

Wednesday, 17 April 2024

## Children, Families and Lifelong Learning (CFLL) additional budget allocation – Prevention activities

### 1. Purpose of report:

- To detail additional budget that will be provided in 2024/25 to CFLL support prevention work with children and families.
- To note and provide a service response to Councillor Catherine Powell's proposed budget amendments relating to Children's Services: [\(Public Pack\)Supplementary Agenda - Items: 5 \(i\) and 6 Agenda Supplement for Council, 06/02/2024 10:00 \(surreycc.gov.uk\) \(p5-14\)](#).

### 2. Introduction:

- As part of the Council's 2024/25 budget setting process, an additional allocation of funding of £5.03m was agreed to support prevention work within CFLL.
- That funding is to be financed from the Surrey share of the £600m additional allocation of Funding received from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in January 2024.

### 3. Summary of £5.03m additional funding for CFLL prevention activity:

#	Item	Description	Category	2024/25 (£m)
A	ELL prevention investment	Additional capacity for Specialist Teachers in Inclusive Practice 12 x STIPs	Prevention	0.81
B	ELL prevention investment	Integrate the Team Around the School service with the L-SPA 1x Manager, 4x School coordinators, 4x SEND advisors, 4x Family comms 1x performance officer	Prevention	0.90

C	Family safeguarding prevention investment	Provide additional social worker resourcing to the C-SPA	Prevention	0.72
D	Family safeguarding prevention investment	Permanent establishment of specialist practitioners within family safeguarding	Prevention	0.90
E	CWD prevention investment	Provide ongoing funding for posts within the Children with Disabilities service	Prevention	0.69
F	ELL	Increase elective home education (EHE) capacity	Prevention	0.16
G	Quality assurance and performance	Staffing for additional quality assurance activities to meet new responsibilities and provide additional assurance	Prevention	0.13
H	Children Looked After (CLA) prevention investment	Additional foster carer family support workers	Prevention	0.25
I	Children Looked After (CLA) prevention investment	Extend the work underway to review commissioning arrangements and key contracts.	Prevention	0.15
j	Quality assurance and performance	Ongoing funding of additional Independent Reviewing Officers	Prevention	0.13
<b>Total additional budget</b>				<b>4.84</b>

**4. Further information about services that will be supported through additional funding agreed (note each letter below corresponds to item in table above):**

- A. Additional capacity for Specialist Teachers in Inclusive Practice (STIPs), to support schools to successfully meet the needs of more children at SEN Support in mainstream schools.** This funding will enable us to increase the capacity of the highly valued STIPs service core offer to support mainstream schools to successfully meet children's needs at SEN Support and prevent escalation to statutory intervention, such as Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs). Currently the majority of STIPs support is provided via a traded offer for schools to buy-in. Increasing the core offer will ensure that the service is able to provide needs-led support to all schools. This will enable identification of children's needs early and allow us to put in place timely interventions to assist mainstream schools to give children the right support.
- B. Integrate the Team Around the School service with the L-SPA as a single Early Intervention and Prevention Service to continue to deliver and scale up the existing approaches to early support and intervention to education providers and families.** A new service will be created through the integration and expansion of two existing services: Team Around the School (TAS) and Learners Single Point of Access (L-SPA). Both services have been

supported through SEND Transformation funding to date and have pioneered innovative and needs-led approaches to early intervention and meeting need, reducing reliance on EHCPs and enabling schools and settings to develop their 'ordinarily available' offer of support.

The new Early Intervention and Support Service will enable us to work proactively and preventatively to:

- Respond to requests for support from parents and professionals at the earliest opportunity, delivering advice and support to settings, schools and families that mitigates against an escalation of need.
- Meet the needs of children, young people from 0-25 and their families as early as possible through a strengthened core offer of support to settings and schools and promotion of inclusive practice.

