

<b>REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>	<b><u>EMPLOYMENT &amp; APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE</u></b> TUESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2016 <b>CHIEF OFFICER STRUCTURE: CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>
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## **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report proposes a Chief Officer structure for Children's Services following the outcome of the Ofsted inspection. This structure will report to the Chief Executive on an interim basis. The report sets out the issues and risks associated with grading, recruitment and retention of senior Children's Services management posts.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

Employments and Appointments Committee are recommended to:

1. Note the revised line management arrangements for Children's Services in the new operating model (See Appendix One).
2. Approve the re-grading and re-designation of the vacant post 'Assistant Director: Children's Care Services to Deputy Director: Children's Care Services to ensure the level of remuneration reflects the size and scope of the role in line with market rates, will attract high quality candidates and supports retention to provide the longer term stability required for the service.  
(Grade: D2 Salary range: £82,741 to £91,935),
3. To approve the re-grading and re-designation of the current post of Assistant Director: Children's Services to Deputy Director: Children's Services. This will ensure the level of remuneration reflects the size, scope and influence of this role in delivering the required improvements to Children's Services, support retention and also provide the longer term stability required for the service.  
(Grade: D2 Salary range: £82,741 to £91,935)
4. To set up a politically proportionate Appointments Panel, in accordance with the terms of reference set out in Appendix Two for the post of Deputy Director: Children's Care Services to be advertised internally and externally and to commence the recruitment process immediately.

5. That the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development be authorised to commence a recruitment exercise for the post of Deputy Director: Children's Care Services.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 To ensure the Council has the leadership capacity to deliver safe and high quality services for children, young people and families. This will address the recommendations of the Ofsted inspection into services for children who need help and protection and the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- 1.2 To ensure the level of remuneration for the Senior Management posts in Children's Services reflect the relative job sizes and scope in line with appropriate market rates.
- 1.3 To mitigate the risk of future recruitment and retention issues and provide stability for the department going forward.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 The first recommendation made by Ofsted following their inspection was to encourage the Council to take urgent steps to recruit a permanent and experienced head of social care to provide operational leadership to services for vulnerable children. This report is a direct response to this recommendation.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 On 25 July 2016 the Employment and Appointments Committee approved the new Chief Officer structure of the Council as attached at Appendix Three.
- 3.2 Paragraph 2.9 of the 25 July report recommended that whilst the Council implements the proposed structure on 1 November 2016, there will be a review of the framework and details relating to Children's Services, subject to the finding of the Ofsted inspection to ensure that arrangements set out in the report were appropriate in light of that inspection.
- 3.3 Since the approval of the Chief Officer structure, elements of Children's Services in Wirral have been judged to be inadequate by Ofsted. The improvements which are required are clearly articulated in the Ofsted inspection report. 19 recommendations have been made for Council services and a further seven for the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- 3.4 The Leader and the Chief Executive have been unequivocally clear – protecting vulnerable children has been and remains the top priority for this organisation. In order to deliver the required improvements we have reviewed the senior management structure within Children's Services.
- 3.5 The first recommendation Ofsted made was for the Council to take urgent steps to fill the vacant Assistant Director post to oversee children's social care. The full text of the Ofsted recommendation is below:

“Urgently progress plans to recruit a permanent head of service for children’s social care to provide consistent and effective operational leadership of services for vulnerable children.”

- 3.6 Ofsted make numerous references to the lack of a ‘long-term, enduring’ head of social care and the impact this has had on the ability of the Director and the entire service to maintain a high-level of performance in social care practice. It is therefore of vital importance to the success of the Improvement Plan, and to ensuring these services are of the quality we want for Wirral residents, for the Council to urgently fill this position with an experienced, high-quality candidate.
- 3.7 We have undertaken a benchmarking exercise of comparative roles. We need to offer a competitive salary to attract and retain a high calibre, experienced person for this role. We have also benchmarked the structure and looked at what other Councils have done whilst implementing improvement plans.
- 3.8 It is critical for our improvement plans that more children receive help and prevention earlier. All partners are required to provide this additional support through the Early Help Strategy and are accountable to the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board. Should this not be the case, caseloads and financial pressures on social care will be even higher, with more children referred into the system and a greater proportion of these will have much more complex needs. This will mean the required improvements to practice and addressing the issues within the Ofsted report will be harder to achieve.
- 3.9 There is a clear requirement for an integrated system from end to end, within all Children’s services and across the partnership.
- 3.10 It is therefore proposed that both lead management posts within the service are at a Deputy Director level, so that there is no hierarchy between early help and prevention and social care, as both are of crucial importance. This will ensure parity and equal influence in leading the required changes. The Deputy Directors will need to grasp and lead the whole ‘continuum of need’ determining outcomes for children so that the whole service offered is at the right time and the right level of support to meet need and reduce risk.

