


Report for: Staffing & Remuneration Committee

Item number: 10

Title: Children's Services Recruitment & Retention Offer

Report authorised by : 
Jon Abbey – Director of Children's Services

Lead Officer: Andy Briggs – Interim AD Business & Resources
Sunni Morzaria – Interim Recruitment Consultant

Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Non Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 On 14th September 2015, Children's Services sought delegated authority for the Director for Children's Services to implement a monetary recruitment and retention reward (option 3 in the committee report) to attract new experienced social workers and retain our existing social worker workforce. This was agreed by the committee subject to consultation with the Lead Member for Children and Families and the Lead Member Resources & Culture, and with the section 151 Officer, which has now happened.
- 1.2 Following the September 2015 Committee meeting, Children's Services have carried out further benchmarking and are now seeking agreement on a more detailed Social Care recruitment and retention offer, which includes a number of additional benefits to attract and retain qualified Social Workers and Team Managers. The Offer that is worked up in this report and proposed to the committee will bring us more in line with other London Boroughs, against which we are competing for the same limited workforce. This offer would replace option 3 from the September Committee Report.
- 1.3. After reviewing our recent recruitment activity since July 2015, we are still finding it difficult to fill vacancies in certain teams. Consequently, we have identified that the targeting of recruitment and retention payments is needed, in those services and teams where we have the highest number of vacancies in statutory roles and where we are having the most difficulty in recruiting. These posts are business critical and, hence, need a more targeted offer.

2. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Notes the implementation of the recruitment and retention monetary reward as delegated, subject to consultation to the Director of Childrens Services, by the Committee on 14th September 2015.
- 2.2 Agrees the recruitment and retention monetary reward as detailed in paragraph 3.13 to take effect from 1st January 2016 and to replace the recruitment & retention monetary reward referred to in paragraph 3.12
- 2.3 Agrees the further incentives and initiatives to be implemented to enhance the recruitment and retention offer for social workers in Haringey, as detailed in paragraphs 4.7 onwards.

3. Background information

- 3.1 The recruitment and retention of staff within Children and Young Peoples' Services (CYPS) presents a growing challenge nationally, especially so in social care services. Continual demographic changes present even more pressures in trying to match the demand of social care services with the supply of social workers, senior practitioners and team managers.
- 3.2 Haringey Children's Services in particular, is undergoing a period of significant and rapid change against the backdrop of reducing budgets and pending OFSTED inspections in 2016 with the aim of moving to GOOD or beyond. The Service needs to recruit and retain more quality, experienced permanent staff. These staff will not only exhibit the key skills and experience to undertake their roles effectively but also demonstrate the right attitudes and behaviours that the Council aspires to both now and in the future as it moves towards being judged a GOOD or EXCELLENT Service by OFSTED.

3.3 National Context

- 3.4 It is undisputed that there is a national shortage of experienced, qualified social workers, senior practitioners and team managers employed in statutory children's social work. Since 2005, around 6,000 students a year are embarking on a social work qualification and there are more newly qualified social workers entering the job market encouraged by various Government initiatives and the expansion of post graduate places so that the future provides some opportunities although the pressures are likely to remain acute and endure for some considerable time.
- 3.5 However, there is a significant discrepancy between the supply of newly qualified social workers and experienced social work practitioners, which is supported in a report published by the Policy Exchange in June 2013, 'Reforming Social Work'. This report found that the supply of social workers will not equal demand until 2022.
- 3.6 It remains difficult at a national and local level to recruit and retain qualified and experienced practitioners and children's social work continues to be recognised as a key area of shortage recruitment within local Government. The social work job market continues to be a highly competitive market place and the recruitment challenges are particularly difficult in London.

- 3.7 Local Authorities are recognising and acknowledging this issue and improving recruitment and retention packages to address the problem. Some London authorities offer a “golden hello” up to £2,500 (Barking & Dagenham) and/or a retention payment – up to £3,000 per annum (Newham). This can be in addition to other benefits such as yearly travel allowances, free parking or a discounted housing offer based on social workers being defined as “key workers”.
- 3.8 Local Authorities also recognise that monetary incentives are not enough to attract and retain social workers on a permanent basis. In order to understand and explore what is being offered elsewhere, a benchmarking exercise was undertaken in September against 31 other London Councils. This showed that other Councils offer a suite of benefits in order to attract and retain talent: low case loads (Ofsted recommends 15 per social worker), dedicated specialised administrative support, comprehensive training programme, protected time for supervision and extra annual leave.