**C. Provide additional social worker resourcing to the C-SPA to assist in the effective identification of levels of need and enable early invention.** Over the last six months, we have been undertaking a full review of the end-to-end processes within the front door teams that support all contacts and referrals into CFLL for a request for service. There are three main front door teams: 1. 'request for service' (part of the wider contact services), 2. the Early Help Hub and 3. the C-SPA team. Work has been completed in partnership with Essex County Council Children's Services to review our processes, practice, staffing establishments and volumes of contacts to help us understand and improve the way in which we manage work at the front door. This work has established that there is not enough social work resource in the C-SPA, which is resulting in delays in managing decisions, referrals being dealt with by non-social work staff and the processes being followed causing significant repetition and 'double handling' between the C-SPA and Assessment services, all of which is causing delays to providing interventions to families. This additional investment into the social work establishment will support the recommendations made from the end-to-end process and be part of the work needed to improve the way in which we safely make decisions within our Front Door (C-SPA) service and work in a preventative manner with families. This additional resource within the C-SPA will allow better and clearer social work decision making which will enable families to be provided intervention and support from an Early Help / Intensive Family Support Approach, whereas at the current time work is passed by non-social work staff to the assessment teams who often will close work down following initial scoping, which causes delays and frustrations to professionals and families.

**D. Permanent establishment of specialist practitioners within family safeguarding (focusing on drug and alcohol, mental health and domestic abuse) to strengthen our early help and prevention approach.** The Family Safeguarding Practice Model (FSM) was implemented in Surrey starting in 2019 and is supported by DfE as an approach that is considered good practice. It supports the journey of improvement happening in children

services in Surrey. A key aspect of the model provides specialist adult practitioners to support and intervene with parental / carer needs in three key areas, Domestic Abuse, Substance Misuse and Mental Health. Specialist adult practitioners work within and alongside the child protection social workers to support families in a holistic manner and to achieve change by supporting and providing interventions to the adults caring for children. Surrey Children Services have received Department for Education (DfE) funding to support the implementation and embedding of FSM and this has contributed towards the funding off these specialist adult practitioners. The practice model is having a positive impact in Surrey: we have seen a 30% reduction of children being subject to Child Protection Plans and a reduction in the numbers of applications for public care proceedings and the numbers of children entering care. Following the end of the DfE funds, this additional funding will enable us to continue to deliver the practice model within Surrey with the key partner agencies to grow and develop this resource which we can see is having positive impacts for children and families in Surrey and is supporting the reduction of younger children entering care. The FSM is based upon working in a preventative manner with families by identifying parental needs and offering interventions alongside the children's social worker who is ensuring the child's needs are also being met. The effectiveness has been evidenced over the last 18 months during which we have seen a significant reduction in the use of Child Protection Plans and the Public Law and court applications, indicating that the practice model is delivering our intended vision of meeting families' needs at the earliest opportunity and in the most preventative way.

- E. Provide ongoing funding for posts within the Children with Disabilities (CWD) service, providing support for the families and enabling children with complex needs to live well at home.** In January 2023, following an extensive piece of work reviewing all aspects of practice and volumes of work in the CWD service, approval was given to develop additional social work posts and one team manager to safely manage the demand within the service. This was originally funded through COVID 19 finances. We are now in a position where it is clear these staff are still required given the demand within the service for interventions and support needed to children and families in Surrey. Work is taking place to support the increased demand which has included reviewing all care packages that could be supported via an early help / review service. This preventative approach ensures we are assessing the child and family's needs and then supporting them via a less intrusive early help service. We are also working closely with adult social care colleagues to develop a 16-25 service which we anticipate will bring improvements in the way we manage transitions for children with disabilities, however there has been an increased demand for services for children who meet the criteria for CWD and removing these posts would create a situation

where numbers of allocations would be beyond a level which we would deem safe in terms of allocated children for social workers. As such, the additional funding brings these posts into the base line budget and will support the CWD service to provide a safe service to children and young people and their families in Surrey. The CWD service wants to support children and families early to avoid escalation of needs requiring high-cost interventions. Having the correct establishment supports manageable allocation of children numbers which will enable social workers to work in a preventative and more intense manner with families to support what is often a range of complex needs for their children.

