

Appendix 1

Briefing Note on a 2nd Cohort of Grow Our Own Social Workers Starting January 2019 (with APEL from Sept 2018)

1. Purpose/Overview

- To invest in existing Children's Integrated Services colleagues to become Social Workers as a keystone to bringing down Agency Social Worker spend.
- To support and endorse a second Grow Our Own Social Worker Scheme, which will offer the opportunity for between 10-12 existing Nottingham City colleagues to apply for a fast track two year BA Hons Social Work Degree, whilst still in employment.
- Minimum value of new contract will be £337,500, as present supplier has stated we need to have a minimum number of 25 delegates on the programme (£13,500 per candidate for 25 places). We will need to work with other LA partners to secure the number of delegates required.
- **Financial overview** (see attached breakdown) - shows pay back schedule of 'career loan' of £10,500 (£3,000 contribution each from NCC - £36k) – shows comparison with Agency spend/egs of F/G grade take home salary) attached.
- **To secure the £36,000 investment needed to support up to 12 NCC colleagues and to provide arrangements for a further £126,000 as a Career Loan paid back through salary by candidates.**
- We will need to contract with other Local Authorities to provide funding for their candidates up front – **as Nottingham City Council will be the lead contract holder with the Scheme provider (Manchester Metropolitan University – or other provider, if they are not successful in tendering process (see Legal/Procurement advice).**

2. Background

Minimum number of delegates required to be able to deliver the programme with MMU is 25 for the price of £13,500 per Social Work Degree Student.

A Grow Our Own Social Worker Scheme was agreed in June 2017 and the 26 delegates are due to complete June 2019. Delegates represented on the existing programme are:

- 18 from with Children's Integrated Services
- 4 from Adult Services
- 4 from Derbyshire County Council (NCC have a separate Contract with them – who paid the whole cost up front)

The project aims to grow our own qualified Social Workers, addressing a significant resource shortage within our organisation with the intention of being able to decrease the amount of spent with agencies to fill basic service gaps. The scheme also offers career development and progression to retain talented colleagues from family support. We will be 6 months from completion on the first cohort when we propose to start the second cohort.

Manchester Metropolitan University were the only viable option as provider of a tried and tested route to a Fast Track Social Work Degree offered to people in work at the time and we received dispensation in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.29 from Contract Procedure Rule 5.1.2 to award the Contract directly to Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU).

There was no additional funds for back fill. Services are covering delegates undertaking their placements and course attendance. Placement swaps between delegates and staggered placement times have been put in place to mitigate for service disruption.

While the Council has funded the course at the outset, 80% of these costs will be recuperated from colleagues via their career development loan from the Council. Colleagues have entered into Loan and Learning Agreements that sets out both the Council and Employee obligations and secures repayment of the loan.

We settled on a NCC contribution of £3,000 towards the £13,500 due to committing the colleague to stay once qualified for 2 years, otherwise they would be tasked with paying back this element on a sliding scale along-side their loan re-payment. In addition, the main target audience would be F grade Family Support Workers and in line with the Pay Policy, deductions for repayments must not take the employee below the national minimum wage see below:

11.3.7 In implementing an overpayment recovery arrangement, Nottingham City Council will act reasonably and in all cases of recovery, the amount being repaid must not result in the employee's basic hourly rate falling below the national minimum wage.

1st Cohort evaluation so far - Out of the 26 delegates four are currently carrying fails, two children's and two adult colleagues, however these are not considered to be reflective of their overall expected outcomes as three will re-sit the law exam in July and they can resubmit failed assignments by August without their grade being capped at this point.

Placement Fees - The Council is receiving payments from MMU for providing placements at £20 per day per student for an average of 170 days, an arrangement with all universities providing Social Work Degrees. Part of this funding is to buy in external support for these MMU students for observation and assessment reports. We estimate the City Council will receive £32,380 placement money and could have £11, 938 unallocated to support any further costs of a 2nd Cohort (potential contribution to the £30,000 investment required to support 10 more NCC delegates).

3. 2nd Cohort set up

We will look to support and fund between 10-12 delegates from Nottingham City Council Children's Integrated Service.

The intention is to have a wider partnership approach to the 2nd Cohort due to cost and numbers required. This will enable the Council to mitigate against the possibility of the cohort falling below the minimum 25 people. Each partner will have its own internal governance arrangements that it needs to adhere to and NCC will need to have contractual documentation agreed and executed before the formal contract is signed off with MMU or new Provider. Ultimately, partners will be paying for their own employees in advance. Partners will have their own scheme for their employees who set out what support they will give and their expectations of their own employees but the teaching provision by MMU or

other party will remain the same for the entire cohort. Input sessions to be run at Loxley House.

The criteria to join the Scheme for other Local Authorities is that there is an expectation that delegates will pay for their own places with small contribution from LAs. This is not a scheme for those LAs who want to fully-fund applicants.

