

**OFFICER DELEGATION SCHEME
RECORD OF DECISION**

TO BE UPLOADED TO THE INTERNET BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Date: 09/02/2024	Ref No: 2211
Responsible Officer: Beverley Johson	
Type of Decision (please refer to MO Guidance):	
Key <input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Key <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Freedom of Information Status: <i>(can the report go in the public domain)</i> Yes	
Title/Subject matter: Best Interests Assessor (BIA) Training	
Budget/Strategy/Policy/Compliance:	
(i) Is the decision within an Approved Budget?	Yes
(ii) Is the decision in conflict with the council's policies, strategies or relevant service plans?	No
(iii) Does the decision amend existing or raise new policy issues?	No
(iv) Is the decision significant and/or does it meet the £100,000 threshold for recording?	No
Equality Impact Assessment [Does this decision change policy, procedure or working practice or negatively impact on a group of people? If yes – complete EIA and summarise issues identified and recommendations – forward EIA to Corporate HR]	The training will ensure that there are increased continued professional development options for social workers in keeping with the Social Work Workforce Strategy 23 – 26. This will have a positive impact for Social Worker retention rates

Summary:

The introduction of the Social Work Workforce Strategy 23 – 26 developed in 2022 in collaboration with practitioners and managers and launched in 2023, included a commitment to introduce a more specialised training offer for Experienced Social Workers (ESW).

Feedback from this cohort of staff when asked what would keep them working in Bury were opportunities for wider accredited academic training in specialised topics, including Best Interest Assessor training.

Best Interest Assessor Training and refresher courses are provided by Manchester University.

Once a Social Worker has undertaken the training, they are qualified to undertake Mental Capacity Act assessments and decide in conjunction with a sec 12 doctor (mental Health) and relevant people if a Deprivation of Liberty is in the person's best interest. These assessments may take place in care homes or in the community where the person lacks capacity to consent to care and treatment and they are under continuous supervision, control, and not free to leave.

7 ESW's have expressed an interest in undertaking Best Interest Assessor training, a further 7 ESW's already hold the qualification but require annual refresher training to maintain currency.

Wards affected: All, this service covers the whole of Bury.

Consultations: N/A

Scrutiny & Review Committee Interest:

Decision [with reasons]

Options considered:

Option 1 (preferred option)

To meet our commitment towards improving and retaining Experienced Social Workers (ESW), designated difficult to recruit to posts, outlined in the Social Work Workforce Strategy 23 – 26, funding is requested for up to 6 places on the Best Interest Assessor (BIA), training on a rolling annual intake.

Funding is also requested for up to 14 refresher course places on an annual rolling intake for already qualified and newly qualified BIA's to maintain currency and be able to continue to practice.

BIA qualified ESW's would lead on and support other practitioners on their teams with complex Mental Capacity Assessment cases and applications to the Court of Protection for community DoLS.

This model would also be in keeping with the enhanced CPD offer in the Social Work Workforce Strategy and would be an attractive incentive for hard to recruit to posts.

Option 2

Do nothing.

This is not the preferred option as we are still losing ESW's to other local authorities and are currently holding 17.5 ESW vacant posts across the ASC system.

Costs

The annual cost for BIA training and BIA refresher training is summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Description	Number of ESWs	Cost (£)	Total Cost (£)
Best Interests Assessor (BIA) Training	6	1,350	8,100
Best Interests Assessor (BIA) Refresher Training	14	135	1,890
Total			9,990


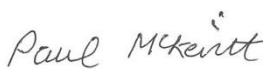

Finance Comments

The total cost of the proposal is £9,900 and will be managed within the existing budget provision of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLS) budget (SGV1000).

As part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle, Finance and Budget holders will track the expenditure linked to the extended contractor costs and the Application Development officer post ensuring that all expenditure aligns to the funding provided. Any financial risks/pressures identified will be highlighted to the Director of Adult Social Services as part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle whereby an action plan will be deployed to mitigate any financial risks/ pressures.

Recommendation:

SLT are asked to please agree option 1.

Decision made by:	Signature:	Date:
Executive Director – Health and Adult Care		26 February 2024
Section 151 Officer		26 February 2024
Director of People and Inclusion	NA	
Members Consulted [see note 1 below]		
Cabinet Member		7 March 2024
Lead Member - HR	NA	
Opposition Spokesperson	NA	

Notes

1. Where, in accordance with the requirements of the Officer Delegation Scheme, a Chief Officer consults with the appropriate Cabinet Member they must sign the form so as to confirm that they have been consulted and that they agree with the proposed action. The signature of the Opposition Spokesperson should be obtained if required, to confirm that he/she has been consulted. Please refer to the MO Guidance.
2. **This form must not be used for urgent decisions.**
3. Where there is any doubt, Corporate Directors should err on the side of caution and seek advice from the Council’s Monitoring Officer.