

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Staffing Committee – 16 December 2024

Report Title

Children and Young People's Services Senior Management – Assistant Director for Family Help

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Nicola Curley – Strategic Director, Children & Young Peoples Service

Report Author(s)

Nicola Curley, Strategic Director for Children and Young People Services
Nicola.curley@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

None

Report Summary

This report provides detail of the:

Proposed amendment of the Assistant Director Early Help and Business Support post in Children and Young People's Services to an Assistant Director Family Help role and resultant change in salary level.

Recommendations

That Staffing Committee approve the creation of an amended Assistant Director post in Children and Young People's Service and the associated salary level, subject to agreement by Council, and to refer the process to the Senior Appointments Panel to make the appointment.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Comparator pay levels

Appendix 2 Job Profile; Assistant Director for Family Help

Background Papers

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Stable Homes Built on Love
- Early Help Strategy: Family Help in Rotherham 2024-2029

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Children and Young People's Services Senior Management – Assistant Director Family Help

1. Background

- 1.1 At present, there is an Assistant Director for Early Help and Business Support based within the Children and Young People's Services' Directorate. This is a proposal to amend that role to take on additional responsibilities in relation to new expectations around Early Help, including a change of job title and required social work qualification.
- 1.2 The proposed changes have arisen further to a review of new statutory expectations outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and the Government policy document, Stable Homes Built on Love and enables the fulfilment of Council plans set out in the Early Help Strategy: Family Help in Rotherham 2024-2029.
- 1.3 The proposal in Rotherham is to reshape the Social Care and Early Help directorates, to enable a more seamless experience for children and families across the border into statutory child in need intervention, when this is required to ensure children's needs are met effectively. There is also the intention to enhance the delivery of services at a community level to include statutory partners, the faith, community and voluntary sector and communities themselves. The new role would oversee all of these changes.
- 1.4 As part of the change, the Assistant Director of Social Care Job Profile will also need to be slightly amended, to reflect the balance of responsibilities and ensure sufficient focus on the provider fostering and residential portfolio. These changes are minor and HR have already established that it would not necessitate any salary change.
- 1.5 In the proposed changes, the Assistant Director for Family Help would be responsible for the management of family help services including Family Hubs, outreach services and targeted teams; support to the community and voluntary sector to build capacity in universal provision and social care services including the MASH, Out of Hours, Duty and Assessment services and short-term child in need work. The role will have particular responsibility for the Family Help and Neglect Strategies and supporting children to remain in their communities wherever possible and safe to do so. These are statutory responsibilities requiring social work qualification and will add greater safeguarding resilience into the service.
- 1.6 The revised role will play a critical role in improving outcomes for children and families and the prevention work to reduce the demand for more costly interventions, by addressing the issues early. The role will require a more enhanced collaboration across services such as health, education and communities to meet the statutory and RMBC responsibilities in achieving performance targets set within the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, Stable Homes Built on Love, Early Help Strategy: Family Help in Rotherham 2024-2029.

- 1.7 Having a qualified social worker in the role of Assistant Director for Early Help in Children and Young People's Services brings several strategic, operational, and professional advantages. The benefits of this include;

Deep Understanding of Child and Family Needs

- **Holistic Perspective on Service Users:** A qualified social worker brings firsthand experience in understanding the complex needs of vulnerable children and families. This allows for the development and implementation of targeted, practical interventions that can prevent the escalation of issues.
- **Insight into Early Help Services:** With their expertise, they can better align services to provide early support, reducing the need for more costly, long-term interventions like child protection services.

Strong Ethical and Practice Framework

- **Commitment to Ethical Practice:** Social workers adhere to a strict code of ethics, ensuring decisions are made in the best interest of children and families. This ensures that leadership remains focused on safeguarding and welfare at all times.
- **Child-Centred Approach:** Social work training installs a focus on putting the child at the centre of decision-making, which is crucial for Early Help services. This ensures that leadership decisions prioritise the well-being and rights of children.

Leadership in Safeguarding

- **Expertise in Safeguarding Protocols:** Social workers have detailed knowledge of safeguarding policies, risk assessment, and child protection procedures. This expertise strengthens the Assistant Director's ability to oversee robust safeguarding practices within Early Help programs.
- **Risk Management and Early Intervention:** A qualified social worker can more effectively identify risks and implement preventive strategies to address potential issues before they escalate into crises.