#### **4.0 INTERIM REPORTING STRUCTURE**

- 4.1 It is proposed for the immediate future Children’s Services will report directly into the Chief Executive whilst improvement work required by Ofsted inspection is delivered.
- 4.2 The structure will be reviewed and realigned with the New Operating Model when the Children’s Services improvement plan has been delivered successfully.
- 4.3 A number of services for children which are not directly related to delivering the improvements required by Ofsted, currently managed by the Assistant Director: Children’s Services, will be moving into new functions of the operating model as originally proposed. This includes Youth and Play services (excluding targeted support) a range of schools services and youth offending. The Director for Children’s Services will retain accountability for the delivery of outcomes for children who require these services.

- 4.4 In proposing to re-grade and re-designate the current post Assistant Director: Children's Services to Deputy Director: Children's Services, the duties of the post will be amended to reflect the changes set out in Paragraph 4.3 above. It has also be amended to reflect additional responsibilities as follows:
- Development of early help hubs and co-ordination of delivery
  - Delivery of the edge of care service for adolescents
  - Ensure commissioning of integrated early help services
- 4.5 A proposed job description for Deputy Director: Children's Care Services is attached at Appendix Four. This will be required for the recruitment process.

## **5.0 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

- 5.1 Since June 2012, Wirral has experienced significant difficulties in recruiting to and retaining appointments to the Head of Children's Social Care.
- 5.2 During this period Wirral has made two permanent appointments. On both occasions there were a limited number of applications, with most wanting to take the opportunity to work in Wirral as a step up in their professional career and with no prior experience of working at this level of seniority. Both permanent appointments left within 12 months to work for other Local Authorities in the area - the last one left in December 2015.
- 5.3 There have also been three interim appointments during the same period. The requirement for greater experience at this level was recognised and in May 2016 we specifically recruited an experienced interim director to provide leadership in this role until a permanent appointment is made.
- 5.4 The outcome of the Ofsted inspection means Wirral will need to attract candidates with strong leadership and management skills and a proven track record. Against the challenging national backdrop of increased competition to recruit and retain to similar roles, there is a risk Wirral will not to be able to attract a permanent post holder from a strong field of applicants with the required knowledge, skills and experience.

## **CHIEF OFFICER PAY COMPARISON**

- 5.4.1 One of the influencing factors regarding Wirral's inability to attract experienced applicants with a proven track record and retain them for a sustained period can be attributed to the level of remuneration for this role.
- 5.4.2 The current salary range for this post is £68,010 to £75,567, grade HS2. The pay scales for Wirral Chief Officers are attached at Appendix Three.
- 5.4.3 The comparative data for equivalent/similar roles is attached at Appendix Four.

5.4.4 The comparisons illustrate the pay gap which has emerged between that of the Assistant Director of Children’s Social Care in Wirral compared to equivalent roles in other authorities, where the average salary is £85,000.

## **SALARY OPTIONS FOR THE CHIEF OFFICER ROLES WITHIN CHILDREN’S CARE SERVICES**

5.4.5 Given the challenges and priority for this role, it is essential that posts are remunerated appropriately and in line with market rates.

5.4.6 The options considered are outlined below:

	<b>Option Description</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Risk</b>
1	Re-grade both posts to Assistant Director 1 (HS1)	£78,474 to £87,193	The benchmarking information and advice from external recruitment agency indicates that this may attract and retain higher quality applicants than previously but top of grade remains mid-range in terms of regional and national levels.
2	Re-grade both post to Director 2 (D2)	£82,741 to £91,935	The benchmarking information and advice from external recruitment agency indicates that this may attract and retain higher quality and experienced applicants than previously and is more competitive in comparison to regional and national levels.
3	Re-grade vacant post to Director 2 (D2) and leave AD: Children’s Services post at HS2.	£82,741 to £91,935	The report makes a case for parity between preventative and social care roles to ensure influence. There is also a requirement to retaining leadership capacity

5.4.7 Given the requirement to deliver a challenging agenda, option two is recommended.

## **6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The cost of re-grading these post including employers costs are:

Option 1: additional cost £29,576

Option 2: additional cost £32,736

Option 3: additional cost £14,788

6.2 Options 1, 2 or 3 will be met from existing approved budgets.

## **7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no legal implications.

## **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

8.1 There are no other resource implications in relation to this report.

## **9.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

9.1 It is crucial the Council is able to attract and retain a candidate with strong leadership and management skills and the knowledge and expertise to drive through the improvements and recommendations of the Ofsted report.

9.2 With other neighbouring Councils offering far more favourable remuneration packages, there is a risk Wirral will not be able to retain or attract candidates with the required knowledge, skills and experience.

9.3 The associated risks are:

- a) Failure to deliver consistently high quality social work services which respond to children's needs to adequately safeguard them.
- b) Continued instability in the management and leadership of the service
- c) Failure to comply with Ofsted requirements and recommendations

## **10.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

10.1 There has been no consultation regarding this report

## **11.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no equality implications

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Chief Officer Structure approved by the Employment and Appointments committee on 25 July 2016

Appendix 2 Terms of Reference for Appointments Panel

Appendix 3 Proposed Interim Chief Officer Structure

Appendix 4 Proposed Job Description

Appendix 5 Wirral Chief Officer pay scales

Appendix 6 Salary Comparison

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Employment and Appointments Committee</b>	<b>25 July 2016</b>