

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 10 January 2024
Subject:	Children and Young People’s Directorate – Senior Management Structure	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is to seek Cabinet approval to progress to formal consultation with affected staff on the restructure of the Children & Young People’s Directorate Management structure.
- 1.2 This proposal builds on the significant restructuring and realignment work undertaken implemented in October 2022 and September 2023 in support of Early Help and Social Care service improvement and the delivery of our Local Area SEND transformation plan and Project Safety Valve.
- 1.3 This phase of the restructure seeks to review Directorate management structures, seeking improved alignment and integration of complementary portfolios, to strengthen the delivery of multi-agency support services delivered to children. It responds to the current substantive vacancies within the three senior leadership posts in the Department and seeks to take this opportunity to align leadership arrangements across two (as opposed to three) substantive divisions going forwards. The proposals are affordable within the current budget and generate a small saving of circa. £9,000.

2.0 Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Agree in principle the commencement of consultation with affected staff in January 2024 on the proposed structural changes to the Children & Young People’s Directorate, as set out within the body of this report.
2. As part of these proposals, recommend to Council that the vacant post of Director of Social Care Practice (Chief Officer Band E, £93,102-£101,596) be redesignated as Director of Social Care & Early Help, evaluated as (Chief Officer Band F, £103,767-£112,636) to reflect the post’s expanded portfolio.
3. Delegates authority to the Executive Director of Children and Young People and the Cabinet Members for Children’s Services and HR and Corporate Affairs, in consultation with the Director of People and Inclusion, Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer to consider responses

received from the consultation and produce a final version of the structure.

2.1 Reasons for recommendation(s)

The proposal sets out a plan to support the transformation of Children's Services, necessary to both integrate and align services and to ensure the structure of the Department is supportive of the next phase of our delivery of the OFSTED Improvement Plan, Local Area SEND Transformation and Project Safety Valve activity and readiness for revised statutory guidance.

This proposal is, in the view of the Executive Director (Children & Young People), necessary to improve outcomes for children and families in Bury and to meet the requirement to improve, imposed upon us by the DfE, and to deliver transformation across our services.

The proposal will support effective service delivery of Children's Services, via stronger integration of key services, bringing all early help and support services under the leadership of the proposed director of social work and early help, and aligning children vulnerable in education services under the responsibility of the virtual school,

The proposed planning reflects the requirements of recent statutory guidance, the Revised Working Together Guidance 2023, and the Children's Social Care National Framework 2023. The former is clear that within early help the role of education and childcare settings is strengthened and made explicit and within safeguarding it clarifies a broader range of practitioners who can be the lead practitioner for children receiving child in need support (s17 CA) such as early help practitioners.

Children's Social Care National framework is central to setting the direction for practice in children's social care as part of the reforms set out in Stable Homes, Built on Love.

The guidance recognises the importance of school attendance and attainment being necessary in securing successful outcomes for our children, the virtual head, and the importance of being aspirational for our children, who receive support from a social worker, stating that.

Virtual School Heads are empowered and supported in their leadership roles to work across children's social care, and with educational settings, to help improve the attendance and attainment of children and young people.

2.2 Alternative options considered and rejected.

The rationale for the proposal is driven by our aspiration that all children and young people in Bury reach their potential, are happy, healthy, and safe and are therefore able to make the best use of their skills to lead independent and successful lives.

The Department is committed to delivering service improvement across the whole gamut of its responsibilities encompassing, Education, SEND, Early Help and Social Care. Current departmental structures could be maintained, although a recent recruitment exercise for the post of Director of Social Care

Practice was unsuccessful, and market testing broadly supports the combined Social Care and Early Help role as being a better positioned proposition.

3 Background

3.1 The basic senior management structure of the Children & Young People's Directorate was established in 2019. Since that time, there have been a number of significant developments and changes that have impacted on the directorate, including:

- The "Inadequate" OFSTED judgment in December 2021
- Ongoing work to improve and transform services for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) linked to the new national inspection framework here.
- Entry into Project Safety Valve in partnership with Department of Education
- A significant investment in and restructure of the Social Care and Safeguarding Division implemented in October 2022, increasing frontline capacity in services.
- A significant restructure of the Education & Skills Division implemented in September 2023, realigning services to meet statutory duties and delivering of Send Transformation and Project Safety Valve commitments.
- Transfer of Business Support functions out of and subsequently back into the Directorate
- Transfer of Commissioning responsibilities out of the Directorate.

3.2 As the Directorate progresses with the improvement journey, there has been an opportunity to reflect on the operating model. Through this reflection it has become apparent that effectiveness could be improved through a further strategic realignment of management responsibilities.

