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| **Directorate** | Children, Families & Education |
| **Combined Tracker Ref.** |  |
| **Service Director** | Teresa/Hills & Teresa Gallagher |
| **Service Area** | Children’s Staffing |
| **Service Manager** |  |
| **Activity/Cost centres** | All Staffing Cost Centres |
| **22/23 Budget £’000** | 29,821 |
| **22/23 Outturn £’000** | 31,752 (£1,932k overspend being offset by £525k SF unallocated grant and £449k additional pay award met by central budgets so net £958k overspend |
| **23/24 Budget £’000** | 31,085 (Full staffing GF budget across whole CFE department) |
| **Pressure on this activity in 23/24 (based on 22/23 outturn) £’000** | Projected overspend as per Q3 is £765k. Q3 report clearly describes £446k overspend plus further £319k is being batched against separated migrant children.  It was agreed to use available one-off Government grant funding to address social work agency staffing overspend, therefore Q3 projection is showing £1.172m of grant funding is being used to address this overspend. |

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| **Explain the context behind this pressure and what has caused it**   * **Since when has the budget been in deficit (provide the year, e.g. 2020/21)** * **Provide details of activity levels and the key cost/income drivers and how these have changed (this is needed for each year including the year prior to when the budget was first in deficit)** |
| The budget has been in persistent overspend since at least 2019/20 primarily due to the use of agency staff to cover vacant permanent positions. This a complex area of analysis but below is an example of the nature of the spend   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Position** | **Agency Weekly Average** | **LBC Weekly Average** | **Difference** | **Assuming 48 Working Weeks (UK)-Additional cost per year** | | Team Manager | £1,865.27 | £1,387.23 | £478.04 | £22,946.04 | | Deputy Team Manager | £1,717.81 | £1,359.56 | £358.26 | £17,196.32 | | IRO | £1,843.51 | £1,450.81 | £392.70 | £18,849.84 | | Senior Practitioner | £1,390.47 | £1,197.35 | £193.12 | £9,269.93 | | Social Worker | £1,432.01 | £1,047.88 | £384.12 | £18,437.91 |   The additional cost between agency and permanent, LBC employed social in a year is **£18,438**.  We currently have 63 social worker vacancies covered by agency social workers. |

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| **What action(s) can be taken to keep 23/24 spend in line with approved budget?**   * **What needs to be done? If there is more than one option explain each option in detail** * **Are there any barriers or factors beyond your control that will affect your ability to recover the deficit?** * **Explain how the cost/income drivers can be managed** |
| **What needs to be done? If there is more than one option explain each option in detail**  **Activity that contributes to the Overspend in COSWEH**  The social work academy continue to support the reduction in the use of agency staff that contributes to the budget overspend in Children’s Operational budget. The current forecast is that by April 2024 we will have 12 permanent social workers to replace agency workers. In September 2023, the recruitment of ASYE’s has now changed from adhoc requirement to recruitment of ASYE’s by cohorts. This approach will strengthen the support that we provide to our ASYE’S as training and support will be delivered in blocks and will improve our retention of staff post 1st year.  Recruitment of 10 Social work apprentice- a 3 year plan  We have recruited 9 social work apprentice who be completing their social work degrees in July 2026  Plan: 10 Permanent social workers will replace agency social workers at the end of the three year degree programme.  Star Chamber process continues with the inclusion of the commissioning and placement service and the Youth Partnership Service. The focus of these meetings is to scrutinise permanent the permanent staff position in each service and to ensure that conversations take place with regards to converting experienced agency social workers to convert them from temporary to permanent positions.  Recruitment market engagement activities with HR and Connect2Luton, with the aim of converting agency to permanent. To actively tackle the social work recruitment challenges, PSW will be attending Community Care Live to promote Luton as a place to work.  Activity to reduce the overspend CQIPI  **Focused area- Overspend in the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance budget.**   * Current review of the Social Work Academy to include the grading of the Senior Practitioner. * Interviews are currently taking place to recruit to the 2 IRO posts that are current being covered by agency workers. * The Team Manager of the Audit Service is now vacant, as the substantive post holder left LBC on the 22nd September 2023. The post will now go out to advert for permanent recruitment by the 6th October 2023. Once the post is appointed too, the agency member of staff covering the substantive post holder post will be released. ( The current Interim covering the Team Manager post has advised that she will not apply for the post) * Active recruitment campaigns continues in respect of converting agency workers to convert to perm. * Notice period to be given to agency workers supported by Strengthen Families grant which are over establishment. * Review with HR with regards to the progress of all current temp to perms ion this area.   **Are there any barriers or factors beyond your control that will affect your ability to recover the deficit?**   1. The impact of the inflation and cost of living – should inflation remain at the current rate and cost of living remains high, we will continue to see permanent social workers leave to joint agency because they can earn more money 2. Unregulated agency market is a driver of the easy movement of social workers from one local authority to the other. 3. The achievement of the permanent recruitment is very dependent on the ASYE’s qualifying and remaining to work in Luton for the foreseeable future 4. Delays in with the admin review has delayed some progress in converting some practitioners. However this should be resolved in Qrt 3 |

