

**Report of: Head of Learning Systems**

**Report to: Director of Children and Families**

**Date: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

**Subject: Sufficiency and Participation Team Service Redesign**



Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. It is proposed to retain significant capacity within the Sufficiency and Participation Team to meet the Council's statutory duties, continuing to be delivered through OBA and RP methodology, but reduce the current staffing level to reflect the reduction in workload and changing ways of working.
2. Through a Managing Staff Reduction process, to change the current staffing level within the Sufficiency and Participation Team by:
  - Reducing current staff levels to 4.3 FTEs (from 5.3 FTEs) Planning Managers at LSC Grade 2C/PO3 equivalent level, with additional responsibility for planning early years provision; and
  - Reducing current staff levels to 3 FTEs (from 4.3 FTEs) Support Officers at SO1/2 reducing responsibility for early years planning but increase support for Planning Managers

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Director of Children & Families:

- Approves the proposed changes to the structure for the Sufficiency & Participation Team;
- Gives authority for the outcome of the Managing Staff Reduction process to be implemented.

## **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To outline the reasons for the need to implement a Managing Staff Reduction process for the Sufficiency and Participation Team, the process undertaken and the outcome of the process.

## **2. Background information**

- 2.1 Leeds City Council has a statutory duty to ensure all young people have access to sufficient and appropriate education and learning places from the age of 5 and that they participate in learning until their 18th birthday (or to the age of 25 should a young person require additional learning provision as part of their EHC Plan). In addition, the Council has a statutory duty to ensure there is sufficient childcare provision for all children up to the age of 14, or 18 for those with SEND. The responsibility for delivering these duties resides within the Sufficiency & Participation Team. The service uses an Outcome Based Accountability and Restorative Practice methodology to deliver solutions to meeting sufficiency demands, working with key partners and communities.
- 2.2 In recent years the focus of the team has been creating additional Primary School places and Early Years childcare to meet the significant demographic growth of young children in the city, and to continue to reduce the number of NEET and Not Known young people across the city. Programmes have been very successful in ensuring sufficient reception places are available to children, families have access to childcare provision and a significant reduction in the NEET and Not Known rate.
- 2.3 As the birth rate begins to stabilise, and the structures to monitor and address NEET and Not Known are embedded across the wider children's workforce, the work related to these areas has begun to decrease. However, there is growing demand for more diverse and complex solutions to providing appropriate learning places as well as the demographic pressure beginning to move into secondary school phase. It is anticipated the reduction in creating additional primary places and NEET work would be greater than the increased work from the secondary school places and more complex provision. In addition, a traded offer to schools to continue to provide Quality Assurance of their 'off-site learning' provision has not been taken up by schools and is therefore also resulting in the ceasing of some work within the team.
- 2.4 The current arrangements of having separate sub-teams responsible for planning Early Years provision and those responsible for planning school place provision at different grades is creating unnecessary duplication of effort and/or different approaches to similar issues.
- 2.5 It is therefore proposed to retain significant capacity within the Sufficiency and Participation Team to meet these statutory duties, continuing to be delivered through OBA and RP methodology, but reduce the current staffing level to reflect the reduction in workload and changing ways of working.
- 2.6 Financially the council continues to face pressure in meeting growing needs with reduced funding. The team has been supported through a traded income that will no longer be available, and a one off grant funding in respect of the SEND review. Consequently savings need to be identified within the team and the only remaining area where this can be achieved is through staffing restructure which will integrate a 0 – 19 (25) planning approach which builds on a successful model of delivery that has been working well in meeting the growing need for primary places.

