

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Personnel Committee
27th November 2017**

Report of the Head of Children and Young People Services – Andrew Jarrett

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Amendment to the staffing establishment in the Fostering Service

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval to make adjustment to the current staffing structure of the Fostering Service by changing the current Consultant Social Worker post to a Deputy Team Manager post

Executive Summary

2. The Fostering Service currently has 2 Team Managers, 1 Deputy Manager and 2 Consultant Social Workers. In order to improve the

management capacity and oversight it is requested that consideration is given to converting one of the Consultant Social Worker posts to a Deputy Manager post.

There is no financial implication to the change.

Background

3. The Fostering Service consists of 2 teams; Assessment and Kinship Care, and Mainstream Support and Supervision. Each team has a Team Manager but there is only one Deputy Manager for the whole Service.

While there is an expectation that the Deputy Manager covers both the team managers in their absence and they supervise staff and undertake delegated tasks; the primary role of the Deputy Manager is to be the Placement Coordinator for the Service. The placement coordination role is a full time task which involves sourcing and commissioning new placements or changes of placement. The focus is on reducing the number of children placed in Independent out of County placements by ensuring that where possible children are placed within, or return to Neath Port Talbot foster carers. These tasks result in there being little capacity for the Deputy Manager to undertake deputising tasks.

There are two consultant social workers in the Fostering Service. Both are very experienced practitioners who aside from their case work have a role in supporting the team and carers to develop methods of working to help children achieve their outcomes. They also have special interests in developing parent and baby placements, and developing supports for Special Guardians and undertaking Family Dynamics Assessments.

It is proposed that by converting one of the Consultant Social Workers to a Deputy Manager in the team that the Management capacity across the Service will be enhanced. It is a large Service; in addition to the 2 Team Managers and 1 Deputy there are 21 other members of Staff. Additional Management capacity would support the day to day operational running of the team as well as the development of the service.

This proposal will be implemented in line with the Council's Management of Change in Partnership Policy and Procedure. It is proposed that applications would be ring-fenced to existing Consultant Social Workers

in the service, thus eliminating any member of staff being placed 'at risk' as a result of the change.

The Consultant Social Worker post is a grade 10 post. This is the same grade as a Deputy Manager post, so there are no financial implications.

The other benefits of converting a post from within the existing Consultant Social Workers is that it allows the opportunity for development and career progression for staff, plus it means that the knowledge and experience is retained within the service.

The proposal is dependent on an applicant being successfully appointed from within the existing Consultant Social Workers in the team. Should there be no interest in the post, or the applicants are not successful then the proposed changes will not take place and the team structure will remain as it currently is until a time where there is a natural vacancy in the consultant social worker posts which would then be advertised as a deputy post.

Financial Impact

4. There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

Equality Impact Assessment

5. There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

Workforce Impacts

6. There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impacts

7. There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

Risk Management

8. There are no risk management issues associated with this report

Consultation statements:

9. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

10. It is RECOMMENDED that Members APPROVE the adjustment to the current staffing structure of the Fostering Service by changing the current Consultant Social Worker post to a Deputy Team Manager post.

FOR DECISION

Reasons for Proposed Decision

11. The change will increase the management capacity in the service to enable a greater opportunity for service development whilst retaining the skills and experience of staff. However, should there be no interest in the post, or the applicants are not successful then the proposed changes will not take place and the team structure will remain as it currently is until a time where there is a natural vacancy in the consultant social worker posts which would then be advertised as a deputy post.

Implementation of Decision

12. The decision is proposed for immediate implementation.

Appendices

13. Appendix 1 - Financial Appraisal
Appendix 2 - Current and Proposed Structures

List of Background Papers

14. None

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