**F. Increase Elective Home Education (EHE) capacity to meet the growth in numbers for EHE and Inclusion and Additional Needs (I&AN) work.**

The number of families who are electively home educating has increased from 1847 to 2179 over the past year (March 2023 to March 2024). This funding will enable us to recruit an additional 4 EHE Officers. The additional capacity will enable us to intervene early, where necessary, to undertake annual visits to families, assess suitable education and move swiftly to court action, where necessary to ensure children are receiving a suitable education. The ability to deliver this service effectively is an important aspect of our education and safeguarding work.

**G. Staffing for additional quality assurance activities to meet new responsibilities and provide additional assurance about safeguarding risks to disabled children placed out of county in residential settings.**

Following an investigation and the uncovering of widespread systemic abuse and neglect in three of the Hesley Group care homes in Doncaster, that provided education and care to children and young adults with complex health needs and disabilities, the Children's National Safeguarding Panel made [several recommendations](#) to the DfE, which were accepted, to improve the standard of care to this vulnerable group of children/young adults. The systemic abuse was not spotted nationally by Local Authority Social Care and Education staff who had placed children within the provision, health staff, Regulation 44 Visitors or Ofsted. Local Authorities are now required to have much greater oversight of the care provided when children and young adults are placed at a distance; ensuring the voice of the child is heard and children and young adults have access to non-instructed advocacy; more appropriate responses by the LADO to allegations of abuse; improved specialist staff training about understanding the needs of disabled children and spotting abuse, especially with non-verbal children; and improved collaboration with partners in the professional network for the child / young adult. DfE are considering whether staff working within residential care provision should be subjected to a registration process. The quality assurance duties and expectations placed on Local Authorities, and indeed all agencies and relevant professional bodies, to

improve practice and monitoring, when embedded will feed into improved standards of care and prevention of abuse in institutional care for this vulnerable group of children and young adults. The additional money will be used to fund a bespoke advocacy contract (50k), 0.5 specialist Independent Reviewing Officer, (35k) staff training, via the academy, (45k) to undertake these additional duties.

- H. Additional family support workers to enable foster carers to accept more children into placements and support children whose placements would otherwise be likely to break down.** On a temporary basis, a small team of family support workers had been funded through the Council's Transformation budget to support foster carers. The workers have been used in a variety of ways to support foster carers, including supporting carers to look after children with additional needs that they may have felt unable to care for without additional support; targeted support for new carers looking after their first child, helping them to understanding their preparation training in practice and balance the demands of their new role. Feedback from foster carers has been overwhelmingly positive and therefore the service can use this additional funding to make these roles permanent. We expect to see a positive impact on stability for children and also greater satisfaction and retention of foster carers.
- I. Extend the work underway to review commissioning arrangements and key contracts.** The additional money to support commissioning arrangements and key contracts is being used to support the transition of preventative transformational programmes of work – and the individuals leading them – into core funding. These programmes provide support for children transitioning into adulthood to ensure CYP's needs are recognised and met before any challenges arise, thereby preventing any escalation of concerns. The impact of these arrangements will result in improved outcomes for children across a number of our priority areas such as children with Additional Needs, Learning Disabilities and Autism.
- J. Ongoing funding of additional Independent Reviewing Officers, continuing the positive impact on foster carer retention and placement stability.** It was recommended in the Essex Peer Review that we employ independent reviewing officers for the Fostering Service. These roles will enhance both the support and challenge we can bring to both foster carers and the wider system supporting looked after children, leading to greater stability for children and improved satisfaction and retention of foster carers.

