

## OFFICER DECISION RECORD

For staff restructures, please also complete an RA1 form to update the HR Portal. This is attached at Annex 2.

Decision Ref. No:

2122001

### Box 1

**DIRECTORATE:** LOSC

**DATE:** 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**Contact Name:** Riana Nelson

**Tel. No.:** 01302 737800

**Subject Matter:** 2021/22 Planned Spend of £2,975,000 Social Care Support Grant Allocation

### Box 2

#### DECISION TAKEN:

To approve the 2021/22 planned spend of £2,975,000 Social Care Support Grant delegated to the Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills and Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Skills.

### Box 3

#### REASON FOR THE DECISION:

The Council's Revenue budget was approved at the Full Council meeting on 1st March 2021. The Council's MTFs included £2,975,000 for additional Social Care Support grant, which was announced in the Spending Review. This funding will be allocated in 2021/22 only, to provide for additional Children Social Care pressures that are not provided in the MTFs. The service demand pressures include over 60% more referrals in July and September compared to the previous year leading to higher numbers of Children In Need, on average 18% higher for the period September to November, greater numbers of Children with a Child Protection Plan, circa. 28% increase for the same period, and Children in Care. Although the estimated impact on the majority of the budget areas in 2021/22 is detailed in Appendix B of the Council's Revenue Budget report, there are further areas which will be met from the £2,975,000 funding allocation, which is delegated to the Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills and Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Skills.

The funding of £2,975,000 will be allocated as follows:

- £1,200,000 to Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) to offset the ending of funding from the Department of Education (DfE) following the revocation of the Statutory Direction for Doncaster on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021. This will be paid to DCST as part of the normal contract payment commencing in April 2021.

- £54,000 to Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) for additional budget required to implement new Social Worker pay grades to help appoint new staff and retain existing staff as current pay grades were below neighbouring authorities, therefore the new grades make Doncaster more competitive. The additional budget required for the new Social Worker pay grades totals £198,000 but DCST will fund £144,000 of this from savings to be delivered from reducing the number of agency workers that will be required as more Social Workers are appointed and retained due to the new pay grades. This will be paid to DCST as part of the normal contract payment commencing in April 2021. Monitoring the delivery of the workforce strategy will include targets for reducing agency workers in accordance with the assumptions included in the budget. This will be monitored via the contract management meetings with DCST.
- £286,000 to Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) to invest in a Social Worker Academy. DCST are implementing plans to grow their own experienced Social Workers; two initial cohorts (6 from April 2021 for step up students and either May or June 2021 for an additional 6), and a further cohort of 12 in August 2021. The academy should deliver future year savings as the number of agency Social Workers required will reduce as the newly qualified workers caseloads increase as their experience grows. Please see appendix A Social Work Academy business case for further detail. The Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills will approve the release and payment of funds to DCST as required based on the information provided regarding the number of appointments made. This will be monitored via the contract management meetings with DCST.
- Up to £795,000 to Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) for additional Social Workers during 2021/22. The caseloads are monitored closely for average/maximum values and the majority of workers were carrying high caseloads due to the increased demand. Based on the estimated caseloads for 2021/22 and the recommended level per worker, it is estimated that an additional 18 Social Workers will be required to maintain caseloads at a maximum level per worker. The strategic aim is to achieve an average caseload not exceeding a range of 18 - 20 children or young people across Children's Social Care to enable Social Workers and other practitioners to provide a high standard of practice to the children and families they work with Please see Appendix B DCST Case Loads Policy for further detail. This funding will be released and paid to DCST, following agreement on the planned recruitment to reduce the caseloads based on the latest caseload information available, taking into account the availability of social workers. The Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills will approve the release and payment of funds as required based on the information provided. This will be monitored via the contract management meetings with DCST.
- £640,000 to be used as in year Social Care costs contingency for service reviews and any in year demand pressures on the Care Ladder. The service reviews and Care Ladder will be monitored through the contract management meetings with DCST, and the use of the Social Care costs contingency will be approved and monitored in the Council's quarterly Finance & Performance Improvement reports.

**Box 4****ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED & REJECTED:**

**Do Nothing** – This option has been rejected, not to provide the relevant funding for the anticipated pressures would result in the DCST being unable to meet the costs of service delivery, which ultimately could result in a decline in the quality of services to support the needs of young people across the Borough.

**Box 5****LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

In accordance with s17 Childrens act 1989 (1) It shall be the general duty of every local authority ....(a)to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need; and  
(b)so far as is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families,  
by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs.

