

Children's Services Savings Proposals (Public Impact – High, Medium & Low)

Ref: SS03 – Blackwood Resource Centre £50k (Part-Year)

(Public Impact: High)

The proposal is to review all existing care packages to ensure the most efficient use of Blackwood Resource Centre. For the majority of existing service users there is unlikely to be any change to the level of service they receive, though timings of short breaks may need to be changed. The proposed efficiencies will be achieved through the management of new referrals to the service and over time will result in the weekday closure of the Centre during school term time thereby prioritising short breaks to weekends and during school holidays.

Ref: SS04 - Reduction in Barnado's Family Support & Young Carers Contracts £50k

(Public Impact: High)

This is a preventative family support service aimed at supporting children and young people to remain living within their families and reducing the risk of breakdown. The project provides intensive parenting support, supervised contact service, specialist support for children at risk of sexual exploitation and support with domestic abuse. The proposed reduction in budget will have a significant impact on service delivery and referrals will need to be prioritised to those families in greatest need.

Ref: SS07 – Review of Children's Services Locality Structure £77k (Part Year)

(Public Impact: High)

Staffing across the Locality Teams has already been reduced by three Team Managers, nine Qualified Social Workers and six Child Care Support Workers. This additional budget reduction will require further posts to be deleted. At this point in time, rather than determining the number of posts at each grade required to achieve the target, it is proposed that the target will be achieved by deleting posts as they become vacant and re-distributing staffing across the Teams as necessary.

Ref: SS05 - Reduction in Commissioned Assessments and Therapies £50k

(Public Impact: Low)

Specialist assessments such as drug testing, psychological assessments and cognitive assessments are often required in Court proceedings and these will have to continue to be prioritised. Other therapeutic services such as attachment work, life story work and some post adoption support work will have to be reduced and in some cases cease to be provided. All requests will be screened and agreed by Service Managers and decisions will be based on priority need.

Ref: SS10 - Reduction in Independent Foster Care Placements £150k
(Public Impact: Low)

Children's Services are committed to the continual recruitment of foster carers to reduce reliance on Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements. However, the number of Looked After Children and the demand for appropriate placements is volatile and difficult to predict. A reduction of five IFA placements is proposed.