

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**ADULT AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES
CABINET MEMBER**

SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECT (SWEEP)

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To propose the development of a Social Work Education and Employment Project (SWEEP)
- 1.2 To seek approval to create a Social Work Professional Educator post within the Project

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The aim of the proposed Social Work Education and Employment Project (SWEEP) is to increase the number of Social Work practice learning opportunities across Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) for those undertaking the BA and MA Social Work routes.
- 2.2 The SWEEP is intended to be a partnership between CYPS and Frederick Gough School, who will host a number (up to 30 each year) of student social workers who are undertaking work placements as part of their training. This would be in addition to the student placements already offered within CYPS.
- 2.3 There are significant advantages to the council attached to providing student placements. There is an anticipated reduction in numbers of social work students requiring placement therefore North Lincolnshire needs to be in a position to attract these. Those who have a positive experience training within North Lincolnshire (and the huge majority of them do) are inclined to apply for vacancies within the authority. When they do so, we already have a good picture of their capabilities and can more easily select the best students. In addition, they are already familiar with practice within the authority, and therefore become effective workers more quickly. Student social workers also attract a per capita fee, which will provide an income stream for the authority.
- 2.4 The SWEEP can offer an exciting new relationship between schools and social work services to offer a more varied learning experience across the child's journey and in line with expectations of the Munro Review of Child Protection and Government response. Students will be based within the school, but have the opportunity to work across a variety of settings, including a component based within statutory child protection work.

Training and supervision will be specific to the student's practice needs and tailored to meet the transition from academia to real-world practice.

- 2.5 The Social Work Professional Educator would in effect manage the project. The tasks of the post will include liaison with universities over which students will attend the project, the setting-up of placements across a wide variety of settings, the induction of students into North Lincolnshire practices, the provision of practice educator oversight (i.e. mentoring, supervising and teaching students), the evaluation of student performance and reporting on the performance of the project.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Option One – To support and approve the project and establish a Social Work Professional Educator to supervise the social work students.
- 3.2 Option Two – Not to support the project or the creation of the post.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Option One - The project is an exciting initiative that is self funding; any financial risk issues associated with the project can be mitigated against within the mainstream social work service where a qualified worker could be redeployed within the service's current staffing and finance structure due to vacancy management. The project will enable North Lincolnshire to attract increasing numbers of social workers to the area and develop a national profile for excellence in this field. The Social Work Professional Educator post will ensure the students experience a quality practice learning opportunity, enhance recruitment and development and be self funding.
- 4.2 Option Two – This would limit the ambitions of the service in terms of the scope and capacity to maintain a robust and continuing social work service. It would mean that the council would miss out on the benefits outlined at paragraph 2.3 above. The long term effect may well be an increasing shortfall in essential posts

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 5.1 The Social Work Professional Educator post would be a permanent post to ensure we attract the right, suitably skilled person. The proposal is to create a post at Grade 9, with midpoint costs of £42,476 per annum, including 29.5% on-costs.
- 5.2 The Social Work Professional Educator post will be self funded from money received in respect of each student placed (currently £1800 per student). The proposal is that between 25 and 30 students will be accommodated by North Lincolnshire in each year, leading to income to cover the cost of the post.
- 5.3 Current income generation in relationship to student placements will be diverted to cover the costs of the post and will be sustained.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 The scheme would operate within the Codes of Conduct applied to Qualified Social Work. The impact of social work would have a positive impact upon those children and families most in need.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 Experience and feedback from students would indicate that a dedicated supervisor role offers a significant added value to their placement.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 To approve the development of the SWEEP project.

8.2 To approve the establishment of a full time Social Work Professional Educator post to supervise and assess Social Workers in Training.

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

'The Munro Review of Child Protection: A Child Centred System', E. Munro, 2011

Appendix 1

Post	Create
Post Number	
Post Title	Social Work Professional Educator
Post Grade	9
Grade approved?	
Yes/No	Yes
Post Hours (WTE)	37
Contract Type	Permanent
Contract Start and End Date	TBA
Establishment	CYPS Specialist Services
Cost Centre	CF930
Funding source	Grant funded
Essential Car User?	Yes
Mid-point costing including 29.5 % on-costs	£42476