The D2N2 Social Work Teaching Partnership are looking at creating a local fast track Social Work Degree offer but believe they will not be able to achieve an offer at this competitive price; the local Universities are at the very early stages of developing their potential Social Work higher apprenticeship.

DCS Group have shown a great level of interest in joining the Grow Our Own Scheme. We have confirmed interest from Derby City, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Rutland and Nottinghamshire County Councils.

Set up Cost to City Council for 2nd Cohort

Council contribution to Course Fees for up to 12 delegates	£36,000 (£3k per delegate)
Career Loan element for 12 delegates	£126,000
Total cost of MMU provision – 25 places inc minimum of 13 other LA funded places	£337,500
Cost per year paid up front to MMU x2 years	£168,750 per year
NCC expected Income on loan (1.2% interest rate charge)	£3,156
Payroll implement the net salary deduction	No cost?
*MMU placement fee paid to NCC - Possible Placement net profit (not inc in figures)	£11,938 approx
Total cost paid out (min 25 on cohort)	£340,656
Total investment costs to NCC	£39,156

(* income dependent upon numbers and length of time of candidates support from Practice Mentor Assessor)

Cost to Employees

Total individual Course Fee	£13,500
Less contribution from City Council	£3,000
Career Development Loan for Employee	£10,500
Loan repayments for 5 years	£175 per month
Payback £3,000 NCC contribution if leave within 2 years of becoming qualified or do not complete with good reason on a sliding scale (as per City Council policy)	
Benefit in kind Employers and Employee's Tax implications; Benefit is less than £10k annually	

4. Legal/Procurement Advice

The type of services offered by MMU fall under the 'light touch' regime for the purpose of public procurement requirements. This provides the benefit of higher thresholds before an EU competition needs to be considered, and therefore allows the Council the flexibility to consider a dispensation from its own financial regulations and contract procedure rules. The current threshold for light touch is £615,413.

Contracts above the threshold require some element of EU competition but are not subject to the full effect and requirements of the procurement processes set out in legislation. This means that the process can be streamlined and dates reduced.

If we were to extend the current arrangement to add a further 25 students then the threshold will be exceeded and we must go **through a competitive exercise, otherwise we will be in breach of the legislation.**

We need to consider a procurement exercise. Timescales can be kept to a minimum for tender returns, particularly as any educational establishment that is interested will know what they are able to offer and have a prospectus for that. We can also benefit from being able to enter into a contract that would allow for further extensions without the need of having to re-consider the market and procurement options (subject to getting approvals in place).

5 Key Potential Risks: (out of 5 max. for Impact and Likelihood = 25 max score)

Proposal Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Risk rating	Mitigation	Revised Risk
Council will be the main contracting party with the university. NCC carries the financial risk to pay the university in the event that not all of the places are filled.	5	4	20	Ensure other LAs have a binding commitment to pay, even if any student pulls out, before entering into the contract with the university provider	If we do not get enough numbers confirmed from other LA, we will not proceed.
Starting 2 nd Cohort without complete evaluation of 1 st Cohort - unclear of achievement of reducing Agency spend and conversion of delegates into Level 1 Social Workers	4	4	16	It was thought the urgency of reducing Agency staff was critical as part of the Children's Social Work Workforce Plan If we don't start 2 nd cohort 2018 we will have no GOO colleagues completing in 2020	MMU is a tested national provider and gives assurances on quality throughout
Unknown assessment of ability to re-pay loan over 5 year period – delegate could be in position to not be able to repay in future years	4	3	12	This was noted in 1 st cohort – no candidates as of yet have stopped payments – this is being monitored closely.	Risk of some not repaying, unlikely it will be big numbers
A number fail at APEL (Accredited Prior Experiential Learning) stage before degree (free of charge element) takes us below 25 minimum required to continue	4	3	12	NCC will need to carry risk of own delegates failing at this stage and other LAs will need to commit to paying minimum number.	Suggestion to put more through APEL to then select down to 25
Potential Social Work Apprenticeship being	3	3	9	This is still early days and Standards have just been agreed – Local	A fast track local version is still at

offered by Local Universities, inc fast track version – we could look to re-direct delegates to this as paid by Apprenticeship Levy				delivery has not been tried and tested. Challenge presently by local Unis of course fee being set at £21k want it at £27k	inception stage
No additional costs have been considered to charge other LAs for the considerable set up/organisational costs of supporting such a programme. Impact on NCC capacity & resources of key services	3	3	9	National schemes such as Step Up does inc an element of admin costs. Need to consider a reasonable charge for organising on behalf of other LAs in region; or if should waiver to ensure getting buy-in from LAs.	If agreed we can consider an admin charge of around £500 per authority for 1-3 places going up to £1,000 for 4-8 places