S112 Local Government Act 1972 provides that a local authority shall appoint such officers as they think necessary for the proper discharge by the authority of their functions

It is advised that a formal agreement be entered into with DCST as to the uses of the monies to be provided

**Name: Scott Fawcus Signature: [REDACTED] Date: 08.04.21**

Signature of Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services (or representative)

**Box 6****FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The Council's Revenue budget approved at the Full Council meeting on 1st March 2021 allocated, in 2021/22 only, £2,975,000 additional Social Care Support grant to provide for additional Children Social Care pressures, delegated to the Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills and Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Skills.

As outlined in the body of the report the funding of £2,975,000 will be allocated and released as follows:

- £1,200,000 to Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) to offset the ending of funding from the Department of Education (DfE). This will be paid to DCST as part of the normal contract payment commencing in April 2021.
- £54,000 to Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) for additional budget required to implement new Social Worker pay grades. This will be paid to DCST as part of the normal contract payment commencing in April 2021.
- £286,000 to Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) to invest in a Social Worker Academy. The Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills will approve the release and payment of funds to DCST as required.
- Up to £795,000 to Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) for additional Social Workers. The Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills will approve the release and payment of funds as required.
- £640,000 to be used as in year Social Care costs contingency for service reviews and any in year demand pressures on the Care Ladder, which will be approved and monitored in the Council's quarterly Finance & Performance Improvement reports.

**Name:** Aaron Bathgate **Signature:**  **Date:** 06/04/21

Signature of Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Director of Finance (or representative)

#### **Box 7**

#### **OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS**

##### **HR Implications**

There are no direct HR implications in connection to this report.

**Name:** J Carter **Signature:**  **Date:** 08/04/2021

Signature of Assistant Director (or representative)

**ANY IMPLICATIONS SENT TO DEPARTMENTS SHOULD GENERALLY BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST 5 WORKING DAYS IN ADVANCE TO ENSURE THESE CAN BE GIVEN THE RELEVANT CONSIDERATION.**

#### **BOX 8**

##### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:** (To be completed by the author).

Ensuring that we are providing good services to vulnerable children and their families will ensure that some of our most disadvantaged children are effectively supported to maximise their life chances.

**BOX 9****RISK IMPLICATIONS:** (To be completed by the author)

There is a risk that demand pressures will continue to increase resulting in additional budget pressures that will require further funding. In addition there is a risk that DCST are unable to recruit workers to the Social Worker Academy, continuing to rely on agency workers which would also result in further additional cost pressures. These risks will be mitigated by monitoring DCST closely via the monthly contract management meetings, and continuing the regular dialogue between both organisations at Senior Management level.

**BOX 10****CONSULTATION**

The pressures and mitigations have been discussed regularly as part of the contract management meetings held with DCST.

The pressures and funding required have also been discussed with the Mayor, who is supportive of the proposals.

**BOX 11****INFORMATION NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

No redactions required.

**Name:** Aaron Bathgate **Signature**  **Date:** 12/04/21

Signature of FOI Lead Officer for service area where ODR originates

**BOX 12****BACKGROUND PAPERS**


Please confirm if any Background Papers are included with this ODR

Yes the following papers:

Appendix A – Social Worker Academy Business Case

Appendix B – DCST Case Loads Policy

**BOX 13  
AUTHORISATION**


Name: Riana Nelson Signature:  Date: 15/04/2021\_\_

Director of Learning Opportunities, Skills and Culture (DCS)

Does this decision require authorisation by the Chief Financial Officer or other Officer


YES

If yes please authorise below:

Name: Faye Tyas \_\_\_\_\_ Signature:  Date: \_15/04/2021\_

Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151)

Consultation with Relevant Member(s)

Name: \_Ros Jones\_ Signature:  Date: \_13/4/21\_

Designation \_\_\_\_\_

(e.g. Mayor, Cabinet Member or Committee Chair/Vice-Chair)

Declaration of Interest NO

If YES please give details below:

**PLEASE NOTE THIS FORM WILL BE PUBLISHED ON THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE IN FULL UNLESS IT CONTAINS EXEMPT OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.**

Once completed a PDF copy of this form and any relevant background papers should be forwarded to Governance Services at [Democratic.Services@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@doncaster.gov.uk) who will arrange publication.

It is the responsibility of the decision taker to clearly identify any information that is confidential or exempt and should be redacted before publication.