

# Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



**Nottingham**  
**City Council**

Reference Number:

3170

Author:

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Department:

Children and Adults

Contact:

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Subject:

Grow Our Own Social Workers 2nd Cohort

Total Value:

£475,656 (Type: Capital)

Decision Being Taken:

1. To approve to go out to tender for a Provider to deliver a fast track BA Hons Social Work Degree to undertake a 2nd Grow Our Own Social Worker Cohort to as set out in Appendix 2.
2. To delegate authority to the Director of Integrated Children's Services to enter into a Learner and Career Development Loan agreements on behalf of Nottingham City Council with individual employees for up to 12 colleagues.
3. To delegate authority to the Director of Integrated Children's Services to enter into contract with a Qualification Provider for provision and delivery of the fast track degree.
4. Authorise Director of Integrated Children's Services for Nottingham City Council (NCC) to act as Lead Authority and enter into contract(s) with other regional Local Authorities to meet minimum numbers for the scheme to help spread financial risk and contractual arrangements with Provider.

Reasons for the Decision(s)

The Council currently spends a significant amount on social work agency staff. At the end of the first cohort we are looking to have 18 children's colleagues able to convert into children's social worker level 1 posts and 4 adults colleagues available to convert to adult social worker posts. A 2nd cohort will give potential to have 10 children's newly qualified social workers and 2 adults newly qualified in the following year 2020, thereby resulting in a sustained approach to lessen agency spend.

We are looking to tender for a provider that can offer a bespoke fast track social work degree which colleagues can be offered in work and be delivered within Nottingham City boundary (saving on travel costs). We need a Qualification Provider to deliver within the timescales desired by the Council so as to lessen agency spend as soon as practically possible. We note accredited prior learning should start September 2018 with formal degree commencing from January 2019 completing in September 2020.

**Briefing notes documents:** Appendix 3 - Financial overview Cohort 2 Grow Our Own SW Career Loan V3 35 Class Size.xlsx, Appenidix 1 -Briefing Note for 2nd Cohort.docx, Appendix 2 Draft GOO 2 Scheme V1.docx

**Other Options Considered:**  
1. Do nothing. This is not a favoured option as the crisis within social work recruitment and retention nationally has resulted in significant use of agency staff which has a destabilising effect on the child protection service which is increasing costs.  
2. Use of the Apprenticeship Levy; this option has been rejected on the basis that this is still in developmental stages and is not confirmed as a viable route at this time.

**Background Papers:**

**Published Works:** Delegated Decision 2869 - Grow Our Own Social Worker Scheme - June 2017

**Affected Wards:** Citywide

**Colleague / Councillor Interests:**

**Consultations:**  
Date: 21/05/2018  
Unions: Unison, GMB  
21.05.18 a Union side meeting with CIS Head of Service where a 2nd Cohort will be discussed. Informal conversations with Union Reps have been positive and the sharing with other LAs has been welcomed to help pressure of covering for delegates on placement

Date: 11/05/2018  
Other:Councillor Mellen  
Lead Portfolio Holder for the service who fully supports a 2nd cohort of Grow Our Own Social Workers

Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

**Crime and Disorder Implications:** The decision will have a neutral impact

**Equality:** Please login to the system to view the EIA document: EIA for 2nd Cohort Grow Our Own Social Worker Scheme 24.05.18.doc

**Social Value Considerations:** By recruiting delegates from the internal workforce on to the Social Work Degree, colleagues are more likely understand the needs of the service and Nottingham families we serve. In turn we are also more likely to keep loyal staff and provide a more sustainable service to citizens resulting in less agency spend.

**Relates to staffing:** Yes

**Decision Type:** Portfolio Holder

**Subject to Call In:** Yes

**Call In Expiry date:** 07/06/2018

**Advice Sought:** Legal, Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, Equality and Diversity

**Legal Advice:** This proposal envisages the Council entering into a contract for a provider to deliver a Fast Track BA Hons Social Work degree to a cohort comprising of City Council and other local authority staff. As the City Council will act as the lead, and therefore hold contractual and financial liabilities directly with the successful provider, it is imperative that appropriate back to back contracts are in place between the City Council and each other local authority engaging in the cohort, particularly in the event that the provider has a minimum requirement for the number of students on the course. Such an approach has been succesful in the first cohort and therefore it is expected that similar arrangements will be followed. Legal Services will provide support and advice with regard to the contractual arrangements.  
  
Advice provided by Naomi Vass (Senior Solicitor) on 21/05/2018.

**Finance Advice:**

The Grown Your Own Social Worker' Scheme was introduced in September 2017. This programme invests in our workforce to develop our own qualified Social Workers. Other benefits include enhancing the quality of our services and reducing agency spend.

A procurement to determine a provider is required, however based on Phase 1 assumptions, the course is delivered at a reduced rate for a cohort of no less than 25. Phase two plans to commence from September 2018 based on a further 12 NCC employee (10 Childrens / 2 Adults) and 18 external partner placements (35 total placements).

Using cohort 1 cost assumptions; the maximum cost associated with the programme is £0.475m over 2 years. This assumes a cohort of 35 and the Council will be required to fund the course from the outset on behalf of the 12 NCC placements. Full payment from Partner's is made in advance.

The Council contribution to course fees £0.039m. The existing Childrens and Adults budget will fund the cost through holding spend in non-safeguarding services.

Residual costs will be recovered from colleagues via a career development loan repaid over a 5-year period. Management will need to monitor and manage any implications arising from any changes to individual circumstances over the course of the loan period.

Finance understands there is no additional funding required to backfill individuals that are enrolled on the course.

**Christine Green**  
Strategic Commercial Business Partner - Children's & Educations

The funding of the course and loan repayment is set out in the table attached as an appendix.

Advice provided by Christine Green (Senior Commercial Business Partner) on 29/05/2018.

Advice documents: 2018 08 29 Financial Implications -GYO Cohort 2.pdf

**Procurement Advice:**

The proposed procurement of a provider of a fast track BA Hons Social Work Degree will be conducted by the Procurement Team through an open tender process compliant with EU and UK procurement regulations and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. The proposed collaboration with the other participating local authorities will enable the procurement of a cost effective minimum number of places and the competitive tender process will ensure best value is secured. The award of the contract will be subject to agreements being in place with the other authorities to secure their commitment to funding an agreed number of places and therefore to share the financial risk. Advice provided by Jo Pettifor (Procurement Team Manager) on 22/05/2018.

**HR Advice:**

See attached HR Comments - Marie Read 29/5/2018 Advice provided by Marie Read (HR Consultant (Departmental)) on 29/05/2018.

Advice documents: DDM HR Comments - Marie Read 29 May 2018.docx

**Equality and Diversity Advice:**

The proposal provides the organisation with trained members of staff that are culturally competent tent to manage and deal with the vulnerable groups within the city. Advice provided by Adisa Djan (Equalities and Diversity Consultant) on 30/05/2018.

**Signatures**

<b>Graham Chapman (PH for Finance, Resources and Commercial Services)</b>
<b>SIGNED and Dated: 31/05/2018</b>
<b>Alison Michalska (Corporate Director for Children and Adults)</b>
<b>SIGNED and Dated: 30/05/2018</b>