.5 fte Social Work Support Officer posts and it is planned that all new recruits will be in post by the beginning of December 2018. A full induction programme is being developed. The 1 fte Senior Social Work Support Officer has also been recruited and begun in post in November 2018. An evaluation of the impact of the additional Social Work Support Officers and Senior Social Work Support Officer will be undertaken in July 2019.
5. In relation to the remaining 4 fte Social Work Support Officer (Grade 4) posts which are currently vacant, work is being undertaken with the Assessment Service to plan how this support should be implemented. Through workshops with Social Care and Business

Support, it has been identified that whilst the Social Work Support Officer role successfully aligns with the support requirements of the majority of safeguarding teams, due to the nature of the tasks required by the Assessment Service, a designated Business Support role is more suited to their support requirements. Furthermore, having designated Business Support roles is likely to be more cost effective than Social Work Support Officers, reflecting a likely cost saving for the authority. A further report which will outline the rationale and recommendation regarding this will be presented to Committee in early 2019.

6. A recruitment process has been undertaken to establish a two year fixed term project team. 3 fte Practice Consultants (Band C), 1 fte Project Manager (Band D) and 1 fte Programme Officer (Band B) have been recruited and have all begun in post. The recruitment process for the Business Support Assistant (Grade 4) has commenced and the preferred candidate is anticipated to be in post in early 2019.
7. A programme of work entitled 'Remodelling Practice' has been established which is managed by the project team led by the Group Manager Service Improvement. The purpose of the Remodelling Practice programme is to create a sustainable delivery model for services for vulnerable children and families which is high quality and financially sustainable. The programme aims to develop a positive working environment and provide teams with the tools and support to do their jobs in the most effective and efficient way, enabling the improvement of outcomes for children and families.
8. The Programme consists of four projects: Framework for Practice, Staffing Model, Business Intelligence and Career Pathway.

Framework for Practice

9. The Framework for Practice project seeks to develop a consistent Framework for Practice for case work with children and families, including identifying a model for addressing drift in case work, which complements practice in Nottinghamshire. The intention is that this Framework will support delivery of a revised vision for Youth, Families and Social Work:

"We will work with children and young people, together with families and our partners, to give the consistent support and protection they need to be safe, secure and have opportunities to fulfil their potential."

The vision is supported by the following principles:

- (1) We will put positive outcomes for children and young people at the heart of what we do*
- (2) We will focus on strengths within relationships and celebrate achievements*
- (3) We will promote a reflective learning culture which balances high support and high challenge*
- (4) We will empower the workforce to be creative and drive innovative and evidence based practice*
- (5) We will work effectively with partner agencies to provide coordinated planning and support*
- (6) We will keep children at home with families wherever possible or when needed provide alternative permanent placements as quickly as possible*

- (7) We will recognise and support individual needs, challenge inequality and celebrate diversity and inclusion*
- (8) We will seek to make best use of the resources available to us.*

10. The next steps for this project are to agree a theoretical model that aligns to the vision and principles, and then to agree the tools and approaches to embedding practice that will be adopted by workers in Nottinghamshire. The intention is for this to be agreed by March 2019, with implementation planning then being developed to cover training, Mosaic, and intranet developments required.

Staffing Model

11. The Staffing Model project seeks to develop a sustainable staffing model within safeguarding teams so that outcomes for children and families are improved through timely, good quality practice that effectively addresses the issues identified through assessments.
12. The Staffing Model project has been split into four work areas: increasing the Social Work Support Officer establishment; piloting Social Work Assistant posts within district child protection teams that are having challenges recruiting sufficient permanent or agency social workers; reviewing the effectiveness of joint working between the Family Service and Children's Social Work for families receiving support as children in need or children on child protection plans; and considering options for introducing a multi-disciplinary approach to safeguarding teams.
13. Once these projects have been completed, a full review of the current staffing model will be undertaken, incorporating any recommendations from the staffing model work streams plus ensuring alignment with the agreed whole system practice framework.

Business Intelligence

14. The Business Intelligence project seeks to develop business intelligence reporting so that frontline and strategic managers have access to easily accessible, accurate and up to date information about workforce, demand and performance thus informing performance monitoring and management.
15. Work is currently underway to develop the reporting solutions, with new performance dashboards scheduled to go live in January 2019. The project team are working closely with the Information Governance team to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.

Career Pathway

16. The social worker career pathway project seeks to develop a clear and informative career pathway ensuring that prospective and current social workers are fully informed of the career progression opportunities available, thus supporting recruitment and retention. This project will lead to improved digital content, both in terms of an external recruitment website and intranet content for current staff.

17. Work is also being undertaken to ensure that the Department for Education standards for children's social workers: the knowledge and skill statements, are appropriately implemented within Nottinghamshire, and that social workers are able to access targeted continuing professional development opportunities that support developing the competencies and expertise required by the statements.

Monitoring progress

18. Progress against each of the projects listed above is monitored by the Remodelling Practice Board which meets on a monthly basis. This is attended by the Youth, Families and Social Work Leadership Team, in addition to representatives from Programmes and Projects, Finance, HR, IT and Business Support to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed and engaged in decision making.

Statutory and Policy Implications

19. 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.

Data Protection and Information Governance

20. A Data Protection Impact Assessment is being developed in relation to the Business Intelligence project. The implementation of any reporting solutions will be subject to the approval of the Data Protection Impact Assessment.

Financial Implications

21. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Human Resources Implications

22. There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

Implications for Service Users

23. Implementation of the projects within this report will improve the quality of service to vulnerable children and young people in need of safeguarding.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the Committee considers whether there is any further action it requires with regard to the progress and impact of the Remodelling Practice programme.

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Constitutional Comments (LM 16/11/18)

24. The Children and Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the contents of the report. Members may wish to consider any actions they require in respect of the issues contained in the report.

Financial Comments (SAS 03/12/18)

25. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

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.

Supporting improvement in Children's Social Care – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 18 June 2018.

Financial monitoring report: Period 1 2018/19 – report to Finance and Major Contracts Management Committee on 18 June 2018

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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