3.9 Haringey Context

- 3.10 Haringey’s Corporate Plan 2015-2018 outlines a clear ambition and high expectations, working within the challenge of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Priority1 is clear that we will be “Enabling every child to have the best start in life with high quality education”.
- 3.11 We are striving to improve our social care offering through the recruitment and retention of a high calibre, skilled workforce. This will be paramount to addressing the Boroughs children’s social care demands in the future and getting to GOOD.
- 3.12 In September 2015 the Committee approved a report which was sort delegated authority to Director of Childrens Services to implement a Recruitment and Retention monetary reward scheme for Haringey’s social workers, senior practitioners and team managers. as per the table below:

Type of Benefit	Description
Recruitment (£1.5k per year)	£500 on appointment, £500 immediately after satisfactory completion of probation of 6 months, £500 immediately after the end of the first 12 months
Retention (£2k per year)	£1000 every 6 months starting 18 months after the beginning of appointment

- 3.13 Since September and in light of recruitment and retention activity during that period, the Recruitment and Retention offer has been refined to give a greater impact in areas that are experiencing acute difficulties in recruiting and retaining. The Table below explains and illustrates the revised offer.

Target Area	Type of Benefit	Description	Permanent (P6)	Vacancies (P6)	Agency (P6)
T1 – Assessments and Safeguarding	Recruitment (£3k/year)	£1000 on appointment, £1000 immediately after probation of 6 months, £1000 immediately after the end of the first 12 months	41	44	26
	Retention (£3k/year)	£1500 every 6 months (first payment for those appointed on or after 1 January 2016 will be immediately after the end of the first 18 months)			
T2 – Children in Care and Placements	Retention (£2k/year)	£1000 every 6 months (first payment for those appointed on or after 1 January 2016 will be immediately after the end of the first 18 months)	69	19	12
T3 – All other Social Workers, Senior Practitioners Team Managers, IROs and CPAs in CYPS	Retention (£1.5k/year)	£750 every 6 months (first payment for those appointed on or after 1 January 2016 will be immediately after the end of the first 18 months)	33	10	17

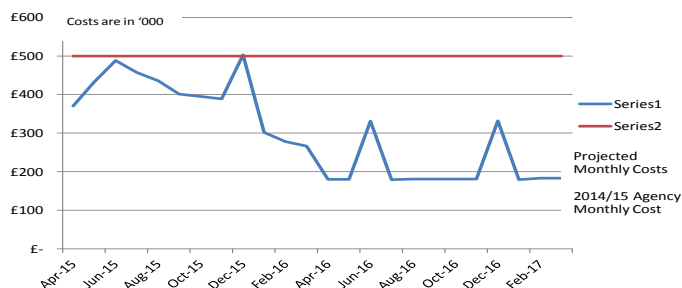
4. Implementing the Recruitment and Retention Offer

- 4.1 Subject to the Committee's agreement CYPS will make the recruitment payments, as set out in the table above, to all newly appointed experienced permanent social workers, senior practitioners and team managers, where there is a statutory requirement for a social work qualification and accreditation to fulfil the duties of the post and who are appointed in target area T1 (Assessments and Safeguarding) on or after the 1st of January 2016

