

	<p>General Functions Committee</p> <p>23 June 2015</p>
<p>Title</p>	<p>Social Worker Recruitment and Retention</p>
<p>Report of</p>	<p>Nicola Francis, Family Services Director Mark Grimley, Human resources Director</p>
<p>Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p>Enclosures</p>	<p>Appendix 1: Family Services: Social Work Pay Assessment</p>
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<p>Summary</p>
<p>This report sets out a proposal to implement a revised scheme for market factor supplements for key roles within Children’s Social Care (Family Services Delivery Unit) where there are shortages of qualified and experienced social workers, reflecting national trends.</p> <p>The reason for applying a market factor relates to difficulties in recruiting and retaining high quality children’s social workers who are responsible for some of the most vulnerable and high risk cases.</p> <p>The Council has reviewed the current market position and used benchmark data from comparable authorities to provide a rationale for the application of a market factor supplement.</p> <p>The addition of the supplement is expected to be eroded through the Council’s longer term pay and terms and conditions strategy current being negotiated.</p> <p>At the same time, this report sets out some broader actions to improve our ability to attract candidates to vacant social work roles.</p>

Recommendations

- 1. That the Committee recommends to Policy and Resources Committee that a market factor supplement within the Family Services Delivery Unit be applied as follows:**
 - i) For positions within the Intervention and Planning Team from level 2 social workers up to deputy team manager level, a market factor supplement is applied that matches the upper quartile for the outer London market, funded from an allocation from risk reserve of up to £217,442 with effect from the 1 August 2015.**
 - ii) For all other posts within the remaining Family Services social work workforce above level 2 social workers up to team manager level, a market factor supplement is applied that matches the median for the outer London market, funded from an allocation from risk reserve of up to £274,928 with effect from the 1 August 2015.**

- 2. That the Chief Operating Officer includes the General Functions Committee recommendation in the amendments to the budget allocations section of the Business Planning report due to be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee on 9 July 2015.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The Council is currently experiencing a challenge in recruiting and retaining experienced, qualified social workers within Children's Social Care, part of the Family Services Delivery Unit. A review has been undertaken to ascertain why this challenge persists. It is clear that remuneration is a key factor affecting recruitment and retention. This report sets out recommendations to address these issues by introducing a market factor supplement for social work posts in Family Services.

- 1.2 Under the Council Pay Policy Statement 2015/16 (Section 3.18 Market Factor Supplements) the application of any additional pay related to market factors must be set against a rationale.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 This report recommends that the General Functions Committee approve that Family Services apply market factor supplements to social work posts with a view to improving the approach to addressing the issue of recruiting experienced social workers and the financial implications.

- 2.2 Subject to the endorsement of the recommendations outlined in this report, the Chief Operating Officer (Section 151) will reflect the amendments in the budget allocations section of the Business Planning report due to be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee on 9 July 2015.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 The Council has, to date, addressed the shortage of experienced, qualified social workers through the use of agency staff and through a standard recruitment campaign.
- 3.2 A key area of any OFSTED inspection will be the resource mix for those social workers responsible for vulnerable groups. Whilst it is accepted that there will be a need for agency workers to cover some roles, for specific reasons the long-term reliance on agency workers is not accepted as best practice and the Council must have in place a sustainable approach to attracting and retaining key groups of staff.
- 3.3 The current campaign 'Barnet: Play Your Part' used during past year to attract children's social worker applicants has had limited impact. The position in London and neighbouring counties is highly competitive and Barnet's current position in the market is not strong enough to attract experienced children's social workers.
- 3.4 The option of maintaining the current salary position has been considered, however, following a benchmarking exercise (set out in Appendix 1 of this report) it is clear that Barnet Council is currently within the lower-quartile of the pay offer within London. As such, Barnet is unlikely to attract and retain qualified workers whilst in this position. Comparatively, Barnet's neighbouring boroughs are more likely to attract experienced candidates. Three of Barnet's neighbouring boroughs are in the upper-quartile in their total offer to candidates.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Should the recommendation ultimately be approved by the Policy and Resources Committee, recruitment to vacant social work, deputy team manager and team manager posts in Family Services will be advertised including the revised market factor supplement rates.
- 4.2 The current social work workforce will have the relevant higher rates of market factor supplement applied with effect from 1 August 2015.¹

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan sets out its vision for delivering its objectives. There are three areas particularly related to Family Services' delivery:

¹ The decision in this report applies to Social Workers, Advanced Social Workers Practitioners, Deputy Managers and Team Managers employed as qualified social workers in social work posts in the Family Services delivery unit. It excludes both Newly Qualified Social Workers and those persons who may hold a social work qualification who are in a post that does not require a social work qualification.