Improved Collaboration with Multi-Agency Partners

- **Effective Interagency Working:** Social workers are trained in multi-agency collaboration, which is critical for leading Early Help services. They can build stronger partnerships with schools, healthcare, law enforcement, and community organisations, ensuring a coordinated response to children and family needs.
- **Building Trust with Stakeholders:** Their professional background helps them gain the trust of frontline staff, other social workers, and external partners, enhancing cooperation and joint working initiatives.

Strategic Leadership Informed by Practice

- **Grounded Decision-Making:** A social worker's experience on the frontlines of service delivery ensures that strategic decisions are rooted in practical realities. This can lead to more realistic and sustainable service plans.
- **Innovative Service Design:** They are better positioned to design services that are responsive and adaptive to the changing needs of children and families, drawing on their experiences in dealing with diverse, real-world cases.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The need to recruit suitably qualified and experienced Assistant Director Family Help, is essential for the Council to maintain and continue to develop the quality of services in this critical area and transformation of Early Help as required by national policy and set out in the Early Help Strategy: Family Help in Rotherham 2024-2029.
- 2.2 The salary for the Assistant Director, Family Help is proposed as £108,258. This aligns with the responsibility and salary of the Assistant Director, Children's Social Care.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Given the imperative to appoint a suitably skilled, qualified, and experienced professional it is felt that this proposal is appropriate and is recommended, ensuring that the Council fulfils its responsibilities in the most effective manner.
- 3.2 The alternative option is to retain the current Job Profile and grade, but this will not allow the role to include social work qualification and will not attract appropriate applicants to the role.
- 3.3 This report requests agreement from Staffing Committee to make the appropriate amendments to the job profile and salary, subject to Council approval and to refer the process to the Senior Appointments Panel to make the appointment.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with the Chief Executive and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Recruitment will proceed subject to approval by the Staffing Committee and subsequent approval by Council in January 2025.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The estimated staffing cost for the new Assistant Director post for Family Help is £108,258 (£139,038 inclusive of on-costs). This represents an increase of £13,252 compared to the current budgeted staffing cost for the AD Early Help post.
- 6.2 The part year cost for 2024/25 (£2,904) will be managed within the overall staffing budget underspend for Early Help. The full year recurrent cost for 2025/26 will be addressed as part of setting / realigning staffing budgets across Early Help.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 The level of pay needs to take into account the reflecting nature of the work performed in critical areas and attract the most talented and experienced candidates whilst maintaining a competitive salary with neighbouring Authorities.
- 8.2 An appropriately rewarded workforce motivates employees and meets standards of fairness and equity required by employment legislation.
- 8.3 Recruitment will be in accordance with the Councils Chief Officer recruitment policies and procedures.
- 8.4 Due to the changes to the requirements of the role, notably the professional qualification and its strategic nature in ensuring positive outcomes for Children and Young People, it is important that recruitment progresses as quickly as possible.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 A failure to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced Assistant Director would impact on the Council's key priority of ensuring that every child has the best start in life and the delivery of the Early Help Strategy: Family Help in Rotherham 2024-2029.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 None.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 None.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 None.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The challenges faced by Rotherham's Children's Services and the challenging national recruitment climate in respect of senior professionals in this area poses risks in the ability to attract suitably qualified and experienced candidates.

Accountable Officer(s)

Nicola Curley – Strategic Director, Children & Young Peoples Service

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
Chief Executive		Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	27/11/24
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)	Lynsey Linton	27/11/24

Nicola Curley, Strategic Director for Children and Young People Services
Nicola.curley@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

Early Help or equivalent Director Pay Levels 2024

Organisation	Comments	Salary
Barnsley Metropolitan Council	Reports to Executive Director	£104,999
Bradford Council*	Reports to Executive Director	£106,268
Doncaster Council*	Reports to Strategic Director	£102,000
North Yorkshire Council*	Reports to Strategic Director	£101,500
Hull Council	Reports to Strategic Director	£101,809
Sheffield City Council*	Reports to Strategic Director	£109,581- £117,855
East Riding of Yorkshire Council*	Reports to Executive Director	£97,219 - £109,098

*Salaries stated are in specified in Pay Policy Statements. A Chief Officer pay award (2.5%) for local government was subsequently agreed on 22nd June 2024.