

Step Up to Social Work Regional Partnership Inter-Authority Agreement

Councillor Lynne Ayres, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education, Skills, and the University

September 2019

Deadline date: 8 September 2019

Cabinet portfolio holder: Responsible Director:	Councillor Lynne Ayres, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education, Skills, and the University Wendi Ogle-Welbourn, Corporate Director People and Communities
Is this a Key Decision?	NO
Is this decision eligible for call-in?	NO
Does this Public report have any annex that contains exempt information?	NO
Is this a project and if so has it been registered on Verto?	NO

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

The Cabinet Member is recommended to approve:

1. Participation in the Step Up to Social Work Programme, and
2. Entering into the Regional Partnership Inter-Authority Agreement.

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 This report seeks the Cabinet Member’s approval for the Council to participate in the Step Up to Social Work Programme and to enter into the Regional Partnership Inter-Authority Agreement.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 2.1 This report is for the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services to consider exercising delegated authority under paragraph 3.4.3 of Part 3 of the constitution in accordance with the terms of their portfolio at paragraph (a).

3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	N/A
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4. DETAILS OF DECISION REQUIRED

- 4.1 The Step Up to Social Work Programme enables trainees to work towards a qualification to practice as a social worker at the same time as gaining intensive hands-on experience. It has been designed to enable high-achieving graduates or career changers who have experience of working with children and young people to train to become qualified social workers. The programme is a 14 month tailored, employer-led training programme incorporating both assessed practice and academic learning requirements. The programme is funded by the Department for Education (DfE). Eighteen regional partnerships of local authorities have been funded to develop and deliver the programme in conjunction with a Higher Education Institute (HEI).
- 4.2 Essex County Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council, Suffolk County Council, Norfolk County Council and Thurrock Council (the Authorities) have formed a Regional Partnership in order to participate in the Step up to Social Work Programme, with Essex County Council acting as the Lead Authority.
- 4.3 The Regional Partnership receives funding from the Department for Education, through the Lead Authority, for participation in this programme. The Lead Authority will subsequently make payments to the Council in accordance with the Regional Partnership Inter-Authority Agreement.
- 4.4 The Regional Partnership will work with Anglian Ruskin University, which it has procured to ensure that all delivery of the academic modules meets the quality assurance criteria of the University and the Health and Care Professional Council.
- 4.5 As part of the Regional Partnership, Peterborough City Council has been allocated two trainees for the period of the programme. Upon successful completion of the Step Up to Social Work Programme, trainees will be awarded an MA Diploma in Social Work. Each trainee will enter into a training contract for the duration of their participation in the Step Up to Social Care Programme.
- 4.6 The Lead Authority has agreed to enter into a contract on behalf of the Regional Partnership in consideration for the Authorities agreeing to accept reciprocal contract terms and to work with each other pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Regional Partnership Inter-Authority Agreement. This agreement will govern the Authorities' collaboration in relation to the Step Up to Social Work Programme.
- 4.7 The Cabinet Member is requested to approve the Council's participation in the Step Up to Social Work Programme and entering into the Regional Partnership Inter-Authority Agreement.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation has been undertaken with Regional Partnership Authorities, Anglian Ruskin University, and the Director of People and Communities.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- 6.1 The signing of the Regional Partnership Inter-Authority Agreement will release the first stage of funding to the Lead Authority and facilitate the progression of the Step Up to Social Work Programme.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS & ANY RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 7.1 The Step Up to Social Work Programme supports the recruitment and retention of Qualified Social Workers in Children's Social Care. This programme was supported and successfully ran between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019 with trainees graduating and taking up employment in the Council.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Peterborough City Council is working in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council to offer the Social Work Apprenticeship Degree to existing staff starting in October 2019. This first cohort will include two Children's Social Care Practitioners for Peterborough who will complete and graduate in 2022.

9. IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Legal

The Department for Education requires that the Lead Authority and participating Authorities enter into a Regional Partnership Inter-Authority Agreement. Legal Services have reviewed the agreement and have liaised with the Lead Authority and other participating Authorities throughout this review.

The Lead Authority, Essex County Council, has taken the lead role in the procurement of the higher education provider. The Regional Partnership will work with Anglian Ruskin University, which has been procured to ensure that all delivery of the academic modules meets the quality assurance criteria of the University and the Health and Care Professional Council.

9.2 Financial

All costs of the programme are fully funded. University costs and student bursaries will be paid directly by the Lead Authority. Peterborough City Council will be in receipt of funding for support and supervision proportionate to the number of trainees. This is estimated to be £3500 in addition to the normal University student placement fees.

9.3 HR

The trainees will not be employees of the council and all academic, practice and conduct issues during the Programme will be addressed via the Universities policies and procedures. However whilst on placement within Peterborough City Council trainees will be expected to adhere to the Council's Policy's and procedures in the workplace.

10. DECLARATIONS / CONFLICTS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS GRANTED

None.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.