- 4.2 Subject to Committee's agreement, CYPS will start making a retention payment to all experienced permanent social workers, senior practitioners, team managers, , independent reviewing officers and child protection advisors, where there is a statutory requirement for a social work qualification and accreditation to fulfil the duties of the post. The first payments will be made in January 2016. These incentives have been targeted to where the service is having the most difficulty in recruiting and retaining and for posts that are business critical.
- 4.3 The recruitment and retention payments will not be consolidated into the basic pay of the employees receiving them. They will also not count as pensionable pay for the purposes of the Local Government Pension Scheme as payments made as inducements not to terminate employment before the payment is made are excluded from the definition of "pensionable pay" in the relevant Regulations. Apart from the recruitment incentive paid on appointment, the payments will only be paid in full if the employee has been in receipt of full pay for the previous 6 months. If for any reason other than being on maternity leave the employee has not been in receipt of full pay for that period (for example because s/he has on half sick pay) , the full payment will be reduced by a proportion, being the proportion of the 6 month period s/he was not in receipt of full pay. Where the employee has been on maternity leave during the 6 month period, the full payment will be reduced by a proportion , being the proportion of the 6 month period the employee was on maternity leave (other than the two weeks' compulsory maternity leave).
- 4.4 Newly recruited experienced social workers have a very clear 12 months programme of work and are reviewed against a capability framework at 3 months and 6 months. The recruitment payments can therefore be linked to the successful completion of probation and of the programme of work. For others, the retention payment will continue to be paid subject to compliance with professional standards.
- 4.5 Communication has taken place with affected staff and unions, subject to approval an individual letter and invitation to one of two workshops where Social Workers, Senior Practitioners, Team Managers and Trade Union representatives will have the new pay arrangements explained and questions answered.
- 4.6 The overall agency spend in Children services will reduce from £6m in 2014/15 to a forecasted £4.8m in 2015/16 (this includes the costs of recruitment and retention incentives). The table below illustrates the projected agency costs, cost of the scheme and overall net financial impact. In the targeted cohort (social workers, senior practitioners, team managers, independent reviewing officers and child protection advisors), the projected agency spend at Period 6 (September 2015) was £3.5m. Based on this cohort, comparison between the forecast of implementing the recruitment and retention payments and P6 projections of agency spend would make a £107k loss in 2015/16 and a £96k savings in 2016/17.

Implementation Costs

Type of Cost	2014/15 Agency Expenditure	2015/16 Projection of Expenditure	2016/17 Projection of Expenditure
Agency Expenditure	£6,017,000	£4,558,000	£2,100,000
Recruitment and Retention Costs	0	£165,250	£376,900
Variance on Agency Spend	0	(£1,293,750)	(£3,540,100)



Assumptions:

1. Always have 10% agency and turnover of 10%.
2. Retention payments based on 143 FTE.
3. Permanent staff conversions are based on the average on-cost for the role.

SW+SP+TM+IRO/CPA Cohort Expenditure	2015/16	2016/17
Projection	£3,620,875	£3,417,692
Variance (against P6 projection)	-£107,534	(£95,694)

The consolidated offer & incentives Financial & Non-Financial

- 4.7 In addition to the implementation of the recruitment and retention monetary award, the Council is now seeking to add further elements to the offer to bring us more in line with London boroughs and create a fully inclusive package, which demonstrates we are serious about investing in and valuing our staff.
- 4.8 **Health and Care Professional Council (HCPC) Registration** – payment of the registration fee for each member of staff who is appointed on or after the 1st of January 2016 and to all current permanent members of staff who require it by law. This will equate to a cost of approximately £18k per year, based on the registration fee of £90 per year. Whilst this will certainly not be a deciding factor in whether someone chooses to come and work for us, the HCPC Registration is a legal requirement for Social Workers to have in order to work and the Council funding this essential requirement will be seen as further investment in them and their professional roles.
- 4.9 **Refer a Friend Scheme payment of £250** payable to staff in post on or after the 1st of January 2016 who introduce and encourage someone they know to apply for a vacancy and if a successful appointment is made. The social work community is fairly close knit, word of mouth and referrals are extremely important in this line of work. Research suggests that a person would be more inclined to apply for a position in an organisation if the place is recommended by a friend/ colleague/ acquaintance and other Local Authorities, such as Bexley, Medway and Bromley recognise this. In addition, the recommendation from an already valued member of the team is an added benefit / dimension to the selection process and will nurture a shared responsibility for building the teams. Maximum expected cost of scheme would be £12.5k, based on the number of vacancies we currently hold. Payment of £250 will be made to the member of staff who makes the recommendation on or immediately after the appointment has been made and after the first day of work.
- 4.10 **Return to Practice Scheme** - despite the challenges of recruiting experienced staff, social workers returning from career breaks, extended maternity leave or from a period

in a parallel profession, are finding themselves unable to re-enter roles for which they are fully qualified. According to the College of Social Work, social workers want to return after a break but are struggling to find work. One block to re-registration is obtaining the required days in practice that is needed. On-line learning modules are available but these need to be completed in hand with practice based experience.

