

**OFFICER DELEGATION SCHEME  
RECORD OF DECISION**

**TO BE UPLOADED TO THE INTERNET BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

<b>Date:</b> December 2023	<b>Ref No:</b> 2196
<b>Responsible Officer:</b> Beverley Johnson - Principal Social Worker	
<b>Type of Decision (please refer to MO Guidance):</b>	
<b>Key</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Non-Key</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Freedom of Information Status:</b> <i>(can the report go in the public domain)</i> Yes	
<b>Title/Subject matter:</b>  Pilot external recruitment of Apprentice Social Work Degree students	
<b>Budget/Strategy/Policy/Compliance:</b>	
(i) Is the decision within an Approved Budget?	Y
(ii) Is the decision in conflict with the council's policies, strategies or relevant service plans?	N
(iii) Does the decision amend existing or raise new policy issues?	N
(iv) Is the decision significant and/or does it meet the £100,000 threshold for recording?	N

**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]

This will open up new opportunities in the recruitment pipeline into entry level of professional social work practice. The Social Work Degree Apprenticeship (SWDA) model was introduced in Bury in 2020, initially to offer opportunities to social care officers/review officers who had gained experience of the Social Work role but had not been able to undertake the training. We have successfully seen 2 SCO's qualify as Social Workers using the programme, there are currently 6 SCO/RO's on the programme due to qualify in March 2025.

**Summary:**

Successful introduction of the Social Work Degree Apprenticeship has meant we have been able to train our next 8 Qualified Social Workers (QSW's) by offering the programme to permanently employed Social Care Officers (SCO's) and Review Officers (RO's).

A further 2 SCO's and 1 RO are expected to commence the September 2024 cohort. We have successfully demonstrated a "grow our own" approach to Social Work recruitment.

This model does require managers of apprentices to agree for apprentices to be given permission to attend university weekly term time and be able to manage the needs of the service.

The success rate of this programme means that there are very few (SCO or RO) internal posts remaining in the system that are not in the upper age bracket.

We now need to look externally to recruit at entry level into the apprenticeship to maintain our pipeline of future Qualified Social Workers.

There is currently a vacant Review Officer post (Grade 9) in the reviewing team which we would like to use to pilot the external recruitment for the Apprenticeship Social Work Degree training course in September 2024. The manager and the review team practitioners are very supportive of this approach of recruitment.

The Practice Learning Lead has established links with Persona and their Rising Star's award programme that aims to prepare people undertaking health and social care training for professional practice, and our inhouse Intermediate Care team, both have practitioners who may be suitable to apply for the apprenticeship.

**Wards affected:**

**Consultations:**

**Scrutiny & Review Committee Interest:**

**Options considered:**

**Option 1** (preferred option)

Commence a pilot external recruitment campaign for an Apprentice Social Work Degree post. This would benefit people in our in-house and stakeholder services being able to apply for entry into professional practice.

If successful, this model of recruitment could be expanded to take up to 4 apprentices very other year.

**For the purposes of the pilot there will be no change to the establishment of the review team, if the post is recruited to externally, we will use apprenticeship standard 6 pay scale (see cost section below).**

**Option 2**

Continue to recruit into the vacant SCO and RO posts at Grade 9 costs as above with a caveat in the job advert that there is a requirement to undertake the SWDA within 12 months of commencing the post.

**COST**

Option 1 presents as an opportunity to use the standard 6 Apprenticeship job description, pay grade £31,299 (including on costs) these posts are currently graded as Review Officer grade 9 £42,019 (including on costs at current pay scales).

This would achieve an overall efficiency in the Adult Social Care workforce budget of £10,720 per external apprenticeship.

**Decision** *[with reasons]*

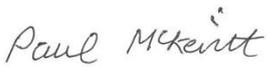
SMT to agree to option 1, permission to pilot external recruitment to the SWDA programme, to undertake a market test to advertise externally the post of social work degree apprenticeship.

A full evaluation report will come back to SLT and exec team on the viability of the potential for changes to SW team establishment budgets if this model of recruitment is successful.

**Decision made by:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

Executive Director – Health and Adult Care		15.02.2024
Section 151 Officer		15.02.2024
Director of People and Inclusion		20.02.2024
<b>Members Consulted [see note 1 below]</b>		
Cabinet Member		29 February 2024
Lead Member - HR		20.02.2024
Opposition Spokesperson		

### 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.