

# 2016-17 Budget proposal Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

## Informing our approach to fairness

<b>Name of proposal</b>	Children's Social Work - Remodel the Children's Social Care Workforce
<b>Date of original assessment</b>	October 2015
<b>Lead officer</b>	Karen Simmons
<b>Assessment team</b>	Ann Banks
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### Version control

<b>Version</b>	2
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<b>Replaces version</b>	1

This is our assessment of the potential equality and other impacts of this 2016/17 budget proposal, based on the available evidence. It is a 'living document' and we will review it throughout the consultation period. A formal review will take place on all proposals when consultation closes to consider comments and information from all stakeholders, research or new and emerging policy.

The following 2016/17 budget proposal is put forward in a context of continued financial austerity. Due to cuts in government funding and unfunded cost pressures we have already been forced to make £191m savings. We anticipate having to make further savings of £100m over 2016-2019, £30m of which are needed in 2016-17.

This IIA should be read in conjunction with 'Newcastle – a great city: Ambition in the face of austerity' which explains more broadly how we are responding to the financial challenges we face.

## Section A: Current service

### 1. What does the service do?

The budget for the Children's Social Care workforce is £16.9m in 2015/2016. 42% of the budget is for employees in frontline child protection roles (the council's East and West Area Teams and the Initial Response Service).

Children's Social Care also provides:

- Adoption and Fostering support services
- Support for Young People over the age of 16 and Care Leavers
- Support for Children and Young People with Disabilities,
- Youth Offending Service
- Multi-Systemic Therapy Teams
- Four council owned Children's Homes
- The Safeguarding Board and Children's Standards Unit

### 2. Who do you deliver this service for?

Children's social care provides services for Children with Complex needs including:

- All children assessed as being at risk of significant harm and all children and young people that are the subject of a child protection plan
- All children and young people being looked after by the council, including children accommodated under section 20 of The Children Act 1989 and children who are subject to court orders e.g. Care, Interim Care, or Supervision Orders
- Children with a severe or complex disability, health or education needs
- Young people who are persistently offending
- Children and Young People who have mental health needs

For the first three situations, a social worker **must be allocated** as the lead professional and for the other situations a social worker may be the lead professional.

At 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 we have:

- 505 looked after children; and
- 450 children subject to a child protection plan

### 3. Do you have any statutory requirements?

The central piece of legislation guiding Children's Social Care is the 1989 Children Act. The key elements are provisions for a 'child in need', 'child in need of protection' and for looked after children

**Section 17** of the Act places a general duty on all local authorities to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need.' A 'child in need' is a child who needs additional support from the local authority to meet their potential.

**Section 47** of the Act requires the local authority to investigate the child's circumstances where they have 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant

harm,' and to 'take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare.' Local authorities have a duty to provide a level and range of services to safeguard children and promote their welfare. Consequently, a local authority has to investigate any concerns or allegations that suggest a child is likely to suffer physical, emotional or sexual abuse, or neglect, and to take action to prevent this.

**Sections 20 and 31** of the Act provides the statutory requirements regarding Looked After Children

Local Authorities also have statutory responsibilities to young people who are care leavers; over 18 years – for example, those with disabilities and those who have been 'looked after'.

The Adoption Service and the Fostering Service are governed by statutory regulation and guidance emanating from the Children Act 1989.

#### 4. How much do you spend on this service?

Gross expenditure	Gross income	Net budget	Capital projects
£16,940,050	£2,504,730	£14,435,320	£0

#### 5. What workforce delivers this service?

Posts	FTEs	Comments
470	416	

## Section B: Change proposal

### 1. What is the proposal to change the service?

We have examined all of our costs to ensure that we continue to provide value for money services that best meet the needs of families in Newcastle and achieve savings to meet the Government's austerity targets. As such we propose to restructure our workforce over the next three years to create a lean, cost effective workforce that ensures the safety of children and meets statutory duties.

This is underpinned by our plans to transform Children's Social Care services over the next three years, which aims to reduce demand for tier 4 services and keep more families together, allowing us to safely make savings across all areas, including staffing.