4.11.1 In England, anyone who has been out of practice for more than two years will need to undertake a period of updating skills and knowledge before they can re-register with the Health & Care Professions Councils. This can consist of supervised practice, formal/private study and the amount required depends on how long an individual has been out of practice:

- Out of practice for up to 2 years – no requirements
- Two to five years – 30 days of updating skills and knowledge
- Five years or more - 60 days of updating skills and knowledge

4.11.2 In order to facilitate a return to practice scheme, Haringey will offer the following:

- Work shadowing opportunities to fulfil appropriate number of practice days required
- Introduce supportive and assistant roles, specifically for people on this scheme, offering good work place experience and access to practitioner discussions/workshops and in-house training

4.12 ***Provide opportunities for unpaid work*** - The Council will continue work in conjunction with training providers to develop routes into social work including a volunteering scheme and 'return to social work' schemes (see 4.11) for former Social Workers. Again, according to the College of Social Work, 1 in 10 social workers is newly qualified and there is growing concern about job prospects amongst students, with many offering to work for free as they are unable to secure employment. Our own recent recruitment evenings in July, attendance at Community Care Fair in November and subsequent enquiries have supported this. By providing dedicated volunteering posts and ensuring the support mechanisms are in place, we will be able to "grow our own" workforce by ensuring our volunteers is able to gain the relevant experience and skills to apply for permanent vacancies.

4.12.1 The Council would provide dedicate volunteering posts for newly qualified social workers, who meet the following criteria:

- Have been interviewed for a permanent post, fall short of a qualifying score but show potential to fill the role with additional support and work based experience
- Are currently studying a social work qualification and during college/university holidays and outside of their placements, offer opportunities to gain more practical experience, which would all be subject to the relevant safeguarding clearance checks.

4.12.2 In order to facilitate a volunteering scheme, Haringey would establish the following in the first instance and would:

- Identify positions which could be suitable for this
- Identify tasks within each of the volunteering positions
- At appropriate points of the year commission Practice Educators to facilitate
- Determine level of expenses to be paid, if any, e.g. reasonable travel/daily subsistence etc.

- 4.13 **Scholarship Programme** – offer 5 funded places to become a fully qualified social worker, as part of and to expand our “grow your own scheme”. This would be open to students who are in their 2nd year of studying a degree in social work. This would be achieved by:
- Engaging and encouraging local organisations to help fund places as a way of giving back to the community. The cost of one place for 2 years of course fees only, is approximately £18,000 if undertaking course full time at university, or £10,800 if taking course via Open University.
 - Identifying suitable candidates via open competition and incorporating rigorous qualifying criteria e.g. must live in the borough, means tested, assessments, successful completion of 1st year of study and supported by university report etc
 - All future placements take place within Haringey.
 - Provide paid work experience during holidays.
- 4.14 **Increase our capacity to take on more ASYE places (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment)** – we know that we do not have trouble attracting newly qualified social workers by the response we have had to our recruitment events, however, the services cannot sustain a workforce of social workers with so little experience. In addition, existing managers do not have the resources to allocate the right amount of time and support to this group to ensure that their needs are being met in reaching the required standards and obtaining the right level skills/experience/supervision. In order to achieve this, CYPS will:
- Fully utilise the our internal resources (Team Managers/Senior Practitioners to supporting ASYE.
 - Offer places via open competitions each year.
- 4.15 **Supervision:** the Council needs to show that it is committed to enhancing the current practice of social work in Children’s Services and staff need to feel involved and supported in making this happen. Social Workers consistently report locally and nationally that good quality support and professional supervision is one of the most important factors in their employment. There are a number of incentives that the Council can re-commit to and introduce to modernise social work practices:
- 4.15.1 The Council must monitor and improve the quality of social work supervision and continue to reduce the average caseloads. There are several types of supervision, however, the three most commonly referred to are: clinical, managerial and professional supervision. The terms used in this area may sometimes overlap in practical term and it may sometimes be difficult to separate them from each other. In all case protected time should be made available.
- 4.15.2 **Clinical Supervision to:**
- Reflect on and review their current practices
 - Discuss individual cases in depth amongst their peers in a supportive environment
 - Identify changes needed in practice and identify training opportunities/needs
- 4.15.3 **Managerial Supervision to:**
- Review their performance
 - Set priorities/objectives in line with service needs
 - Identify training and continuing development needs
- 4.15.4 **Professional Supervision to:**
- Review professional standards to ensure these are being met
 - Keep up to date with professional developments