4 Background

4.1 The Children & Young People Directorate currently is organised into three operational divisions of:

- Social Care & Safeguarding, with responsibility for statutory social care provision for children & young people.
- Education & Skills, with responsibility for the local education system, including school assets, governance, admissions, and assurance, as well as education safeguarding and children & young people with SEND.
- Early Help & School Readiness, with responsibility for non-statutory support to children and families, early intervention, and early years provision.

4.2 At the present time, all three Director / Assistant Director level posts are substantively vacant. Strong interim arrangements are now in place. However, these changes have provided a timely opportunity to consider roles and responsibilities and best align these to service requirements.

- 4.3 The government response to the Independent Review of Social Care, Stable Homes Build on Love (February 2023), has emphasised the need for Local Authorities to support families at the lowest level, referred to as 'Family Help'. As part of the government's Families First Pathfinder programme, some Local Authorities are testing out how Children's Services might support children in need (CIN) alongside families in need of Early Help, in the future. As the Pathfinders share their findings, it is likely that Children's Services, will move to working with families in a way that is more joined up between Children's Social Care and Early Help.
- 4.4 Taking the opportunity now to have both children's social care and early help sitting under the same Director would bring consistency and oversight around future developments and ensure whole system working. When Bury moves to respond to the government reforms, developing subsequent transformation activity, will be more efficient, if undertaken under the same Director.
- 4.5 It is also worth highlighting the role of the Virtual School in this context. The strategic leadership from the virtual school in Bury is delivering improved outcomes for our looked after children, both in terms of progress and attainment, this has been achieved via strengthened partnership arrangements underpinned by strong advocacy for our looked after children.
- 4.6 The Virtual School's role has expanded considerably in the last three years, with extended duties to oversee the education of children on Child in Need and Child Protection plans and a new duty to oversee children on kinship care, as well as the established duties to promote the education of looked-after children (statutory since 2014) and previously looked-after children (statutory since 2018). All these children have common educational vulnerabilities; children with a social worker are far more likely to be permanently excluded and/or suspended from school, to be persistently absent, on part-time timetables or even not in education at all. For this reason, Virtual School management of the Attendance, Children Missing in Education (CME) and Elective Home Education (EHE) teams will ensure robust leadership and oversight of these teams and enable effective multi-agency working across the LA and with schools and families. The proposal will harness the opportunity to bring together all LA services which support vulnerable children in education within one service, under the strategic leadership of the Virtual School.

5.0 Proposals

5.1 Directorate Structure

- 5.1.1 It is proposed that the Directorate is reorganised from three delivery divisions to two. This will require the disestablishment of the Early Help and School Readiness Division, and the transfer of the three core functions of the Division (Family Help, Family Resource and Early Years) to a reconfigured Social Care and Early Help Division.

- 5.1.2 The vacant post of Assistant Director (Early Help & School Readiness) will be disestablished, with all areas of work transferred under the strategic responsibility of the reconfigured post of Director of Social Care & Early Help. The work needed to fully integrate Early Help Services into the new operating model is complex, and further activity is planned during 2024 to seek to align service areas that provide Early Help Services.
- 5.1.3 To ensure stability of the Early Help services during this transitional period, it is proposed to establish a fixed term role of Head of Service (Early Help) for a period of no longer than 12 months. This post will report to the Director of Social Care & Early Help and will assume line management responsibility for the posts that previously reported to the Assistant Director (Early Help & School Readiness). The post will provide the necessary operational management capacity to ensure these key services remain robustly supported and supervised as the overall service structure is developed during 2024. This post is assessed as Chief Officer Band B (£68,714 - £74,619) It is proposed that this role is filled on an acting basis by the Head of Service (Family Help).
- 5.1.4 It is proposed that the Children's Commissioning function is transferred from the Health & Adult Care Department to the Children & Young People Department. This recognises the integral nature of effective commissioning in the delivery of high-quality services for children and young people, as well as the central role the function plays in ensuring the delivery of cost efficiencies for the council. A wider review of the operation of this function will be brought forward separately and the current proposals relate to a transfer of strategic leadership accountability only.
- 5.1.5 The proposal also recognises the transfer of Business Support functions into the Directorate from the Corporate Core in November 2023. The proposal seeks to build on this through the transfer of a number of specialist stand-alone posts and responsibilities from across the Directorate under the Strategy, Assurance & Reform service area, seeking to reduce the risk associated with single points of failure and providing more robust integrated management and support arrangements. Positioning these posts in the cross-cutting Strategy, Assurance & Reform service will support their operation across the entire Department more effectively than their current location within a specific division.
- 5.1.6 Further details of the services and posts proposed to be amended are set out below.