**5. Cllr Powell's alternative budget proposals:**

- Councillor Catherine Powell has proposed an amendment to the 2024/25 budget "to fund more early intervention, prevention and support services in

Adults' and Children's Services that specifically targets some of our most vulnerable residents, particularly in deprived areas, as well as reducing pressures on statutory services". In relation to CFLL's work, the Cllr has proposed:

- £0.5m for further investment in SEND Play and Leisure to address increased demand, track and address the waiting lists
- £0.05m of one-off funding to support the expansion of the current pilot, where providers of SEND Play and Leisure or Overnight Respite Groups would allow parents and carers to directly fund a session or place using their personal allowances, when the parents are struggling to recruit Personal Assistants (PAs) to provide respite and support.
- £0.3m of one-off funding to support the implementation and roll out of the Surrey Fosters Carers Charter, developed alongside the Surrey Foster Carers Association, to support Foster Carers retention and recruitment and ensure the best possible outcomes for the children and young people in their care
- £0.7m for additional support in schools for neurodiverse children, specifically those in areas of high deprivation
- The CFLL directorate has reviewed the proposals, costed them, and considered their likely prevention impact.

## **6. Service evaluation of Cllr Powell's alternative budget proposals:**

### **A. £0.5m for further investment in SEND Play and Leisure to address increased demand, track and address the waiting lists**

The Committee is asked to recognise that the core, baseline budget for short breaks provided through play and youth schemes has already been uplifted by £370k for 2024/25. In addition to this core budget, SCC has been successful in securing a second year of additional funding from the Department for Education (DfE), through the Short Breaks Innovation Grant scheme. For 2024/25 the grant funding totals £950k, of which £467k is allocated to capacity in local schemes for children with the most complex needs, who require 1-to-1 support to access their break.

Alongside this, the additional DfE funding has enabled SCC to begin a short breaks co-production programme with parents and carers, focused on working in partnership to enable the best possible outcomes for children and families through short breaks in Surrey. One of the key themes that has already emerged from parents and carers, alongside a range of areas of improvement within core short breaks services, is the need to enable more children and young people with additional needs to access more inclusive opportunities in communities, rather than diverting children with additional needs away from

their peers and into specialist provision. This feedback aligns strongly with the aims of SCC's overall Additional Needs and Disabilities strategy. Instead of relying on ongoing increases in specialist provision, we expect that better and more sustainable outcomes will be achieved by enabling more children and young people to access inclusive opportunities and provision locally, ensuring that specialist short breaks are prioritised for those who need it most. The co-production programme provides an excellent forum to begin exploring creative, new ways of doing this with children and families during 2024/25. Therefore the service welcomes the proposal to direct increased funding towards leisure opportunities for children with additional needs and recommend that any additional funding under this heading is not targeted towards specialist provision but focused on a programme of developing more inclusive practice in mainstream provision in line with the co-production work currently under way.

**B. £0.05m of one-off funding to support the expansion of the current pilot, where providers of SEND Play and Leisure or Overnight Respite Groups would allow parents and carers to fund a session or place using their personal allowances, when they are struggling to recruit Personal Assistants (PAs) to provide respite and support**

As highlighted by Councillor Powell, Surrey County Council is currently running a 6-month pilot with one of our main providers of play and leisure short breaks, Disability Challengers, to repurpose unspent funding within children's personal budgets to purchase additional 1-to-1 supported spaces on current play and youth schemes. This pilot, which began in January 2024, was initiated in response to an idea from local parents, who identified additional short breaks as an alternative (and sometimes preferred) way to meet their needs, when it was not possible to recruit Personal Assistants. For the purposes of the pilot, the provider has, at their cost, recruited additional staff to provide extra places on current schemes, but with SCC agreeing to underwrite the financial risk of those places not being taken up by families.

Whilst the pilot is only in its early stages, the initial signs are positive, with small numbers of eligible families starting to access the additional sessions. If the pilot is successful and families do take up these places (as seems to be the case), there will be little to no additional budget requirement for SCC, as providers' additional staff costs are met through pre-allocated personal budgets. If £50k were allocated by SCC to support this pilot for 2024/25, as proposed by Councillor Powell, the potential benefit would be enabling SCC to pump-prime and therefore speed-up creation new places with other providers prior to completion of the pilot phase – although this would be set against some potential additional risks from having not fully tested the model with one provider. The current plan to test, learn and then roll-out the scheme (if appropriate) with other providers is therefore our preferred approach and the service would welcome the opportunity to allocate an additional 50k to this.