- Ensure that work is being carried out within professional codes of conduct and boundaries

4.16 As part of the CYPS Workforce Strategy which is currently in development, other developmental opportunities and benefits will be researched and appraised, such as further academic development (funding for MAs or PhDs) and would form part of a future update to Staffing and Remuneration panel.

5 Existing elements to promote more widely/consolidate:

5.1 It should be noted that the recruitment and retention offer is not just about monetary gain. The Council already has some non-financial benefits in place, however, these are not always widely advertised and the wider “package” needs to be consistently promoted at every opportunity. This will be effected via prominent positioning of the full offer on the corporate website in the Jobs/Careers Section; within a newly created recruitment brochure to be handed out at external recruitment fairs and as part of a candidate pack that will be attached to every advert that we place.

5.2 Professional Development

5.2.1 **Career Development and Succession Planning** are major draws when attracting and retaining staff; it shows that the Council is serious and cares about staff and their development. Whether they are looking for career progression or want to consolidate their experience in their existing roles, Children’s services is striving to ensure this is happening. CYPS now have 8 Practitioners doing a Consolidation Award in addition to another 6 doing Practice Teaching Training at Royal Holloway University of London. Also, Senior Practitioners offer Learning Seminars on regular basis to existing staff.

5.2.2 **Social Work Faculty** - As part of the overall Haringey offer, the Council is establishing the Faculty (part of the Haringey Academy) specifically designed to nurture and support the growth and development of our qualified social workers throughout their career. It will drive the Council’s ambition to be a learning organisation. The Council is developing meaningful partnerships with Higher Education Institutions to maximise the exchange of knowledge and learning and the application of skills and experience.

5.2.3 **Signs of Safety** - In addition, the Council is implementing Signs of Safety into social work practice across Haringey’s child protection system by supporting social workers to be competent and confident practitioners and is committed to supervision, support and continuing professional learning and development.

5.2.4 **Further qualifications** - The ILM Level 2 Award in Leadership and Team skills and The First Line Manager Development Programme, to support succession planning and helping social workers moving up their career ladder. The Council already offers development opportunities on Management and Supervision skills through the provision of social work placements for students.

5.2.5 **Multi-Disciplinary Training** through the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board and opening up access to Virtual School taught courses. (Virtual School supports Children in Care and teaches courses entirely or primarily through online methods).

5.2.6 **Haringey Fuse** – The Council has launched a new interactive Learning Platform, which encourages staff to engage in different ways of learning. Haringey Fuse is a new way of learning for the council. It’s an online social learning platform that is easy to use and allows you to share and discuss ideas. This has replaced the previous

Learning Pool, and contains essential training such as Safeguarding and Health & Safety standards. CYPS intend to proactively promote and encourage staff to access and use the learning platform.

5.2.7 ***Making Research Count:*** The Council is a member of a national collaborative research sharing initiative that offers access to workshops, seminars and developmental events. Also, we have limited number of licenses for Community Care Inform, a subscription website that holds a range of expert-written, practice-related information.

5.2.8 ***Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE):*** The Council also has a robust and well supported programme for newly qualified social workers. Moreover, we work with Frontline to support social work trainees to qualify and take up NQSW/ASYE placements.

5.3 **Environmental Focus**

5.3.1 ***Transport Links:*** CYPS intends to positively promote in recruitment drives and literature on how well connected the Borough is when getting to and from Haringey:

- Tube 10 Stations: Manor House, Turnpike Lane, Wood Green, Bounds Green, Seven Sisters, Tottenham Hale, Highgate, Finsbury Park, East Finchley, Seven Sisters.
- Train 7 Stations: Finsbury Park, Haringay, Hornsey, Alexandra Palace, Bowes Park, Tottenham Hale, Northumberland Park
- Overground 7 Stations: Haringay Green Lanes, Bruce Grove, Seven Sisters, South Tottenham, White Hart Lane, Crouch Hill, Stamford Hill
- Extensive bus routes covering the Borough
- Good Road Network (A406, A105, A10, M1, M11) + parking at reasonable costs i.e. from as little as £3.00 per day
- Getting to Wood Green: 17- 34min from Liverpool Street, Victoria, Waterloo, Euston, Kings Cross, London Bridge or Charring Cross.

