

## **LEADERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORK AND CHILD PROTECTION FROM APRIL 2016**

### **Joint Report of the Strategic Director, People and the Head of Services for Communities**

**Recommendation:** that the County Council be recommended to endorse the engagement of a new interim from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to act as Head of Children's Social Work and Child Protection via a consultancy arrangement and agree the duration for a 2 year contract.

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Appointments & Remuneration Committee were unable to make an appointment to the Head of Children's Social Work and Child Protection following a second recruitment process held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015.
- 1.2 The current interim took up the role on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 and her current contract is due to expire at the end of March 2015 and will not be subject to any further extension.

#### **2. Proposed Arrangements**

- 2.1 Nationally, there is a shortage of experienced candidates for permanent senior leadership positions in Children's Services. Given the difficulty experienced in successive attempts to recruit to the permanent post, and the need to maintain the momentum of service improvement, the best alternative is to secure the services of a successor interim manager with a strong track record.
- 2.2 The new interim will need to have a primary focus on three main areas:
  - quality of practice and performance improvement
  - leadership within a large complex multi-agency environment
  - the need to balance complex budgets with practice demands.
- 2.3 Within the interim market the rate Devon can expect to pay will be determined by the calibre of individual candidates and their previous track record of achievement. Recent research of agency rates for interims operating at the required level has been undertaken via the key recruitment agencies that source interims of this calibre. The detail is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.4 It is proposed that a two year contract is made available. It is hoped that the duration of the contract may enable the authority to negotiate a more favourable day rate, as well as providing continuity and sustainability to enable Devon to continue its improvement journey.
- 2.5 A new interim would be identified via the Council's Social Work Agency Framework, with the search being extended via non-framework agencies if necessary.
- 2.6 Another immediate action, which it is necessary to progress, taking account of the skills shortages in the Children's Social Work sector is the development of the direct reports to the Head of Service role. It is imperative that the Council has robust and effective leadership and management development proposals in place. An immediate focus needs to be on the development of the current tier of senior

managers working within this service area to enable them to become future Heads of Children's Services. Leadership/management development plans for all managers within Children's Services are included in the Children's Services Workforce Plan 2015/2016.

- 2.7 The County Council's Employment Procedures authorise the Chief Executive to approve the placement of interim chief officers, but given the importance of this post it is considered that the Appointments & Remuneration Committee should endorse the proposed approach.

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**Electoral Divisions:** All

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## Appendix 1

### **Consultancy rates for Head of Children's Social Work, Deputy Director of Children's Services and Director of Children's Services**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Head of Children's Social Work, Deputy Director of Children's Services</b>	<b>Director of Children's Services</b>
Baltimore Consulting	£750 - £850	£800 - £1000
Sanctuary Personnel	£700 - £800	£950 - £1050
Penna	£660 - £840	£900 - £1080
Veredus	£750 - £850	£850 - £950
IPeople	£806 - £876	£940 - 1010

*These rates are day rates and include expenses and the agency fee*