**C. £0.3m of one-off funding to support the implementation and roll out of the Surrey Fosters Carers Charter, developed alongside the Surrey Foster Carers Association, to support Foster Carers retention and recruitment and ensure the best possible outcomes for the children and young people in their care**

The service is committed to implementing the Foster Carers' Charter, and has launch plans for Foster Care Fortnight later this year. Cllr Powell has suggested that additional resource is required to support the implementation. The Committee is asked to note that the implementation of the Charter is dependent on improved communication and relationships between foster carers and the wider system, which requires some cultural change but very little additional cost over existing plans. The service acknowledges that it would be helpful to the implementation to have some additional capacity project leadership for a twelve-month period to ensure the model is well embedded and becomes part of our ongoing 'BAU' operating model. The service proposal in response to this suggestion is that we retain a subject matter expert for a twelve-month period. The individual knows the service well and has already worked with the Foster Care Association on a number of initiatives. This additional capacity will support the implementation plan and associated communication across the system. The cost of this additional capacity would be in the region of £50,000 depending on the exact number of days worked in the twelve-month period.

We have not identified any other costs associated with delivering the Charter other than this implementation leadership.

**D. £0.7m for additional support in schools for neurodiverse children, specifically those in areas of high deprivation**

**Recommendation Paper on Autism Intervention Programmes**

Building on the proposals outlined by Councillor Powell, we have identified the following projects and programmes that can be further developed to achieve the desired outcomes:

**Schools Inclusion For Autism (SIFA)**

Extension of the Autism Outreach programme delivered by a partnership of Surrey Specialist schools to bring the placement stability work into the core offer. This programme, known as **SIFA (Schools Inclusion for Autism)** provides targeted support for children at risk of needing to move to specialist provision and provides strategies and interventions for both families and mainstream schools. During the pilot, which covered a 12-month period, 38 children were supported across 18 schools. The end of year report noted that all schools noted an improvement in attendance and a greater understanding of needs and increased confidence to support children with autism. Historically most of these young people would have been transferred to either

Surrey specialist provision or Non-Maintained Independent (NMI) schools at additional cost.

The SCC Placement Stability Coordinator and Head of Outreach at Freemantles School worked closely together to refine the process of identifying and prioritising pupils across Surrey. They look at a range of criteria that includes CIN/Children who are looked after/refugees and asylum seekers as well as children who are at risk of permanent exclusion at their current school. We have mapped the LSOAs areas across the schools and although the 18 schools themselves do not sit in the top 21 SLOA wards (which are small) we have data to evidence that many of the children who attend the SIFA supported schools live within the areas of high deprivation

Additional funding would enable us to transition SIFA into business as usual so that maintained schools can access targeted support for children at the earliest opportunity when schools are struggling to support a child to make good progress and to be happy to be in school.

### **Cost breakdown**

The cost of the initial project, including SCC staff and extending the commission for outreach service delivery.

Two Inclusion Officers grade 10 to sit within Commissioning SEND Admissions - £111,950

Expansion of the SIFA offer delivered by the Autism Partnership - £200,000

**Total - £311,950**

### **Whole School Autism Friendly Reviews**

Scaling up of the new and highly successful Whole School Autism Friendly Reviews so that all mainstream schools can access. This review addresses the school environment from the perspective of:

- Pupils at the school.
- Parents and carers and
- School leaders,

It has been co-designed with people with lived experience, ATLAS, Family Voice Surrey and the review is carried out by the All Age Autism Team. The reviews started in September 23 and there are already 40 schools on the waiting list. The review includes an evaluation visit 2 terms after the initial review in order to measure and understand the difference it has made.

Expanding this programme will mean that more schools can access the reviews and start to make whole schools changes that will improve the environment and experience of the school day for all children and young people and staff in the school community.

The reviews are currently carried out by members of the All Age Autism Team. Each review team consists of the Autism Lead, who has extensive

knowledge of autism and is qualified as an Autism Champion Trainer, a member of the Family Voice Surrey team which is the Surrey CC parent/carer forum and our apprentice with lived experience.

