

Agenda Item	22.
Report No	CLH 53/18

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Care, Learning and Housing

Date: 18 October 2018

Report Title: **Update on Family Teams**

Report By: Director of Care and Learning

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report sets out the process followed and progress towards implementation of the restructure of Family Teams in Children's Services.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the update.

3. Family Team Restructure

- 3.1 The restructure of Family Teams was agreed by Members as part of the Care and Learning budget proposals for the financial year 2018/19.
- 3.2 The Family Teams are the main delivery mechanism for health and social care services to children and families, and have a three-part structure covering Early Years, School Years and Care & Protection. These are headed by Practice Leads, who in turn are managed by District Managers, reporting to the Children's Services Manager.
- 3.3 The restructure proposed merging the District Manager and Practice Lead roles, with a reduction of 8 posts.
- 3.4 This process was led by the Head of Children's Services. During the early consultation with staff and the development of revised job descriptions, the Principal Officer for Nursing and the Principal Officer for Social Care were also fully involved. HR support was provided throughout the process. Several meetings were held with the relevant Trade Unions.
- 3.5 Revised job descriptions for Family Team Managers and Children's Services Managers were consulted on with staff and Trade Unions. They were then submitted for job evaluation through both Highland Council and NHS Agenda for Change processes. This did not result in any change in grade. The trade unions have raised concerns about this, and it is being worked through with HR colleagues.

4. Current position

- 4.1 The consultation period has been protracted, resulting in a longer than anticipated wait for implementation. Naturally during this time, there has been turnover in the affected posts. During this period, some vacancies arose at a similar grade, which were ring-fenced to affected staff, by agreement with the Trade Unions, resulting in a reduction of the number of staff potentially at risk. As part of the restructure, an additional Children's Services Manager post was created in the South area, and this was filled by one of the District Managers after competitive interview.
- 4.2 At this point in time there are three District Managers who will be displaced, although another Children's Services Manager post will shortly become vacant due to retirement. There are enough posts now for all affected staff to be accommodated within the new structure. The Highland Council pay protection policy will apply as appropriate.
- 4.3 Practice Leads will be assimilated into the equivalent Family Team Manager roles. The remaining District Manager can be redeployed into vacant Family Team Manager roles. Children's Services Manager posts are unchanged, other than some revision to the Job Description and the creation of an additional post. It is anticipated that the process can be completed over the next 2 months.
- 4.4 Whilst the process was initiated as a savings measure, the consultation highlighted some issues around the working of the Family Teams, and so will inform future planning and training requirements. Measures are being identified to reduce the overall workload of this group of managers, including relocation of responsibilities for oversight and support of residential units, reduction in frequency of foster carer reviews, and changes to the responsibility for carrying out case reviews for Looked After Children placed outwith Highland.

5. Implications

- 5.1 Resource – The planned saving of £250k will be achieved through this restructure.
- 5.2 Legal – No legal implications have been identified.
- 5.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – There are no newly identified issues arising.
- 5.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever – There are no newly identified issues arising.
- 5.5 Risk – There is a risk that the new posts are not attractive to staff who wish to remain as senior leads of practice, rather than take up a more clearly defined managerial role. Support will be provided to assist managers to adjust to the new role.
- 5.6 Gaelic – There are no identified issues.

Designation: Head of Children's Services

Date: 4 October 2018

Author: Sandra Campbell

Background Papers: Revised job descriptions are attached.