- I. The Council will continue to ensure a great start in life for every child and that young people are well prepared for adulthood.
 - II. Safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable young people will continue to be effective and robust, with greater interface between statutory services, for example Social Care and Youth Offending teams working together to identify and support young people who might be at risk.
 - III. There will be a range of services to identify and address, at an early stage, any issues that may impede a successful childhood, provided through a well-trained, high quality workforce.
- 5.1.2 To deliver the Corporate Plan requirements for Family Services, it is essential that the Council employs sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced social workers who are able to make appropriate decisions in the best interests of those children and young people for whom the Council is responsible.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 These proposals commit the Council to funding a short-term (in-year) position to address the immediate need to attract and retain social workers in key positions pending a longer-term pay strategy being implemented through the Unified Reward Project.
- 5.2.2 To specifically address the recruitment and retention issues for social work posts within the department, the base budget for Family Services will require a one off in year allocation of £492,370 from risk reserve. This budget virement will need to be approved by the Policy and Resources Committee in July.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 In accordance with Appendix A to the Responsibility for Functions section of Barnet Council's Constitution the General Functions Committee has responsibility for decisions related to the pay and terms and conditions of employment for staff, including remuneration on recruitment increases. Where decisions have a significant impact on the Pension Fund and/or Council budget, decisions will be subject to agreement also by the Pension Fund Committee and/or Policy and Resources Committee.

5.4 Risk Management

- 5.4.1 Ensuring the Council has a high quality, experienced and qualified children's social care workforce is imperative to managing the risks to children, young people and families within the borough. Experienced social workers are more able to deliver effective interventions and take appropriate action to protect vulnerable young people, as well as controlling costs and effectively using resources.

5.4.2 Any inspection of the Council, most notably OFSTED, may raise concerns if it has not considered how it recruits and retains a skilled workforce that is able to work with young and vulnerable people. The long-term reliance on agency staff will not be seen as an adequate solution for resourcing plans.

5.4.3 Ensuring there is continuity of social work support for children and young people, is important to secure good outcomes for children. A reliance on agency staffing can disrupt case planning and can result in poor outcomes, as well as increasing the cost of delivery.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity

5.5.1 The Council has in place a job evaluation scheme to ensure equality of pay and reward across the workforce. Where there is a variation from the grading of the role against the pay structure, we must be able to objectively demonstrate a need and rationale for this action. This report sets out the reasons for increasing the total remuneration of key groups of social workers within the current market.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

5.6.1 The Chief Operating Officer has been consulted about the affordability of these proposals.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.2 The committee's attention is drawn to local government practice and guides about the attraction, recruitment, retention and development of the social care workforce:

Local Government Association/PPMA: Recruiting and Retaining Social Workers (February, 2015)

Local Government Association: Social Work: A toolkit for workers and employers (October, 2014)

FAMILY SERVICES: SOCIAL WORK PAY ASSESSMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 2014, the Council's General Functions Committee approved the restructure of Family Services to achieve savings of £2.2million. That decision has now been implemented, along with an increased focus on performance management within the Delivery Unit to provide better value for money and improve services for children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable residents.
- 1.2 Following the restructure, Family Services identified a number of vacancies that were being covered through agency staff that would need to be recruited into a permanent post. A recruitment campaign has been undertaken going out to the market for the recruitment of experienced social workers, particularly for those working on child protection and court cases. However, this has proven difficult. This is the predominant work of the Intervention and Planning teams where there is a continuation of vacancies.
- 1.3 Fortunately it has been possible to recruit a number of agency staff to cover these vacancies, and there are some roles under offer; however this high use of agency staff (34 FTE across the social work qualified roles²) is not financially sustainable nor is it an effective approach to driving up the quality of practice and continuous improvement within the Delivery Unit.
- 1.4 It is therefore essential to ensure that all of the required components are in place to attract and recruit high quality experienced children's social workers to Barnet. One of the key components of this is an attractive and competitive pay offer. This paper discusses the position of Barnet regarding children's social work pay compared to London comparators and makes recommendations regarding a new offer for Barnet.
- 1.5 The Council's position and overall offer within the current market has been reviewed. The research, summarised within this paper, sets out a number of key issues:
- (i) There is a national shortage of experienced, qualified social workers and the situation has worsened over recent years
 - (ii) Best practice to recruit and retain social workers is a package of activities includes pay, career development, job security and work-life balance
 - (iii) A number of high-prolife recruitment campaigns by local authorities have been successful in attracting social workers
 - (iv) The current Barnet position on pay within the market is lower-quartile and Barnet is losing experienced children's social workers to neighbouring authorities whilst failing to replace them