5.3.2 ***Schools:*** For those candidates that look at moving to Haringey, we have 100% of our Special and Secondary Schools that are rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted; and 90% of our Primary Schools are rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. Moreover, we provide Child Care Vouchers for after-school clubs, nurseries and child minders.

5.3.3 ***Diversity/Culture:*** CYPS will promote the borough as exceptionally economically diverse and fast-changing with over 35% of people coming from ethnic minority backgrounds and an amazing 190 different languages spoken in our classrooms. In addition, it will mention the Tottenham re-generation project and benefits this will bring to the borough i.e. more jobs, better housing etc.

5.4 **Further initiatives undertaken:**

5.4.1 The Exit Interview and Questionnaire has been redesigned in order to understand why social workers are exiting the service and highlight issues in retention. This new process will offer exit interviews either face-to-face or over the telephone, with the option of speaking to someone other than their line manager. The conversation will be an opportunity to discuss and capture reasons for leaving. This information will then be used to develop further approaches to reduce staff turnover.

5.4.2 Attendance at external Social Worker events – Community Care London 2015 and Compass Jobs Fair London 2015, where Haringey spoke to around 300 delegates

who approached our stand. At the Community Care event, seminars, panel discussions and round table informal talks were undertaken on various topics, and 160 people attended the seminars given by Jon Abbey and Neelam Bhardwaja, hence raising the profile of Haringey. By continuing to do this, the Council is re-positioning Haringey Children's Services, being seen as industry thought leaders and raising our profile after a period of hibernation.

- 5.4.3 There is a Jobs & Career Pages microsite development in house with dedicated section for Children's Services and social work. This gives the Council the opportunity to engage with potential candidates by posting wider service information e.g. workforce plans, structure charts, video clips, L&D offer, insight in roles being offered and mini interviews with existing staff/managers.
- 5.4.4 A Children's Services recruitment brochure has been produced, promoting Haringey as a borough with great potential, outstanding schools, re-generation plans etc. In addition, it includes profiles on the Senior Leadership team and service specific information to include rewards & benefits. The brochures are handed out at recruitment events and are all part of the overall strategy in raising the Council's profile.
- 5.4.5 A campaign to recruit 11 permanent Team Managers with the support of external agencies is underway. The rolling campaign which has been underway since June, promotion of these roles at our recruitment evenings in July and attendance at the recent Community Care and Compass recruitment events, has not identified enough suitable candidates to fill these positions.
- 5.4.6 A programme to follow up with relevant and suitable ex-staff who have left the Council within the preceding 3-6 months, to identify if they are happy with their move and if they may want to return to Haringey. They would need to meet the qualifying criteria i.e. good performance/sickness record before we make contact.

6 How will we measure the success?

- 6.1 CYPS believes it's important that we are able to understand what success might look like when the above recruitment & retention initiatives are all imbedded in the service. Measures of Success would be:
 - Agency reduction plan (below 15% of full time equivalent establishment)
 - Permanency above (90%)
 - "Grow your own" (volume of internal recruitment and scholarship)
 - Staff turnover reduction (to be below London Average of 21%)
 - Sickness rates (to be at or below Council target of 6 days)

7. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Assistant Director of Corporate Governance