Under these proposals we would seek to employ a new team manager to support the programme and to lead reviews along with a commissioned member of FVS. We are committed to continuing to employ young people with autism to support this programme. The additional funding will enable us to employ a second autistic intern or apprentice to be part of this workstream.

All of the above would be accessible to all mainstream and specialist schools and a referral process will take into account the levels of need within the school including deprivation, attendance and exclusions.

This programme is being carried out in alignment with the Inclusion and Innovation Working Group which is a schools-led programme to support inclusion and raising awareness and understanding of autism.

Autism Friendly School Reviews take place in Surrey mainstream primary and secondary schools and support all children attending by supporting the schools with suggestions to improve their routines, practices etc. The programme has been voluntary up until now with schools putting themselves forward. We will target areas of high deprivation across Surrey in the future and ask schools in these areas if they would like a review. The Outreach work is supporting schools with practices that enhance provision for autistic children. Many of the interventions and resources suggested are suitable for all children that may struggle with lower academic achievement or delayed speech and language skills.

### **Cost breakdown**

Autism Review Lead - £72,514

Business Support - £15,551

ATLAS - £25,000

Supported Intern - £0

Family Voice Surrey - £8,000

**Total - £121,065**

### **Enhanced Language and Communication Initiative (ELCI)**

This is a programme which started this academic year to put additional targeted support into Reception classes in response to feedback from schools that children are arriving in Reception with a low level of attainment which is affecting their access to education. This includes speech and language delays, disorders and social language and communication issues which can

sometimes be a precursor to an autism diagnosis. The programme can support 26 schools at a time with a qualified speech and language advisor spending half a day per week supporting Reception teachers and assistants with strategies, training and resources to support more complex cohorts of children. This programme started this academic year and has already had excellent feedback from schools.

The proposal would be to expand the programme to support additional schools reaching up to 50 schools at any one time and to extend the training offer.

### Cost breakdown

Educational Psychologist	0.2	TBC dependent on experience		£13,537
Specialist Speech and Language Therapist (to cover a day of Highly Specialist time)	0.2	PS10	£11,064	
Senior Specialist Support Worker	1.0*	SP8		£40,537
Specialist Communication Worker	4.0**	SP7		£146,952
<b>Total</b>				<b>£212,090 + 4%</b> £220,090

In relation to all the programmes outlined above, the service cannot impose a programme on any individual school so we cannot guarantee the take up would always be from schools in areas of deprivation but we can commit to promoting these activities first to schools in those areas and to prioritising their take up before any wider offer. To be of maximum value to Surrey children with additional needs and their families, any leftover places could then be taken up by other schools to meet needs in their cohorts.

### Recommendation:

**To approve the funding for the programmes listed above with a total value of £653,105**

## 7. Remaining Funds Proposals

CFLL staff have costed the full range of additional opportunities outlined above at £6.1 million. The directorate is aware that up to £8.3 million may be available to

support prevention objectives in children's services. We consider that the best value for the remaining £2.2million funds potentially available will be realised by focusing on recruitment and retention initiatives for the social work workforce.

### **Recruitment & Retention:**

- The Council has already provided some additional investment for a Market Forces payment to social workers in hard to recruit areas within the statutory social work teams. This additional investment was welcomed and appreciated by CFLL and we are closely monitoring the impact of this payment to social workers who are employed in the Family Safeguarding teams. However, there remain recruitment and retention challenges across the wider social care workforce, particularly in the Assessment / CWD and Children Looked After teams. We know that the leaver / retention rates remain higher than we would wish, the balance of permanent / agency staff and vacancies and the workforce stability continue to be key challenges and focus for the leadership team and a key factor in our journey of providing an Outstanding social care service to children and families in Surrey. Additional funding would be allocated to two areas: a) to recruit social workers internationally, to expand the pool of social workers in what is a tight market. We have worked closely with West Sussex County Council to understand how they have bridged their vacancy gap via international social work recruitment and the financial costs of this. b) retention: following a review of the current retention offer for social workers there is scope to change and extend this offer. We have benchmarked against other local authorities and their offer.
- The current use of locum social workers has increased over the last year by (22.6%), we currently have 110 FTE locum social workers predominately working in the safeguarding and children looked after teams. The cost of this for SCC in the financial year 2023 – 2024 is (conservatively) **£9.5million**.
- Therefore, investment in a strategy which can create higher levels of retention alongside increased recruitment to reduce the current commitment on locum staff makes a strong financial argument and we would be creating stability in the social work workforce which is identified as one of the critical factors and ingredients in a good / outstanding children service.

