



**15<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

**Agenda Item: 10**

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

**UPDATE ON THE REMODELLING PRACTICE PROGRAMME**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. This report provides the Committee with an update on the progress of the Remodelling Practice programme and proposes that the Committee receives a quarterly update regarding progress.

**Information**

2. In June 2018, the Committee approved a range of measures to support improvements in the quality of Social Work practice:
  - a) the permanent establishment of current social work support officers and senior social work support officer posts.
  - b) an increase in the permanent establishment of social work support officers and senior social work support officer posts.
  - c) the establishment of a fixed term project team to embed new approaches to supporting improvements in social work practice including case progression.
3. In June 2018, the Remodelling Practice programme was established to provide governance and ensure timely progression of a range of activities to support improvements in the quality of Social Work practice. The programme is supported by a two-year fixed term project team from the Programmes and Projects Team.
4. 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.
5. The programme incorporates four projects:
  - a) Staffing Model
  - b) Framework for Practice
  - c) Career Pathway
  - d) Business Intelligence.

## Staffing Model

6. The purpose of the staffing model project is to develop the 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.
7. In June 2018, a request from contingency to fund additional Social Work Support Officer and Senior Social Work Support Officer posts and establish existing Social Work Support Officer and Senior Social Work Support Officer posts was approved by Finance and Major Contracts Management Committee.
8. The additional 16.5 fte Social Work Support Officers and 1 fte Senior Social Work Support Officer have been in post since December 2018. Feedback regarding the roles has been extremely positive, some examples of the feedback received are as follows:  
  
*“Social Work Support Officers complete tasks that do not require a Social Work qualification, and this frees us up to complete direct work with children and families”*  
  
*“I could not cope with my role if I did not have my Social Work Support Officer support. They are so essential for my own emotional well-being by taking some of the pressure off me”*
9. In January 2019, the Committee approved that 4 fte vacant posts of the Social Work Support Officer establishment could be converted to ring-fenced Business Support for the Assessment Service as it was identified that this type of support was better aligned to the needs of the Assessment Service. A recruitment process has recently taken place and all roles have been appointed to.
10. Work is underway with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to enable closer links with frontline Children’s Social Work teams and the children and young people they support. A separate report is being presented to this meeting of the Committee to seek approval of the proposed changes.
11. A scoping exercise has been undertaken to explore the potential for multi-disciplinary teams, specifically considering taking a whole family approach to safeguarding, with the potential for adult substance misuse workers, adult mental health practitioners and domestic violence practitioners to be co-located within children’s safeguarding teams. A proposal is being developed for this work to be progressed as a cross-council project.
12. An overarching review of the staffing model and skill mix within safeguarding teams is being undertaken and as part of this, options for the future staffing model and skill mix are being developed. This work is being undertaken alongside colleagues from Remodelling Early Help to consider interdependencies. A separate report will be presented to the Committee in the autumn to outline the proposed changes.

## Framework for Practice

13. 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 Framework for Practice is supported by the delivery of a revised vision for the Children and Families Department:

*“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.”*

14. 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.*

15. In March 2019, Children and Young People’s Committee approved the implementation of a strengths-based approach to practice. Briefings are currently being rolled out to staff within the Children and Families Department with a staff conference planned for 9 October 2019.

16. Priorities for embedding a strengths-based approach into practice have been identified and leads have been tasked with progressing these. Initial priorities include incorporating a strength-based approach within assessments, and within child protection conferences. These priorities align with feedback from children and families.

17. To support the launch, a new intranet page is being developed which will be user friendly and contain up to date information and tools. Printed resources will also be produced to promote the Framework for Practice. A monthly newsletter is being produced to ensure staff are kept up to date regarding the programme.

18. Corporate colleagues including the Programmes and Project Team, Business Support and HR have expressed an interest in exploring strengths-based practice. It is recognised that local authorities which have been successful in implementing a model of practice have promoted this widely across their organisations. Corporate colleagues will be provided with an opportunity to receive briefings regarding strengths-based practice.

19. A model of reflective group supervision has been piloted in the Bassetlaw Child Protection Team to address drift in case work. The focus of the sessions are cases where there is

potential drift and delay. The pilot has been positively evaluated, with feedback highlighting that staff feel the sessions are useful for developing a plan for cases; they are powerful in hearing the 'voice of the child' and that shared learning is achieved during the sessions. The model will now be rolled out across Children and Families department, initially focussing on the District Child Protection Teams.

20. Nottinghamshire will also be piloting a further group session, intended to improve the emotional wellbeing of staff working in social care. Nottinghamshire have been chosen as one of six local authorities to pilot Schwartz Rounds, a facilitated confidential, multi-disciplinary forum designed for staff to come together once a month to reflect on the emotional and social experiences associated with social work. The Schwartz Rounds sessions will begin in June 2019, followed by an evaluation by Cardiff University in March 2020.

### **Business Intelligence**

21. 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.
22. A workforce reporting solution has been developed which went live in April 2019, with initial data being available in May 2019. Currently this solution is an interim measure, and this will be developed into a permanent solution in the long-term.
23. Data dashboards have been developed which show service wide performance. Specifications are being developed to show programme, team and individual level data. The project team is working closely with the Information Governance team to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.

### **Career Pathway**

24. 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.
25. 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.
26. A new recruitment webpage has been developed to showcase the benefits of joining Nottinghamshire as a Social Worker. New intranet content has also been developed to create a central place for information regarding career progression and development opportunities. This has been welcomed by the Social Work Practice Forum.

### **Monitoring progress**

27. 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**

28. 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**

29. The project team is working with Information Governance to ensure that the programme has completed any satisfactory Data Protection Impact Assessments for areas of the programme which require this.

## **Financial Implications**

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

## **Human Resources Implications**

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

## **Implications for Service Users**

32. 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 agrees to receive quarterly updates regarding progress of the Remodelling Practice programme.

**Steve Edwards**

**Service Director, Youth, Families and Social Work**

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### **Constitutional Comments (AK 19/06/19)**

33. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee under its terms of reference.

### **Financial Comments (LCD 28/06/19)**

34. 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

Update on Supporting Improvements in Children's Social Care – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 17 December 2018

Supporting Improvements in the Assessment Service – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 14 January 2019

Youth, Families and Social Work Framework for Practice – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 18 March 2019

Social work post-qualifying standards: knowledge and skills statements

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/knowledge-and-skills-statements-for-child-and-family-social-work>

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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