

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:	1892
Author:	Elaine Fox
Department:	Children and Families
Contact:	Elaine Fox (Job Title: Children and Families Development Assistant, Email: elaine.fox@nottinghamcity.gov.uk, Phone: 01158764540)
Subject:	To extend four temporary posts, 2x Family Support Workers and 2x Customer Services Officers for an additional 12 months
Total Value:	£109,598 incl. on-costs (Type: Revenue)
Decision Being Taken:	To extend four temporary posts - 2x Family Support Workers within the Children in Care team and 2x Customer Services Officers within the Fostering and Adoption team for an additional 12 months within the Children's Social Care directorate from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 (Non-executive officer decision under delegation 16). To approve the budget of £109,598 for the 12 month extensions to be met from efficiencies identified within the Children in Care budget (Portfolio Holder decision).

Reasons for the Decision(s) These posts were established in April 2013 on a temporary basis funded from the Adoption Reform Grant which has now ceased. The work undertaken by these post-holders has been invaluable and funding has been identified through efficiencies in other areas which can be utilised to continue the funding of these roles in the 2015 - 2016 financial year.

The Customer Services Officer posts were established to provide an immediate response to all enquiries from the public in relation to Fostering and Adoption to ensure that potential applicants were provided with information about the service which was detailed and knowledgeable. The role has now expanded into other areas. Having these posts means we are able to give an immediate response to enquiries by potential Foster Carers or adoptive parents to ensure sufficient temporary and permanent homes can be identified for our Children in Care.

The Family Support Worker (FSW) posts have proved invaluable and have worked to assist Social Workers with tasks to improve timescales in Adoption cases, which has meant faster processes in achieving permanency and consequently better outcomes for some of our most vulnerable children and young people. If there were no FSWs our Social Workers would have to undertake the activities which the FSWs have been working on and in order to facilitate this, it would be necessary to reduce the case loads of Social Workers which would potentially lead to an increase in the number of Children in Care in Nottingham City.

Extending these posts represents value for money as the post-holders work to help reduce the number of Children in Care, therefore resulting in reduced spend by Nottingham City Council on placements in internal residential homes or with independent fostering agencies or private sector residential care.

Other Options Considered: Not to extend the Family Support Worker or Customer Service Officer posts. This option was rejected as these roles have been crucial in identifying new Foster Carers and Adopters and supporting Social Workers with non-specialist tasks.

Background Papers: None.

Published Works: None.

Affected Wards: Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests: None.

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

Crime and Disorder Implications:

These posts assist with Nottingham City Council's aim of ensuring temporary or permanent family homes for our Children in Care. By ensuring children and young people have supportive family homes for a short-term placement or permanently, depending on their need, it is hoped to reduce the risk of harm and poor life chances.

Equality:

EIA not required. Reasons: EIA not required as this decision does not relate to a new or changing policy, service or function.

Decision Type:

Portfolio Holder

Subject to Call In:

Yes

Call In Expiry date:

31/03/2015

Advice Sought:

Legal, Finance, Human Resources, Equality and Diversity

Legal Advice:

Assuming the initial appointments to the posts complied with Section 7 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (appointments made on merit), any extensions to these posts must comply with Nottingham City Council's policies and procedures. Advice provided by Paulette Brown (Solicitor) on 12/03/2015.

Finance Advice:

It is proposed to extend the contracts of four temporary posts, 2 Family Support Workers and 2 Customer Services Officers, within the Children in Care Service for one year, until 31st March 2016. These posts are currently funded by the Adoption Reform Grant, which ends on the 31st March 2015.

The estimated cost of this proposal is £109,598. Efficiencies have been identified within the Children in Care budget, which will enable these posts to be funded for one year

Extending these contracts will enable the adoption process to be speeded up, which in turn will reduce the number of Children in Care; this will relieve pressure on the external placements budget, achieving Value for Money

**Steve Lynk - Finance Analyst
0115 8763726
steve.lynk@nottinghamcity.gov.uk**

**5th March 2015
Advice provided by Stephen Lynk (Finance Analyst) on 05/03/2015.**

HR Advice:

The proposal to extend these fixed term contracts is in line with the work to support aims of the post Ofsted Improvement Programme and support longer terms savings for the Department. Management will need to consider the implications of extending the fixed term period, and will need to be mindful of the Council's Fixed Term Contract Policy and guidance, and ensure that the understand the potential financial implications of any exit strategy, in term of potential redundancy or pension benefit payments.

Management will also need to consider the employments rights of the employees in these temporary posts, and impact should the roles be made permanent in the future.

Lynn Robinson
HR Business Partner

5 March 2015 Advice provided by Lynn Robinson (HR Business Partner) on 05/03/2015.

Equality and Diversity Advice:

The proposal meets the needs of very vulnerable young people and is therefore fully supported. Advice provided by Adisa Djan (Equalities and Diversity Consultant) on 05/03/2015.

Signatures

David Mellen (Portfolio Holder for Children's Services)

SIGNED and Dated: 23/03/2015

Alison Michalska (Corporate Director for Children and Adults)

SIGNED and Dated: 20/03/2015