### **Market Forces (MF)**

- CFLL has set a recruitment & retention target for social workers, with the target being 85% permanent, 5% vacancy and 10% agency within the next 12 months (by March 2025). As of December 2023, only 58.2% FTE social worker roles were occupied by permanent employees.

- Social Workers (and SW Team Managers) in the Family Safeguarding (FS) and Safeguarding Adolescence teams (SAT) receive a £5,000 per annum market supplement, introduced in December 2023. Impact is being monitored monthly. Other service areas have experienced similar challenges, and we are therefore considering widening out the MF payment
- An initial benchmarking exercise has been completed by CFLL's Policy, Planning & Programme team. Salary data was gathered from 19 other local authorities including geographical neighbours and wider 'key' local authorities. From this benchmarking activity of 19 local authorities Surrey is the 17<sup>th</sup> highest paying local authority for basic pay (3<sup>rd</sup> from bottom).
- It was found that many local authorities included in this exercise grade their qualified social worker role across more than one grade, with 3-4 spinal pay points in each grade. This provides more incremental pay progression, allows more 'headroom' before reaching the top of the grade, and offers more flexibility when offering roles to successful candidates.
- The local authorities who pay more than Surrey (excluding allowances) are paying £3,068 more on average than Surrey.
- 11 of the 19 local authorities included in the research currently pay a market supplement for Children's Social Workers.

**Financial Modelling of Market Forces payment implemented into Assessment / CWD and CLA service areas:**

- Based upon the current levels of vacancies the recommendation is to have a graduated market forces payment:
- Assessment and CWD: 4k for all social work grades and social work team managers.
- CLA: 3k for all social work grades and social work team managers.

Post	Assessment Teams		CWD Teams		CLA Teams		Total	
	Base FTE	Estimated extra cost	Base FTE	Estimated extra cost	Base FTE	Estimated extra cost	Base FTE	Estimated extra cost
TM	12.6	64,814	6	30,864	8.4	32,407	27	128,086
SW	46.0	236,624	19	97,736	36	138,888	101	473,248
SSW	15.2	78,189	9	46,296	22.8	87,770	47	212,254
ASW	11.9	61,157	6.5	33,436	5.6	21,605	24	116,197
	85.7	440,784	40.5	208,332	72.8	280,670	199	<b>929,785</b>

- Total costs **£929,785**.

### International Recruitment:

- Social Work England reports that the vacancy rate has increased to 20%, or one in every five social work positions, up from 17% in 2021. This has exponentially increased the recruitment of social workers from other countries. Studies estimate that over 10 per cent of England’s qualified social workers trained abroad.
- We have liaised with colleagues from WSCC who have commissioned Frontier Consulting (Tripod) to support them with international recruitment. WSCC are approximately 6mths into a recruitment campaign of 50 international social workers.
- The table below provides a breakdown of costs to undertake face to face recruitment of social workers from South Africa. The recruitment agency fund members of SCC staff to travel and stay in South Africa to undertake the social work interviews.