5.2 Social Care & Early Help Division

- 5.2.1 The existing post of Director of Social Care Practice (Chief Officer Band E, £93,102-£101,596) will be reviewed and redesignated as Director of Social Care and Early Help. The post will assume strategic responsibility for the services currently located within the Early Help & School Readiness Division. To recognise this, change the job description of the post has been reviewed and evaluated at (Chief Officer Band F, £103,767-£112,636). Because this change relates to a post with a remuneration package greater than £100k

approval for this is, ultimately, a matter for Council. At present the Director of Social Care Practice is filled on an interim basis and this individual has the skills and experience to continue to oversee the expanded portfolio pending substantive recruitment.

- 5.2.2 The post of Head of Service (Family Help) will transfer to the Social Care & Early Help Division, reporting to the interim Head of Service (Early Help). The post will continue to manage the Early Help Locality Teams. - Responsibility for management of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub will transfer from the Family Help service to the management of the Head of Service (Initial Response and Complex Safeguarding). This will locate all initial contacts / front door services in one structure, allowing improved oversight and management. The job description for this post has been reviewed and there is no proposed change to remuneration.
- 5.2.3 The post of Service Manager (Family Resource) will transfer to the Social Care & Early Help Division, reporting to the interim Head of Service (Early Help). The post will continue to manage the current area of work it is responsible for, plus responsibility for the management of the Children's Right's Service will transfer to it from Head of Service (CASS & Leaving Care). The job description for this post has been reviewed and there is no proposed change to remuneration.
- 5.2.4 The post of Service Manager (Early Years) will transfer to the Social Care & Early Help Division, reporting to the interim Head of Service (Early Help). The post will continue to manage the current area of work it is responsible for. There are no proposed changes to the duties, responsibilities, or grading of the role.
- 5.2.5 The posts of Principal Social Worker (Chief Officer Band A) and Service Manager (Quality & Assurance) (SM1 Grade) will be disestablished and replaced with a new Head of Service (Social Work Development & Quality Assurance). This post will assume the professional responsibilities of Principal Social Worker, and lead on workforce development and safeguarding, as well as management of the IRO/CP Service and LADO. It is proposed this role be graded as Chief Officer Band A.
- 5.2.6 The role of Principal Social Worker, fits well with both the practice and objective scrutiny resource of the Department. It is common for these roles to be joined together and to include the responsibilities and function as Head of Safeguarding. The creation of this new role will strengthen the oversight of quality of practice and assurance across the Directorate.
- 5.2.7 The post of Team Manager, Complex Safeguarding will transfer to the line management and responsibility of the Head of Service for CASS and Care Leavers.

5.3 Education & Skills Division

- 5.3.1 The existing post of Director of Education & Skills will remain unchanged.

- 5.3.2 It is proposed to amend the portfolio of the post of Strategic Lead (School System). It is recognised this is a key period of transformation in the Education sector, with an increasing pace of academisation, focus of pupil place planning and sufficiency, and a significant programme of capital investment. To ensure appropriate strategic capacity to support the school system, responsibility for oversight of safeguarding functions will be removed from this post. The job description for this position has been reviewed and there is no proposed change in grade. The post will be retitled Head of Service (School System) to ensure consistency of job titles across the Department.
- 5.3.3 Amendments will be made to the role of Senior School Assurance Officer. The post will retain responsibility for the management of School Assurance and Governor Support functions. However, current duties in relation to the management of Safeguarding in Education will transfer as detailed below. The job description for this position has been reviewed and it is proposed the post grading remains unchanged at Soulbury EIP 20-23 (£65,794 - £69,586)
- 5.3.4 The statutory duties of the post of Virtual Head Teacher will be enhanced and amalgamated with additional responsibilities in relation to safeguarding in education (as detailed above) to form a new post of Head of Service (Virtual School and Vulnerable Children & Young People in Education). This post will report to the Director of Education and Skills and take managerial responsibility for the Virtual School and the Attendance, Exclusions and Community Education Service. This post has been assessed at Soulbury EIP 23-26 (£69,586 – £73,173), an increase from the current Soulbury 17-20 (£62,440 - £65,794)
- 5.3.5 To ensure appropriate managerial capacity, a new post of Deputy Head of Virtual School will be established. This role will support the Head of Service (Virtual School and Vulnerable Children & Young People in Education) in the discharge of statutory responsibilities and will provide operational line management for employees in the Virtual School. This post has been assessed at Soulbury EIP 13-16 (£56,976 - £61,106)
- 5.3.6 The existing post of Strategic Lead (SEND & Inclusion) will be redesignated as Head of Service (SEND & Inclusion), to ensure consistency of job titles across the Department. The portfolio of services managed by this post will remain as established in the Education & Skills Restructure implemented in September 2023, with the exception of the Children with Disabilities team that will transfer to the Social Care & Early Help Division, under the Head of Service (Initial Response & Contextual Safeguarding).
- 5.3.7 The job description for this position has been reviewed to reflect the additional accountabilities linked to the post in the context of the Council's Project Safety Valve participation and strategic SEND improvement work . The post has been assessed as Chief Officer Band B (£68,714 - £74,619), an increase from the current Chief officer Band A designation.