² Correct as of 13/05/15

2.0 CURRENT RESOURCE POSITION

- 2.1 Family Services has recently implemented a service transformation across the whole continuum of care from early intervention and youth and family support to social care, to ensure that Family Services is best configured to support children and young people to achieve positive outcomes, in line with quality assurance frameworks, including Ofsted.
- 2.2 The changes made to the organisational structure were to raise the quality of outcomes for children and families placing the Family Services Delivery Unit on a sustainable footing through:
- Close senior management oversight of frontline service delivery
 - Strengthening the management arrangements for front line delivery teams
 - Ensuring sufficient frontline social work capacity
 - Further development of workforce skills
 - Investment in quality assurance
 - Streamlining processes and improving delivery
- 2.3 Barnet has been actively pursuing recruitment within the market, although the attraction of quality candidates is currently low and only a handful of vacancies have been successfully covered through existing recruitment. A Family Services project is currently developing a recruitment campaign which will specifically target experienced children's social workers. Whilst the aim is to produce an innovative social work brand for Barnet, achievement of the campaign's objectives will be significantly influenced by an improved pay and remuneration offer for experienced social workers.
- 2.4 Barnet's pay within the market is lower-quartile and to realign this, pay incentivisation is to bring this into line with other authorities from 1 August 2015.
- 2.5 The number of vacancies across Family Services is set out, by job type, in table 2.1 below. Of note, from the 34 FTE vacancies⁴, 18.0 FTE of these are within the Intervention and Planning Team (covered by 13.5FTE agency staff), representing nearly 45% vacancies in this essential service. Overall, the Delivery Unit is carrying 23% vacancies in qualified and experienced social worker roles, with the majority of these covered by short-term agency arrangements.

⁴Correct as of 13/05/15

Table 2.1 Current permanent vacancies for all children’s social work positions up to Team Manager⁵

Team Manager	22	4	18%
Deputy Team Manager	10	2	20%
Advanced Social Worker	25	7	28%
Social Worker	81	21	26%
Newly Qualified Social Worker	12	0	0%
TOTAL	150	34	23%

3.0 MARKET INTELLIGENCE

3.1 As part of the London-wide benchmarking club through London Council’s, an assessment has been compiled of the market position for social work recruitment in children’s social care.

Agency costs

3.2 The latest research (Quarter 4, 2014) indicates that there are currently 1,418 children’s social work roles within London covered by agency staff. This has increased since the same point in 2013, by 27%. At the same time, despite agency controls through our resourcing contract with Comensura, and caps on margins applied to roles, the demand for agency workers has seen the rates for social workers rise substantially within the past 12 months. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 below and over leaf set out current London rates for agency workers per hour and convert this into equivalent salaries, the conversion calculation is based on a 37 hour working week, full time inclusive of holiday pay.

Table 3.1 Current London rates for agency workers (excluding agency fees)

	Minimum Hourly rate	Average Hourly Rate	Maximum Hourly Rate
Outer London	£29.34	£29.68	£35.45
Inner London	£25.36	£29.48	£30.24

⁵Correct as of 13/05/15

Table 3.2 Translation of Hourly rates into equivalent salary

	Minimum Salary Equivalent	Average Salary Equivalent	Maximum Salary Equivalent
Outer London	£56,450	£57,104	£68,205
Inner London	£48,792	£56,719	£58,181

Table 3.3 Comparison of total Costs per worker type on the Outer London rates (against LBB experienced social worker role)

	Minimum Salary Equivalent	Average Salary Equivalent (or mid-point)	Maximum Salary Equivalent
Outer London Agency	£56,450	£57,104	£68,205
LB Barnet Current (lower quartile)	£41,351	£43,329	£45,307
LB Barnet Proposed (upper quartile)	£48,953	£50,068	£51,182
LB Barnet Proposed (median)	£46,692	£47,822	£48,953

Salary Levels

- 3.3 Barnet has traditionally had a low-turnover and low vacancy rate, restricting the need for a review of pay and other benefits for social workers. However, a number of factors, including intensive recruitment campaigns from other boroughs and large neighbouring counties have attracted candidates with more substantial packages. Since the end of 2013, Barnet Family Service’s social work vacancies have risen from around 8 per cent to 23 per cent of the workforce. This puts us in the top quarter of boroughs for vacancies.
- 3.4 Benchmarking against other outer London authorities indicates that Barnet is now offering the third-lowest total remuneration package and is in the lower-quartile for London.

