

Report of Deputy Director of Adults and Health

Report to Director of Adults and Health

Date: 28 October 2020

Subject: Establishment of Two Approved Mental Health Professional Posts, Temporary Measure to Address Increase in Demand

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open 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

1. Main issues

- To establish two Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) posts for a 12 month period to enable the Local Authority to execute its statutory function with regards to the requisite provision of AMHPs.
- The additional capacity in the system will enable Adults and Health to be able to flex with regards to the unprecedented increase in demand for Mental Health Act assessments.
- The increase in capacity is necessitated across the AMHP day time function and the Emergency Duty Team. The operational model is that one post will be dedicated to the day time AMHP Hub and one to the Emergency Duty Team.
- The new posts will be managed within the Mental Health Unit and will create additional career opportunities for staff wishing to specialise further within the technicalities of the Mental Health Act.
- The cost of the two posts inclusive of on-costs is £120,075. The breakdown of the costs are inclusive of both post-holders being at PO3 grade, plus the four increments for AMHP status and the 22% enhancement for the Emergency Duty Team. The cost for the EDT AMHP is £65,599 and the cost for the day time AMHP is £54,476.
- The cost of these two posts will be funded from reserves and this has been approved by the Director of Adults and Health for a 12 month period.

Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

There are no specific implications relating to the Best Council Plan, this is not a response to a change in the law, this proposal centres around the maximisation of ensuring that people with the most complex health needs in the city are assessed within a timely manner. However there are a number of key areas within the plan which this pilot enhances.

- Safe, Strong Communities
 - a. Keeping people safe from harm, protecting the most vulnerable
- Outcomes
 - a. Be safe and feel safe
 - b. Live with dignity and stay independent for as long as possible

2. Resource Implications

The two AMHP posts are graded at PO3 with the requisite AMHP increments and the 22% enhancement for working for the Emergency Duty Team. This report is seeking permission to establish and recruit to these two posts for a 12 month period. Mid-way through this temporary arrangement there will be an evaluation to track and monitor the Local Authority's capability to meet demand.

Recommendations

- For the Director of Adults and Health to note the technical content of this report.
- For the Director of Adults and Health to approve the proposed temporary establishment of two AMHP posts in order to meet the unprecedented surge in demand for Mental Health Act assessments.
- For the Director of Adults and Health to approve establishing and recruiting to the two AMHP posts.

1. Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to establish two temporary AMHP posts on a 12 month basis to be managed within the Mental Health Unit. The posts will be recruited into via competitive interview and recruitment process.

2. Background information

- With the advent of Covid-19 there has been an unprecedented increase in mental health activity in general and specifically for assessments under the Mental Health Act. There has been an increase in demand constituting an additional 20% which is exceeding the available AMHP capacity. The increase in demand is across both the day time service and the Emergency Duty Service who work evenings, through the night, weekends and bank holidays.
- There is a growing acuity in mental health services period which is across primary, secondary and tertiary services and individuals who would have previously been supported by Community Support are now being admitted into acute mental health wards.
- There has been a significant increase in individuals admitted into inpatient services who have not previously had any contact with secondary mental health services.

- The extended lockdown / partial lockdown is contributing to this as people experiencing mental ill-health are becoming more isolated, their support networks are being eroded with regards to longevity of lockdown. Plus the anxiety with regards to the uncertain future is impacting upon individual's ability to cope and to keep themselves feeling well and optimistic.
- More concerning, on the back of this profile presentation there is an increase in suicide rates and self-harm.
- The Mental Health Unit are also seeing an increase in the number of Mental Health Act assessments being requested by Nearest Relatives which is a concern in itself as there is a clear carer strain prevalent.
- There are also unprecedented sickness rates within the Mental Health Unit, mainly anxiety and depression which has again eroded the available capacity in order to meet demand. It is increasingly challenging to undertake Mental Health Act assessments within the environment of Covid and these challenges have impacted upon the work force. The temporary establishment in terms of two posts equating to much needed additional capacity will be invaluable in the execution of the statutory function with regards to the Mental Health Act and will contribute to maintaining a safe service.

3. Main issues

3.1 To agree the establishment of two AMHP posts for a period of 12 months to enable the Council to lawfully execute its duties in terms of the Mental Health Act and to increase the capacity within the service to a level which would be classed as safe.

3.2 This will involve Leeds City Council establishing and recruiting to two temporary AMHP posts at grade PO3 for the day time AMHP Hub and the Emergency Duty Team.

3.3 The City Council will fund the cost of the posts from reserves.

3.4 The cost of employing the two AMHPs is £120,075 which includes on-costs.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 In terms of the establishment of these two posts a paper is going to Members Brief in October / November and the Trade Unions were briefed and engaged with in October 2020. The Trade Unions have raised no issues or objections to the creation these two temporary posts.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening Tool has been completed and is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

4.3.1 There are no specific implications relating to the Best Council Plan, this is not a response to a change in the law, this proposal centres around the establishment of two temporary AMHP posts in order for the Council to lawfully execute its duties with regards

to the Mental Health Act 1983. However there are a number of key areas within the plan which this initiative enhances.

- Safe, Strong Communities
 - a. Keeping people safe from harm, protecting the most vulnerable
- Outcomes
 - a. Be safe and feel safe
 - b. Live with dignity and stay independent for as long as possible

Climate Emergency

There are no specific climate emergency issues to be considered as part of this pilot however there could be climate benefits obtained as the result of how the work is undertaken such as the reduction in the number of vehicles used in order to attend meetings and undertake visits in the city. The maximisation of technology will be optimised and these considerations will be taken into account as part of the 12 month initiative.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.4.1 The Director of Adults and Health has been clearly sighted on the rise in demand and the impact on the work-force and the need to create additional capacity in the form of two temporary posts at PO3 level for 12 months in order to meet the demand in relation to Mental Health Act assessments 24/7, 365 days per year.

4.4.2 This additional resource will have a direct correlation in terms of the timeliness of undertaking Mental Health Act assessments, any delays in the system could result in emergency admissions to A&E, increase carer breakdown and potentially fatal consequences such as suicide.

4.4.3 There will be added value for the entire system with reference to the above and greater partnerships with the AMHP service, the Crisis Assessment Service, in-patient wards within LYPFT predominantly and the Section 136 Suite.

4.4 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.4.5 This is a significant operational decision which is not subject to call-in as the annual cost of the service is less than £500k.

4.4.6 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information under the Access to Information Rules.

4.5 Risk management

4.5.5 It is essential that people with the most complex mental health presentations who necessitate an assessment under the Mental Health Act are responded to within a timely manner, which is done on a multi-disciplinary basis. This area of operation is technical and complex and recruiting individuals with the requisite professional qualifications and experience within the management of risk is critical in ensuring a good standard of service delivery and compliance with the law.

5 Conclusions

- 5.4 If this proposal is accepted by the Director of Adults and Health we will immediately be able to establish, advertise and recruit to these posts to deliver the lawful components in terms of current legislation and to ensure the appropriate and timely assessment of people with mental ill-health who are amongst some of the most vulnerable individuals in the city.

6 Recommendations

- For the Director of Adults and Health to note the technical content of this report.
- For the Director of Adults and Health to approve the proposed temporary establishment of two AMHP posts in order to meet the unprecedented surge in demand for Mental Health Act assessments.
- For the Director of Adults and Health to approve establishing and recruiting to the two AMHP posts.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 EIA Screening Tool

¹ 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.