

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:	4285
Author:	Julie Proctor
Department:	Children and Adults
Contact:	Audrey Taylor (Job Title: Principal Manager, Email: audrey.taylor@nottinghamcity.gov.uk , Phone: 0115 8762575)
Subject:	Recruitment of 3 additional Fostering Social Workers in the Fostering Team
Total Value:	£135,375 (Type: Revenue)
Decision Being Taken:	<p>(1) To agree an increase in the number of Fostering Social Workers from 10 to 13 to support an increase in the number of Foster Carers and Regulation 24 Carers (Non-Executive Officer decision)</p> <p>(2) To agree spend of £135,375 to support the above recruitment (Portfolio Holder decision).</p>
Reasons for the Decision(s)	<p>1 The Fostering Team continues to increase Foster Carers and Regulation 24 Carers. It is envisaged therefore that the size of the Team will increase, for every 18 additional carers or Regulation 24 Carers an additional Supervising Social Worker is required to support them.</p> <p>2 The additional posts would ensure new and existing Carers are supported and are well integrated into their role.</p> <p>There are currently 166 Fostering Households, and 79 Regulation 24 Carers with 86 children placed supported within the Fostering Team. There are currently 32 assessments being undertaken for Regulation Carers, and 13 Foster Carers under assessment. There is a total of 236 cases allocated to the team. There is an average caseload of 22 to 25 cases allocated to each Social Worker, with an average of 30 days in a month and taking into consideration staff member's annual leave, sickness, monthly visits, plus additional visits for LAC reviews, PEP meetings Fostering annual reviews and admin work such as case recordings etc. There are currently 4 Supervising Social Workers on sick leave, and 2 Supervising Social Workers on maternity leave. We currently have 3 temporary agency staff covering maternity and sick leave.</p>

Other Options Considered: To continue to increase the caseloads of existing Fostering Social Workers. This was rejected due to the negative effects that this could have on Social Worker's capacity to support existing foster carers.
2. To carry on as at present, was rejected due to risk in relation to safeguarding, and statutory responsibilities.

Background Papers:

Published Works:

Affected Wards: Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests: None

Consultations: Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

Crime and Disorder Implications: Not applicable for this post

Equality: EIA not required. Reasons: EIA not required. Reasons: Not applicable as this is not a changing policy or function.

Relates to staffing: Yes

Decision Type: Portfolio Holder

Subject to Call In: Yes

Call In Expiry date: 27/07/2021

Advice Sought: Legal, Finance, Human Resources

Legal Advice:

In so far as the non-executive decision to recruit to the posts is concerned, if this proposal is accepted then in accordance with section 7 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the appointments should be made on merit. In addition, with regards to any potential equal pay issues, the pay relating to the proposed posts should be assessed in accordance with Nottingham City Council's pay policy.

The decision to release funding for the proposed posts is an executive decision and is for the relevant Portfolio Holder. Advice provided by Aman Patel (Solicitor) on 06/07/2021.

Finance Advice:

The decision seeks approval to increase the Social Worker establishment budget by 3fte to ensure capacity within the team to meet statutory requirements to manage the increasing numbers of internal foster carers and the rise in Regulation 24's.

In line with 2021/22 terms and conditions, the annual cost of 1fte Grade H1 is £46,042, including on costs. The total value of this decision based on 3fte is £138,126 per annum. The additional cost is funded from the approved budget following the recent pressures analysis.

This proposal is critical to ensuring sufficient capacity in the team to support the increase of Nottingham City's internal foster provision and reduce the reliance on high cost external placements.

The service should ensure that costs are forecast correctly in future reporting periods.

Advice provided by Christine Green (Strategic Finance Business Partner) on 30/06/2021.

HR Advice:

Management need to ensure that the proposed posts are correctly evaluated through Job Evaluation. Management will need to ensure that recruitment is conducted through the appropriate processes, including redeployment consideration. Management should be aware that the selected post-holders should commence on a starting salary of Level One within the respective grade, unless the appointed colleague is already in employment at the Council and on Level 2 of the same grade, in which case the employee would be matched over at the rate of pay they currently receive. There will need to be a support and development plan for the new post-holder once appointed in line with managing performance. Advice provided by Aadil Bhatti (HR Consultant) on 08/09/2020. Advice provided by Aadil Bhatti (HR Consultant) on 02/07/2021.

Signatures

Cheryl Barnard (Portfolio Holder- Children and Young People)
SIGNED and Dated: 20/07/2021
Catherine Underwood (Corporate Director for People)
SIGNED and Dated: 19/07/2021