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| **Timescale for budget deficit recovery**   * **List the key milestones required to deliver the budget recovery, the estimated amount to be delivered and the estimated date for each** | | |
| MILESTONE DETAILS | £ | Date |
| Recruitment of Perm Team Managers post in the Audit Service. This will release the agency worker covering the substantive agency IRO post | Yearly saving  £18,849.84 | December 23 |
| Recruitment of 2 IRO’s | Yearly saving  £37,699.68 | December 23 |
| Notice to Audit Officer | Yearly Saving  £17,196.32 | November 23 |
| Recruitment of 4 Senior Practitioners in the SWA | Yearly Saving £37,079.72 | January 24 |
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| **Quarterly Monitoring updates**   * **Provide quarterly progress updates against milestone delivery to align with the quarterly budget monitoring reports to executive. Where milestones have not been met please provide an explanation, revised milestone dates, and how delivery can be brought back on track** * **If the recovery plan cannot be delivered, THERE IS NO NEW MONEY AVAILABLE so please provide an alternative proposal as to how budgets can be realigned so that it can be considered by DMT** | |
| **QUARTER 1 (to 30/06/23)** | |
| On Target ? (Yes = GREEN; Partial (e.g. milestones slipped) = AMBER, No = RED) |  |
| Provide narrative below | |
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| **QUARTER 2 (to 30/09/23)** | |
| On Target ? (Yes = GREEN; Partial (e.g. milestones slipped) = AMBER, No = RED) | Amber |
| Provide narrative below | |
| Conversations with staff with regards to conversion are taking place. However conversion is slower than hoped. Hard deadlines have been given in respect of providing request to recruit information for position to be advertised. | |
| **QUARTER 3 (to 31/12/23)** | |
| On Target ? (Yes = GREEN; Partial (e.g. milestones slipped) = AMBER, No = RED) |  |
| Provide narrative below | |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Recruitment of Perm Team Managers post in the Audit Service. This will release the agency worker covering the substantive agency IRO post | Yearly saving  £18,849.84 | December 23 | | Recruitment of 2 IRO’s | Yearly saving  £37,699.68 | December 23 | | Notice to Audit Officer | Yearly Saving  £17,196.32 | November 23 |   The above has taken place and we should see the cost avoidance clearly in January 2024  We have continued to have conversations with agency social workers at star chamber. We have run recruitment campaigns in October and have had some positive enquiries as a result. | |
| **QUARTER 4 (to 31/03/23)** | |
| On Target ? (Yes = GREEN; Partial (e.g. milestones slipped) = AMBER, No = RED) |  |
| Provide narrative below | |
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