5.4 Strategy, Assurance & Reform

- 5.4.1 The Strategy, Assurance and Reform Service has expanded significantly due to the transfer of 30 FTE Business Support Staff to the unit in November 2023. The posts of Head of Strategy, Assurance & Reform and Children's Improvement Manager have been reviewed to incorporate these additional responsibilities, with no change in grade.
- 5.4.2 To fully reflect the work of the service across the Department, it is proposed the service area will sit outside of the two main operational divisions, with the Head of Strategy, Assurance & Reform proposed to report directly to the Executive Director of Children & Young People.
- 5.4.3 In addition, several specialists "stand alone" posts have been identified from across the Department which would be better delivered from within this function with some associated amendments to support resilience and reduce duplication. It is considered that these posts currently work in isolation, and there is a risk of them becoming single points of failure for the Directorate.

5.5 Children's Commissioning

- 5.5.1 It is proposed that the Children's Commissioning Team are transferred from their current location in Health & Adult Care into the Children & Young People Directorate.
- 5.5.2 The operational structure of the service area is currently under formal review; however, it is apparent that operationally the oversight and management of the service will need to be integrated directly into the Children & Young people Management structure to deliver the necessary improvements. It is therefore proposed that the line management of the Head of Childrens Commissioning transfers to report to the Executive Director of Children & Young People, with further consultation to take place with the service on a future operating model once the full review has completed.

6.0 Consultation

- 6.1 Should approval to progress to consultation be given, agreement from the Trade Unions will be sought to undertake employee consultation.
- 6.2 The formal consultation is proposed to commence in January when full consultation documentation will be provided to employees and trade unions. Consultation would be for a period of 30 days. Consultation will include a series of open sessions, one to one meeting with all the affected staff. There will be open engagement meetings for the wider directorate.
- 6.3 The proposals will directly impact on 23 individuals in the structure who will form the core consultation group.
- 6.4 It is anticipated that implementation of any new structure would be in place prior to 1st April 2024.

6.5 The majority of changes proposed reflect primarily changes to reporting lines and management responsibilities and accountabilities. In the small number of incidences where there is the potential for employees to be displaced, suitable alternative roles are available across the Directorate structure and the details of this will be considered and confirmed as part of the formal consultation process.

7.0 Service Restructure Proposals

The appendices attached outline both the current structure and the details of the proposed restructure of the Children & Young People Department.

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9.0 Links with the Corporate Priorities:

- 9.1 Our vision for Children's Services links to the Let's Do It Strategy and our values and principals.
- 9.2 With the support of the wider council and its partners we have set out a plan of transformation which is ambitious and seeks to improve the lived experience of children and therefore their outcomes during childhood and beyond, to achieve this a focus upon an effective offer of help and support to those families who face complex issues is required.
- 9.3 A full departmental restructure is necessary to drive forward our transformation and improve the lived experience of children and young people.
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10.0 Equality Impact and Considerations:

- 10.1 These changes are being delivered within the Councils approved policy framework that has been subject to full equality analysis. No adverse service changes are anticipated to result from the proposals.
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11.0 Environmental Impact and Considerations:

N/A

12.0 Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Failure to recruit to posts within the new structure	Salaries are considered as competitive within the market, and management spans of control / portfolios reasonable and coherent.
Instability of management structure	Robust arrangements in place in respect of interim cover while the new structure is consulted upon and recruited to

13.0 Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications arising from the proposed consultation.

14.0 Financial Implications

The costs of this management structure form part of the budget proposals in the budget report being presented to Cabinet in February and were contained in the projected revenue budget for 2024/25 presented to Cabinet on 13/12/23.

15.0 Background papers:

- Appendix 1 – Current Structure
- Appendix 2 – Proposed Structure

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.