Our strategy for delivering this ambitious transformation programme includes:

- a more focused early help offer in the city which alongside a continued focus on social care thresholds will help to ensure an appropriate response to needs and reduce the need referrals to Children's Social Care (tier 4 services)
- once children are referred to social care we are developing a more purposeful and direct Social Work intervention that clearly targets the needs and characteristics of families, referred to as the 'Family Insights' model. So that we reduce time that children and young people spend in the social care system and prevent needs escalating and requiring more costly services

Transformation will take time to have an impact on demand for services, so in the first year, 2016/2017, a workforce reduction amounting to 28.5 full time equivalent employees across Children's Social Care is proposed as set out below:

The proposals have sought to protect as far as possible statutory frontline child protection casework and statutory requirements for looked after children.

Proposals include the reduction of participation activity with parents and children through the deletion of Viewpoint posts and the Parent Carer Participation Worker post.

We have been successful in a bid to the Department for Education (DfE) to establish a Regional Adoption Agency. Our proposals to reduce staffing in Corporate Parenting particularly in the Adoption Service reflect our intention to deliver efficiencies through a cross authority approach.

In partnership with the Northumberland Tyne and Wear Hospital Trust (NTW), we provide a Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) social work service. As this service is not one of our statutory functions, the proposal is to remove our contribution to this service.

The Social Work staffing model for the front line child protection teams is based on what is felt to be a manageable caseload for each Social Worker. Caseloads include looked after children, children subject to child protection plans and children in need. As cases vary in complexity it is very difficult to set a target caseload and there are no statutory targets for caseloads. We aim for a target of 20-25 children for each social worker and 15 for newly qualified staff.

The reductions set out above, aim to minimise the impact on frontline social work services but will be very challenging to implement whilst maintaining reasonable caseloads. The impact on caseloads will be carefully monitored. It should be noted that the additional social work resource through DfE Family Insights funding is currently contributing to manage caseloads and mitigate against the volume of statutory child protection activity. However this is a temporary resource and funding for this will expire in July 2016.

In Children' Social Care we are proud to have low staff turnover rates which results in a stable workforce. However, staff do change posts and leave our employment from time to time. In this instance, posts may be left vacant for a while before staff are replaced, resulting in a saving on the staffing budget. We have increased our turnover target from 1% to a prudent 5%, this equates to a staffing budget reduction of £345,000. There is no impact on employee posts.

Information source	What has this told you?
<p>S251: (Source: S251 2015/2016 net expenditure data).</p> <p>These returns are statutory returns submitted to the DfE on an annual basis. They are robustly reviewed by the Education Funding Agency and the DfE, and are the basis on which national benchmarking data is made available.</p>	<p>Section 251 benchmarking figures inform us that the costs of social work staffing is £156 per head compared to the £172 per head average of our family of statistical neighbours</p>
<p>Finance Partner</p>	<p>Budget and staffing costs</p>

<b>2. How much will you spend on this service?</b>				
	<b>Gross expenditure</b>	<b>Gross income</b>	<b>Net budget</b>	<b>Capital projects</b>
<b>16/17</b>	£15,518,550	£2,504,730	£13,013,820	£0
<b>4. What will the net savings be of this proposal?</b>				
	<b>Gross Saving</b>	<b>Implementation Cost</b>	<b>Net Saving</b>	
<b>16/17</b>	£1,421,500	£0	£1,421,500	
<b>5. What impact will this have on the workforce?</b>				
	<b>No. FTEs</b>	<b>% workforce</b>		
<b>16/17</b>	28.5	6%		