Table 3.4 Current Family Services social work Market Factor Supplement (MFS) showing increase to market median for Outer London

Role	Current salary (inclusive of MFS) / £	Current MFS / £	Proposed MFS increase to market median/ £	Total MFS following adjustment/ £
Social Worker (L2)	34845	1000	3994	4994
Social Worker (L3)	38668	2000	3613	5613
Advanced Social Worker	41351	2000	3956	5956
Deputy Team Manager	42188	2000	2691	4691
Team Manager	50386	2000	358	2358

Table 3.5 Current Family Services social work Market Factor Supplement (MFS) showing increase to upper quartile for Outer London

Role	Current salary (inclusive of MFS) / £	Current MFS / £	Proposed MFS increase to upper quartile / £	Total MFS following adjustment/ £
Social Worker (L2)	34845	1000	6762	7762
Social Worker (L3)	38668	2000	7032	9032
Advanced Social Worker	41351	2000	6457	8457
Deputy Team Manager	42188	2000	5809	7809

4.0 PAY RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that the Council adopts the following approach, given the factors of the bottom-quartile pay; upper quartile vacancy rate, recent high turnover and equivalent cost of agency staff:

- (i) Adjustment of the market factor supplements applied from level 2 social workers up to deputy team manager level in Intervention and Planning to match the middle of the outer London upper quartile position, pending the outcome of the Unified Reward project that will seek to address the current issue of low-basic salary offer. The reasons for this are the continuing increase in agency costs and competition from comparable boroughs who have already offered a significantly more attractive package. This will be applied from 1st August 2015.
- (ii) All other level 2 and above social work positions are moved to the market-median position for Outer London by means of market factor supplement, pending the outcome of the Unified Reward project that will seek to address the current issue of low-basic salary offer. This will be applied from 1st August 2015.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 For the Intervention and Planning Team to move to the upper quartile (assuming a mid-range point) would result in market factors of £326,163, full year cost (allowing for 8 months allocation in 2015/16 this equates to £217,442). This would be required until the implementation of the Unified Reward Project, at which point a review of market factor supplements will be required. The rationale for this is to avoid additional costs of agency workers, the cost of turnover and retain the current workforce.

Table 5.1: Total costs (inclusive of on-costs) of moving the Intervention and Planning Team Market Factor Supplements (MFS) to the middle of upper quartile for outer London children’s social workers⁵

Intervention and planning teams				
Role	Number in establishment	Cost / Social Worker MFS to middle of upper quartile salary / £	On- costs (assuming 35%) / £	Total cost / Social Worker MFS to middle of upper quartile salary / £
Social Worker (L2)	10	67,620	23,667	91,287
Social Worker (L3)	14	98,448	34,457	132,905
Advanced Social Worker	9	58,109	20,338	78,446
Deputy Team Manager	3	17,426	6,099	23,524
Total cost of enhancement				326,163

5.2 To move the rest of the social work workforce to the market median via use of a market factor supplement would result in an additional cost of £ 593,560 (including Intervention and Planning). Assuming that the Intervention and Planning supplements are addressed through the first recommendation, the total additional requirement is £412,391 (for the current financial year, for which this report relates to, this is an allocation of £274,928 for eight months). This would be required until the implementation of the Unified Reward Project, at which point a review of market factor supplements will be required. The rationale for this is to avoid additional costs of agency workers, the cost of turnover and retain the current workforce.

Table 5.2: Total costs (inclusive of on-costs) of moving the social work Market Factor Supplement (MFS) to the market median for outer London children’s social workers.⁶

Family Services social work workforce				
Role	Number in establishment	Cost / Social Worker MFS to market median / £	On- costs (assuming 35%) / £	Total cost / Social Worker MFS to market median / £
Social Worker (L2)	35	139,790	48,927	188,717
Social Worker (L3)	46	166,198	58,169	224,367
Advanced Social Worker	25	98,900	34,615	133,515
Deputy Team Manager	10	26,910	9,419	36,329
Team Manager	22	7,876	2,757	10,633
Total cost of enhancement				593,560

5.3 The cost of the short-term approach will be met in-year through allocation of the Council’s reserves by the Chief Operating Officer.

⁶ Figures included in tables 5.1 and 5.2 are estimated and rounded up for the purposes of this report