- 7.1 The proposed arrangements for the making of recruitment and retention payments include the making of payments to the relevant employees which are linked to successful completion of probation, of a 12 month programme of work and to compliance with professional standards. The Equality Act 2010 requires men and women doing like work, work rated as equivalent under the Council's job evaluation scheme and work of equal value to be paid the same unless the difference in pay because of a material factor. Performance-related pay is capable of being a material factor. However it will be important to ensure that the assessment by line managers of whether a member of staff has satisfactorily completed probation/ a 12 month programme of work or has complied with professional standards is not tainted by unconscious gender (or other unlawful) discrimination that might leave the proposed payment open to challenge under the Equality Act. Training and guidance for line managers on the assessment of performance may reduce the risk of such unconscious discrimination. It would also be advisable to compare on an ongoing basis the make up by protected characteristics such as age, disability, race as well as gender of those staff receiving the payments with the make up by those protected characteristics of those staff not receiving the payments. This will allow the detection of potential discrimination against staff with particular protected characteristics.
- 7.2 The proposed arrangements may also lead to a potential breach of the Equality Act in that social worker staff receiving the proposed payments may be paid more than other Council employees who are not social workers, but whose work is rated as equivalent to (or more demanding than) the social workers' work under the Council's job evaluation scheme. Difficulties in recruitment and retention can be a material factor justifying the difference of pay in such circumstances. However it will be important to keep the proposed arrangements under review and to reduce or end the recruitment and retention payments if market conditions warrant this. Given this, it will be advisable to include in the contracts of any staff eligible to receive these payments a provision allowing the Council to end or vary the entitlement the staff member would otherwise have to receive these payments in the future.
- 7.3 Women on maternity leave have special protections by virtue of section 74(6) and 74(7) of the Equality Act 2010. This provides that a woman shall receive the following contractual payments if they would, apart from her maternity leave, have been paid :
- Pay (including pay by way of bonus) in respect of times before she begins her statutory maternity leave
 - Pay by way of bonus in respect of times when she is on compulsory maternity leave
 - Pay by way of bonus in respect of times after the end of the protected period
- 7.3.1 As the recruitment and retention payments are also linked to performance they are arguably "bonuses" for the purposes of the Act. The Act does not define what a "bonus" is. The proposals in paragraph 4.3 for the reduction in certain circumstances of these payments comply with section 74(6) and 74(7). Although on the face of it they would put at a disadvantage a Council employee with a disability where the disability causes the employee to be absent from work and to be on half or nil sick pay, it is unlikely this would be found unlawful by an Employment Tribunal.

Chief Finance Officer

- 7.4 Spending on staffing is a very significant part of the costs of Children's Services. The staffing budget for the whole of the Directorate is £24.4m, of which £13.6m is within the Safeguarding and Social Care division. In general, agency staff cost more than

equivalent permanent employees and so the high level of reliance on agency workers is contributing to an overall £570k overspend on staffing in the Safeguarding and Social Care Division.

- 7.5 This report proposes a range of initiatives to improve recruitment and retention of social work staff, all of which will require additional expenditure. The introduction of recruitment and retention allowances and professional subscriptions will have an initial cost of around £330k a year for existing permanent social workers. Assuming a differential cost of around £10k to £12k between agency and permanent staff then at least 30 new social workers would need to be recruited in order for this initiative to be cost neutral. There is no additional funding available for this initiative so it should only be implemented if there is a high degree of confidence that it will contribute to increased recruitment and lower costs. It must be recognised that whatever the strict contractual situation it may still be difficult to remove these allowances once they are granted without an impact on staff morale and retention. However if these targets are achieved it should bring great benefits to the service – not only reduced costs, but also greater stability and perhaps quality.
- 7.6 The other elements of the strategy will also have costs, especially the scholarship scheme and potentially the return to practice scheme. The costs of these schemes however, is dependent on the size of the scheme and number of people involved and can be more easily flexed from year to year.
- 7.7 Over the course of the MTFs Children's Services are expected to make substantial staffing savings of around £3m. The costs of all the initiatives contained within this strategy must be met from within the final reduced budget. Obviously, in general the higher the salary costs per post, the fewer posts will be affordable within a fixed budget. However, improvements in the stability and quality of the workforce may well compensate for this.
- 7.8 Finally, it is important to consider whether there could be any potential adverse side effects – either increasing the competition for social workers in our local market (leading to a bidding war) or the creation of demand for similar initiatives in related work sectors (such as Adults Social Workers or non Social Work Children's Professions.)

8. Use of Appendices

- *Appendix 1: New benchmarking data*
- *Appendix 2: EqlA*

9. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- *Children's Services Recruitment & Retention Offer* report presented to Staffing and Remuneration Committee on the 14th of September 2015.