6. Who have you engaged with about this proposal?				
Date	Who	No. of people	Main issues raised	
w/c 23 November	Staff directly affected by proposals	28		
w/c 30 November	Wider staff groups across Children's Social Care			
16 December	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board			
Jan 2016	Parent and Carer Forum			
Jan 2016	Youth Council			
13 January 2016	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board			
18 January 2016	Children's Trust Board			
7. What are the potential impacts of the proposal?				
Staff / service users	Specific group / subject	Impact (actual / potential disadvantage, beneficial outcome or none)	Detail of impact	How will you address or mitigate disadvantage?
People with protected characteristics				
Staff	All staff	Potential disadvantage to employees	Employees at risk of redundancy	A transparent and fair redeployment process will be undertaken in line with Corporate Human Resource policies. Employees will have access to

				the Council's redundancy scheme and will be supported through the changes to be implemented.
Staff	Younger/older people	No evidence that this group will be disproportionately affected	Employees at risk of redundancy	A transparent and fair redeployment process will be undertaken in line with Corporate Human Resource policies. Employees will have access to the Council's redundancy scheme and will be supported through the changes to be implemented.
Staff	Disabled people	No evidence that this group will be disproportionately affected		
Staff	Carers	No evidence that this group will be disproportionately affected		
Staff	People who are married or in civil partnerships	No evidence that this group will be disproportionately affected		
Staff	Sex or gender (including transgender, pregnancy and maternity)	No evidence that this group will be disproportionately affected		
Staff	People's sexual orientation	No evidence that this group will be disproportionately affected		
Staff	People of different races	No evidence that this group will be disproportionately affected		
Staff	People who have different religions or beliefs	No evidence that this group will be disproportionately affected		
<b>People vulnerable to socio-economic disadvantage</b>				
Service users	People living in deprived areas	People in deprived areas make up a significant proportion of the service users of children's social care. This group are potentially disadvantaged by a reduced workforce and may receive a lower level of service	Impact on the support to children in need in deprived areas and risk that more children may come into care	Children's Social Care will continue to meet its statutory duties to protect children. Service transformation will ensure that resources are focused on those in most need and that more children remain with their families

Service users	People in low paid employment or in households with low incomes	People in low paid households make up a significant proportion of the service users of children's social care. This group are potentially disadvantaged by a reduced workforce and may receive a lower level of service. This group may expand as the Government's proposal to reduce family tax credits are implemented in April 2016.	Impact on the support to children in need for families with low incomes and risk that more children may come into care	Children's Social Care will continue to meet its statutory duties to protect children. Service transformation will ensure that resources are focused on those in most need and that more children remain with their families.
Service users	People facing barriers to gaining employment, such as low levels of educational attainment	Children's Social Care have a number of services users with low levels of educational attainment. This group are potentially disadvantaged by a reduced workforce and may receive a lower level of service.	Impact on the support to children in need for families with low incomes and risk that more children may come into care	Service transformation will ensure that resources are focused on those in most need and that more children remain with their families.
Service users	Looked after children	Children's Social Care is responsible for 490 looked after children.	The proposals do not impact on children's placements but there may be reduction in support to some foster carers.	Children's Social Care will continue to meet its statutory duties to protect Service transformation will ensure that resources are focused on those in most need and that more children remain with their families.
Service users	People facing multiple deprivation, through a combination of factors such as poor health or poor housing / homelessness	This group faces a potential disadvantage by this proposal as those in multiple deprivation make up a significant proportion of service users of Children's Social Care.	Impact on the support to children in need for families with facing multiple deprivation and risk that more children may come into care	Children's Social Care will continue to meet its statutory duties to protect children. Service transformation will ensure that resources are focused on

				those in most need and that more children remain with their families
<b>Businesses</b>				
Business	Businesses providing current or future jobs in the city	No impact	No impact	No mitigation required
<b>Geography</b>				
Service users	Area, wards, neighbourhoods	Service users tend to be from specific wards and this proposal may have an impact on these areas.	Impact on the support to children in need for families in specific wards and risk that more children may come into care from these areas	Children's Social Care will continue to meet its statutory duties to protect children. Service transformation will ensure that resources are focused on those in most need from these particular areas and that more children remain with their families
<b>Community cohesion</b>				
Service users	Community cohesion	None	None	No mitigation required
<b>Community safety</b>				
Service users	Community safety	None	None	No mitigation required
<b>Environment</b>				
Service users	Environment	None	None	No mitigation required