

Recommendations of the Children, Families and Skills Committee 13 March 2024

Item 4 – Contextual Safeguarding Re-Model and Implementation of the EmPower Contextual Safeguarding Multi Disciplinary Team

Resolved: That the following recommendations be shared with the Cabinet Member for Children and Families:

- i. A future agenda item on Youth Violence in Lancashire and what is being done to counteract it (to be considered in context with surrounding authorities), be included on the committee's work programme for 2024/25.

For scrutiny committee to co-ordinate

- ii. Regular updates to be provided to the committee on staff recruitment and retention and updates on how the multi-agency system is working, for example through case studies.

In regards to recruitment of youth workers/vacancies.

In the previous year we have had 4 Youth Support Workers, 2 Professional Range Youth Workers and 8 Assistant Youth Support Workers leave the authority – creating vacancies. In addition to these we have had vacancies in our system generated from the establishment of new youth work posts, created from investment (including 7 new youth work mentor posts which we have recently recruited to). As you know, there isn't a specific budget for a youth service, as the provision is part of the early help offer. Turnover for the early help service as a whole is relatively static around 12-15% and the larger turnover we experience is around family support workers generally. Overall staffing turnover can generate an underspend due to vacancies of up to £1million each year. As the youth work staffing element of early help is around 10% of the total, you might therefore deduce, that underspend due to youth work vacancies could be around £100,000 per annum.

Currently there are 5.2fte vacancies in youth work

- 12 x assistant youth support workers (2 evenings) = 1.92fte
- 2 x assistant youth support workers (3 evenings) = 0.48fte
- 3 x assistant youth support workers (10hr posts) = 0.8fte
- 2 x full time youth support workers (recently vacant due to existing postholder securing one of the new youth work mentor posts) = 2fte

As you can see the majority of which are made up of Assistant Youth Support work posts in a number of districts. These posts are for either two or three evenings per week only – and we do have some ongoing challenges recruiting to these type of posts.

In reality the challenge in recruiting evening sessional youth workers is not uncommon across youth services generally and has been a feature of youth work recruitment for decades. Youth services nationally have experienced a reduced interest from the public to work in the sector, in this way – given this relies often on people with other 'full time' employment taking on additional evening work with young people.

Generally speaking there has been a steep decline in access to staff who hold a nationally recognised youth work qualifications. Many universities dropped their youth work training programmes over the last decade and it is estimated nationally that 4,500 qualified youth workers have been lost from the frontline. There is therefore a limited pool of individuals holding the relevant qualification – to access during recruitment activity.

For this reason we have been investing in 'grow your own' or 'in house workforce development for our youth workers, utilising the Apprenticeship Levy and we have 16 of our youth work staff studying for youth work qualifications at either Level 3 or Level 6 currently.

- iii. Contact details for local MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) Teams to be shared with the committee.

0300 123 6720. Out of hours call 0300 123 6722.

mashdutymanager@lancashire.gov.uk

Structure chart attached

Item 5 – Family Safeguarding Update

Resolved: That the following recommendations be shared with the Cabinet Member for Children and Families:

- i. The committee support the service priorities identified for 2024/25 as detailed in the report / supporting presentation.
- ii. Information to be provided to the committee on the formula and method used to calculate staff turnover. Data on turnover rates for social workers in Lancashire to be provided and for this to be benchmarked against local authorities.

Our turnover rate follows established/industry methods. It is quite basic and is just Leavers in period / Headcount expressed as a percentage (or leavers multiplied by 100)

Guidance:

<https://www.cipd.org/uk/knowledge/factsheets/turnover-retention-factsheet/#Measuring>
https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lqastandard?mod-area=E92000001&mod-group=AllRegions_England&mod-metric=649&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

Explanation:

What we tend to use for Turnover is a rolling 12-month position, number of leavers over 12months / Headcount.

Examples:

*CSC rate for March 2024 is 11.65% $188 * 100 / 1614$ or 188 leavers in the period divided by the total headcount of 1614.*

Social worker rate for March 2024 12.42%. there were 58 leavers out of 467 posts.

- iii. Data from exit interviews to be considered, if possible, to consider why staff leave the service.

The number of leavers questionnaire returned are quite low. The service is working with colleagues in Human Resources to try and improve this.

Reasons given in those that are returned include moving for promotion or moving location due to personal circumstances. A more detailed response can be provided as part of a CSC workforce update in the coming year.