

Reference	
Executive Director	Jeanette Richards
Cabinet Member	Cllr Lucy Smith

Section A

Service Area	Social Care & Safeguarding
Budget Option Description	Edge of Care review

Budget Reduction Proposal – Detail and Objectives

Edge of Care work requires a clear, prompt, and skilled intervention with families to avoid unnecessary care entry or to facilitate a timely return home/within family networks from short-term care episodes. The service remit and criteria, referral and access to this resource must be clearly defined and easily accessible for the system at the right level to capitalise on timely response that in most cases could help families remain together where safe and possible to do so.

To support implementing the Edge of Care service, there needs to be greater clarity about what services are available to support families at the right level and safeguarding responsibilities need to be shared within the partnership network. Step-up and step-down processes need to be fluid and focused on intervention at the right level (i.e., after an intense, short term family focused intervention on edge of care at Level 5, the family could be stepped down for some youth mentoring work if that would help with maintaining the improved family functioning in the long term).

Family Group Conferencing (FGC) has a role in supporting with early family disfunction/prevent escalation into Level 5 services and need for specialist Edge of Care intervention, in line with services being delivered at the right level. This would ensure access to Edge of Care services as a last possible intervention before care entry, and not as the go-to service before any other intervention is tried.

Feedback from our Sector Led Improvement Partner (SLIP) Essex County Council advises of a need for protected space to develop a specific skillset and carry out specialist, intensive change work.

The proposed model works with the whole family together and uses a clear methodology for intervention (Solution Focused) which has tended to promote sustainable change faster without necessarily a need for separate work.

We will implement the following:

- Preventative work aiming to keep families together within Early Help and FGC.
- A closer analysis of the data around the unplanned care entry cohorts (i.e. pre-teens, adolescents and 16/17 year olds) to better understand trends and factors impacting on families and reasons for care entry.
- The Edge of Care service will be a secondary service sitting within Level 5. We will implement a service that is flexible, adaptive and prompt in offering a planned, specialist whole family intervention as opposed to reactive crisis support.
- Clear remit and referral criteria for the service will be developed along with clear referral and decision pathway – decision making will be via a resource allocation panel with oversight at Practice Director level.
- Referrals will come in via the allocated SW (IRT, CIN, Safeguarding, SGO teams) at point of parents and young people's relationship breaking down or of an unplanned short-term episode of care with a clear plan of return home where safe and possible to do so.
- The work may be stepped down to Early Help once relationships are improved and risk of care entry is reduced for additional support as needed (i.e., parenting support, 1:1 emotional support for the young person etc.).

- Once the service is established, consideration will be given to extending the offer to supporting placement stability work (for long term placements where there is a risk of placement breakdown).
- The service will hold the view that family networks are the best place for children and young people to thrive and would hold their nerve through periods of crisis within families.
- We will adopt a clear approach that fits with a BRIEF solution focused intervention model which promotes collaboration and agency within the families we support (and that would also fit with the overall family focused approach of the organisation).

This proposal will target a reduction in the looked after children cohort of 24 children, which is an approximate saving of £1.2M but will require time for the service to be established

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Budget Reduction (£m)	£0m	£506k	£1.2m
Staffing Reduction (FTE)	0		

Section B

What impact does the proposal have on:

Property
N/A
Service Delivery
This will improve service delivery for those families that require intensive support, complementing the Family Safeguarding model. This will build on the improvements that Bury Children Services have already made, contribute to practice that is more aligned to the rest of Greater Manchester and better serve our children and families - improving outcomes.
Organisation (Including Other Directorates/Services)
None
Workforce – Number of posts likely to be affected.
Creation of posts within Children’s restructure already approved and funded from April 2023: 1 x Team Manager, 3 x social workers, 3 x family support workers
Communities and Service Users
Bury2gether; parents; young people; Children with SEND; Children with Disabilities

Other Partner Organisations
N/A

Section C

Key Risks and Mitigations

Risks	Mitigations
Failure to recruit	New comms and recruitment strategy implemented

Key Delivery Milestones

Include timescales for procurement, commissioning changes etc.

Milestone	Timeline
Recruit team	April 2023
Complete training	May 2023
SLIP mentoring and evaluation	July 2023

Section D

Consultation Required?	Completed
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	Start Date	End Date
Staff		
Trade Unions		
Public		
Service User		
Other		

Equality Impact

Is there potential for the proposed budget reduction to have a disproportionate/ adverse impact on any of the following?

Disabled people	No
Particular Ethnic Groups	No
Men or Women (including impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	No
People who are married or in a civil partnership	No
People of particular sexual orientation	No
People who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or undergone a process or part of a process of gender assignment	No
People on low incomes	No
People in particular age groups	No
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	No

EIA Required?	Yes
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Section E

Financial Implications and Investment Requirements

Investment requirements – Revenue and Capital

Restructure investment already agreed and funding in place from April 2023.

Finance Comments – Will the proposal deliver the savings and within the agreed timescales?

The savings have been phased to commence in 2024/25 to allow time for the new team and ways of working to become embedded