### **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 The proposal was to retain significant capacity within the Sufficiency and Participation Team to meet these statutory duties, continuing to be delivered through OBA and RP methodology, but reduce the current staffing level to reflect the reduction in workload and changing ways of working. This will be achieved by:
  - 3.1.1 Retaining a Lead Officer at LSC 4A grade with overall responsibility for sufficiency;
  - 3.1.2 Defining the Team Manager roles into Participation Manager at LSC 3B equivalent grade responsible for oversight of complex and emerging issues for sufficiency in relation to Post-16, SEN, Alternative Provision, and Academy/Trust/Land issues, and a Sufficiency Manager at PO5 responsible for sufficiency of mainstream learning provision (EY, Primary & Secondary school places);
  - 3.1.3 Reducing current staffing levels at PO3 Planning Manager / LSC Grade 2C 11-19 Quality Support Officer from 5.3 FTEs to 4.3 PO3 Planning Manager FTEs (removing the 11-19 Quality Support Officer role), with additional responsibility for planning early years provision;
  - 3.1.4 Redesigning the SO1/2 role by replacing 4.3 FTE SO2 Project Officer positions and SO1/2 Early Years Sufficiency Officers with 3 FTE SO2 Support Officer positions, reducing responsibility for early years planning but increasing support for Planning Managers; and
  - 3.1.5 Retaining a Sufficiency & Participation Officer at C1.

### **4. Corporate considerations**

#### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 The proposal and process was outlined to staff and unions in an informal initial meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017.
- 4.1.2 Formal consultation began 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017, including a meeting with staff and unions. The Collective Consultation feedback period ran until the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017.
- 4.1.3 ELI was offered as part of the consultation process.
- 4.1.4 In response to feedback during the consultation period, a further 2 day consultation extension was given during 30<sup>th</sup> October 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017.
- 4.1.5 Amendments to the selection criteria and the selection process were agreed following feedback from staff and their union representatives.
- 4.1.6 Following the completion of the scoring exercise, individual consultation meetings were held with staff provisionally selected for redundancy during w/c 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017.
- 4.1.7 Appropriate written notice of termination of employment on the grounds of redundancy was issued on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 to those selected for redundancy.

#### **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 An EDCI assessment was completed and attached.

#### **4.3 Council policies and best council plan**

- 4.3.1 This proposal provides the capacity to support achievement of the Best Council outcome to give everyone the chance to do well at every level of learning, gaining the skills they need for life.
- 4.3.2 This proposal is being brought forward to meet the Local Authority's statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places for all the children in Leeds, and the learning provision available is fit for purpose for all children and young people to participate in learning.
- 4.3.3 This proposal contributes to the city's aspiration to be the best council, the best city in which to grow up and a child friendly city. The delivery of learning places through the Learning Places Programme is one of the baseline entitlements of a child friendly city. By creating good quality local school places and ensuring appropriate provision for young people to engage in learning, we can support the priority aim of improving educational achievement and closing achievement gaps. In turn, by providing young people with the skills they need for life, these proposals provide underlying support for the council's ambition to produce a strong economy by compassionate means. A good quality school place also contributes towards delivery of targets within the Children and Young People's Plan such as our obsession to improve attainment, attendance and achievement.

#### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 The MSR process will reduce the annual staffing costs of the Sufficiency & Participation Team by approx. £100,000. This will fully off-set the funding reductions in traded income and the end of the one off grant funding in respect of the SEND review and reflect the decrease / change in workload across the team. The financial implications of the proposals have been incorporated into the 2018/19 draft estimates.
- 4.4.2 The associated severance costs will represent one-off expenditure within the financial year that payments are defrayed and are estimated to be in the range of £23k to £61k dependent on the outcome of legal challenges, as noted in paragraph 4.5 below.
- 4.4.3 4.3 FTE positions of SO2 Project Officers and SO1/2 Early Years Sufficiency Officers are being replaced with 3 FTE job evaluated SO2 Support Officer positions. This will remove a linked grade from the structure and ensure a consistent Support Officer position is in place within the team.

#### **4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

- 4.5.1 The service / Council is at a potential risk of a legal challenge from the employees affected by the MSR process.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

- 4.6.1 The new structure has been designed to reflect the future workload of the Sufficiency & Participation Team. By not implementing the changes the team will have over capacity for the expected workload.
- 4.6.2 Further reduction in staff would put at risk the capacity of the Council to deliver its statutory duties of providing sufficient learning places for all children.

## **5. Conclusions**

5.1 The new structure provides the capacity for the Council to meet its statutory duties outlined earlier in the report.

## **6. Recommendations**

6.1 It is recommended that the Director of Children & Families:

- Approves the proposed changes to the structure for the Sufficiency & Participation Team;
- Gives authority for the outcome of the Managing Staff Reduction process to be implemented.

## **7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.