Placement Fees % of Salary	Face to Face	Pastoral Support	Total – per candidate
15%	£6307.95	£1500	£7807.95
14%	£5887.42	£1500	£7387.42
13.5%	£5677.16	£1500	£7177.16

In addition to this SCC would pay the £8500 retention payment to each candidate, therefore a recruitment aimed at 30 international social workers would cost **approximately £470,000**

### ASYE and/or ISW Recruitment and Retention additional resource and support

- In the Academy we currently have in post 1 Team Manager managing 7 ASYE assessors (Advanced Social Workers-ASWs) and Practice Educators, co-ordinating the ASYE programme, running the SW Apprenticeship Programme, and external student placements. ASWs support 10 Newly Qualified SWs on their ASYE, run induction and we have a 0.5 post dedicated

to delivering a Post-Qualifying Year 2 programme to aid retention, and start preparing for the 2 year ASYE programme requirement that will be brought in by the DFE in 2026.

**Option 1:**

To continue current level of work to recruit and deliver support annually to 35 NQSWs, Post-Qualifying Year 2, preparing for increased ASYE requirement in 2026, increasing up to 30 SW Degree Apprentices, and external students.

**1x Team Manager at PS11SC:**

Total: £64,136- £72,207

**Option 2:**

To deliver Option 1 plus support to an additional 10 NQSWs (Assessors support 10 per year):

**1x Team Manager at PS11SC**

**1x ASW at PS10SC between £56,361 and £62,515**

Total: £120,487-£134,722

**Option 3: (preferred option)**

To deliver option 1 plus increased ASYE scheme and provide similar support to International Social Workers:

**2x Team Managers between £64,136 and £72,207 each**

**1x admin at PS7 - approximately £41,345**

**3x ASW between £56,361 and £62,515 each for every 10 additional**

**NQs/ISWS:**

**Total: £338,700-£373,304**

**Vicarious Trauma support:**

- To support the staff working in Surrey CC Children & Families Directorate, the focus of this support is for social workers but also includes support to all other staff who work in these services as there is awareness to offer an inclusive approach and all staff, whether seen as 'frontline' or not can be impacted by their work. The nature of the work that staff in this area have to face, often on a daily basis, means they can be exposed to trauma and in addition through the material they may read or may hear they are at risk of developing vicarious trauma (or secondary trauma). This support would be part of our overall package to attract and retain social work staff and has been raised by our own staff via feedback to the Directors and therefore is something that our own social workers have identified as a good and supportive for them and likely to improve retention.

**Option 1-** delivered by therapist, costs annually per 10 people per month for a 90 min session and preparation costs: £1503 (also options for monthly or 4 month trial but less cost effective). For 8 sessions a month (2x per quadrant) this would be £12,024 or 8x sessions a month (4x quadrant)- £24,048.

**Option 2-** train own staff to deliver group sessions- £550 per person to train plus therapist would then provide supervision of 6-8 group facilitators at £1503 per year. Capacity to deliver the sessions to groups would need to be considered.

**Option 3- (preferred option)** Employ a staff member 0.6 FTE with psychology background to undertake Reflective Practice training and then deliver reflective practice group and individual sessions, according to service needs. Would be able to provide more sessions and support in a more flexible way. **Costing at band 7 in health bands- £26,245-£30,033**

## Conversion Payments

Proposal to make equivalent to SCC relocation payment of £8500 to any locum social worker or Team Manager who wishes to become a permanent SCC employee. This payment would be dependent upon 2years of service following payment and we would have this in a contract.

We would hold this offer for a 3month period and this would effectively create financial savings if we are able to convert people into permanent roles.

Total cost of measures outlined above: £1,803,122 (+ cost of any relocation payments for temp to perm conversions).

## Conclusions:

- Considerable investment has been already agreed to support a number of services in preventing the escalation of need and supporting both cost containment and better outcomes for children and young people in Surrey.
- The further work required to consider the alternative proposals put forward by Cllr Powell has been undertaken and a recommended way forward outlined in respect of each one.
- Consideration has been given to the use of the balance of available funds to support children's services and recommendations made for further use to support recruitment and retention.

## Recommendations:

- The Select Committee is asked to note the report and its content.

<b>Next steps:</b>
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- Updates on the progress of these interventions should be brought for future review.

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*Rachael Wardell, Executive Director Children, Families and Lifelong Learning*

**Sources/background papers**

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Council, 06/02/2024 10:00 \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)

[Government announces a further £600 million boost for councils - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)