



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

15 June 2023

Report of the Executive Director Children's Services

Proposal to Establish an Edge of Care and Prevention Service

Children's Services and Safeguarding Portfolio

1. Divisions Affected

1.1 County-wide.

2. Key Decision

2.1 This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is greater than £500,000 with the aim to also achieve cost avoidance and savings that mitigate future budget pressure within children's services.

3. Purpose

3.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to create an Edge of Care and Prevention service within children's services, specifically focused on delivering edge of care and prevention support, as part of the Council's strategic objective to improve outcomes for children and young people through early intervention and prevention.

3.2 The proposed Edge of Care and Prevention service is not a substitute for statutory safeguarding services and support. Rather the service aims to improve the conditions for children and young people who would otherwise come into or remain in care, and in so doing, improve the

likelihood of better outcomes for these children and young people in the longer term.

3.3 The report outlines the benefits of investing resources to create this service, and seeks to secure Members' support to allocate resources to the initial phase of the Edge of Care and Prevention model (first six months) and the second phase (full year FY 2024-25) as follows:

- Initial funding of **£330,000 for the first 6 months of the service** within the 2023-2024 financial year from the Supporting Families Programme reserves. It is recommended this resource is agreed to expand and remodel existing edge of care and prevention support, in order to enable recruitment processes to commence and the service to start within this financial year from 1st October 2023 to 31st March 2024.
- Members are asked to agree to the request for **additional funding from the Supporting Families Programme reserves of £660,000** to pay for the first full year of the service from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2025. This resource will enable the full Edge of Care and Prevention model to be embedded; a full evaluation of the impact of the services within the model; and provide the evidence to “prove the concept” that the Edge of Care and Prevention model should be funded through the core budget within children’s services. The goal is that savings achieved through reducing and preventing children coming into care will in effect pay for the service by means of reduced placements expenditure on an ongoing basis from 1st April 2025.

4. Information and Analysis

4.1 Children in care come from a range of different backgrounds and have different needs and vulnerabilities, some related to adverse childhood experiences. For some children, it is essential to come into care for reasons of safeguarding and protection, or because there are no alternatives to enable the necessary care. However, national research indicates that children who have been in care tend to have poorer outcomes than children who have not been in care, in relation to several areas such as educational attainment, mental health and physical health (NSPCC, 2022). National research also tells us that the majority of children in care return home at the age of eighteen (Department for Education Children’s Social Care Innovation Programme, 2014). The proposal in this report to establish an Edge of Care and Prevention service is designed to ensure that, wherever it is in the child’s best interests, additional support is offered to help enable them to remain safe and supported outside the care system. Members are asked to note that this is in no way a substitute for statutory safeguarding, and children who

need to be admitted into care will continue to be supported in that way. The Edge of Care and Prevention service is designed to help improve conditions for children and young people in their community, with their families and extended networks to reduce the likelihood that they will need to come into care, and therefore to help improve their overall outcomes both in the short and longer term. Offering more stability and better connections to their families and building relationships within communities increasing resilience into adulthood.

- 4.2 Similar to children's services across the country Derbyshire County has seen a significant growth in the number of children entering care in recent years. In 2016-17 there was 41 per 10,000 children in care which has grown to 60 per 10,000 in 2021-22. This represents an increase of 46% of the number of children under 18 in care in Derbyshire. Derbyshire figures also reflect that once a child is placed in care only about 13% leave before they reach 18. Some of this growth is due to the increase in unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) who are being dispersed across the country to ease the pressures in Kent and other port locations. Whilst these numbers fluctuate, looking at six months' admissions into care as of November 2022, of the 208 children placed in care, 86 (approx. 41%) were UASC. Most of these children are over 16 and will be placed in supported accommodation. These numbers fluctuate seasonally and may change as a result of the potential amendments in policy through the Illegal Migration Bill currently going through parliament. The proposal for the new Edge of Care and Prevention service will not address the needs of the UASC population as these children will need to enter care. However, it will be focused on the remaining cohort (the 60% of the last 6 months for example) of children who may be able to remain in their families and networks with additional support of the kind that would be offered through the Edge of Care and Prevention service.
- 4.3 A further national issue impacting Derbyshire is that whilst the number of children entering care has increased, the capacity for care provision has not met the demand. There is an insufficient range of suitable local placements available, which ultimately means that the provision may not meet the needs of the children, presenting additional challenges to the overall objective to improve outcomes for children and families. Adolescents particularly can experience more placement moves which impacts on stability with relationships, education etc which can significantly increase adverse impact and outcomes. Furthermore, the imbalance between demand and supply has driven significant increases in placement costs. The increases in costs are just one of the factors which have been taken into consideration whilst developing the Edge of Care and Prevention model – the primary factor being the need to

improve outcomes for children – but are nonetheless an important part of the context, not least because continued (unmitigated) increases in costs present a risk to the Council’s ability to provide appropriate placements for those children who need them in the future. Analysis of the placement data carried out between December 2022 and January 2023 involved a review of the 995 placements for the year to date at that time. The forecasted cost for 2022-2023 at that time was tracked at approximately £69 million in total.

Across the profile of the data reviewed, the type of placement was as below:

- Fostering related placements - 67% (670 placements)
- Residential placements - 12% (119 placements)
- Parental/ Independent - 16% (154 placements)

The costs of the placements by age also reflect a significant difference: **52% of Derbyshire’s placement spend is allocated to children aged 13 to 16 years old.** Whilst the number of children in this age cohort reflect approximately one third of the number of placements, they reflect just over half of the overall placement costs. Children aged 13-16 are traditionally much more likely to be placed in residential care than alternative forms of provision, and on average residential placements are seven times more expensive than fostering placements.

Given the challenges of finding appropriate placements for children to ensure their needs are met, and in the context of rising demand, particularly pressures arising from adolescent children entering care, work was commissioned to analyse Derbyshire’s current approach and response, consider options for strengthening the approach and response, develop options for what form any change could take and where this might sit in the system of children’s services. This report reflects the outcomes from this work, and the proposal has been developed through reviewing existing cases, data, current research, interviews with key stakeholders and co-design meetings.

4.3 *Our current approach: Preventing Family Breakdown*

Derbyshire currently has a Preventing Family Breakdown (PFB) team which was created as a result of the Department of Education Innovation Fund Reclaiming Social Work project in 2015-2016. The team is small consisting of three social workers, a child and family worker and a team manager. The team was designed with a clinical psychologist within it, but this post has remained vacant due to recruitment challenges. The model of delivery for the team was based on an evidence-led approach, working systemically with families to address the underlying issues and

their relationships to enable children to remain safely within the home. Systemic social work practice is a relational and strengths-based approach that positions families as experts in their unique family situation. The capacity of the team is limited as the caseloads were set at 5 families to allow for intensive work, the team has also had some issues with sickness which has further impacted its capacity. On average the work with families lasts 6 months and the capacity of the team is 15 at any one time when fully staffed. Whilst the PFB team have delivered some positive outcomes, it does not have sufficient capacity in its current configuration to meet the broad range of challenges associated with delivering effective edge of care and prevention in the context of rising need and demand.

As mentioned, the Derbyshire PFB team was launched as part of the “Scaling and Deepening the Reclaiming Social Work Model”. An evaluation report was published in July 2017. This demonstrated that nationally, ‘Of the 119 children referred to the service from multiagency resource panels as at high risk of care, **79% remained at home**, with only 25 children (21%) subsequently receiving some form of care.’ In addition to improved chances of better outcomes, the evaluators estimated that for those areas evaluated a total of £3,116,486 in care costs were avoided. Whilst the current PFB team have not measured performance consistently, they have demonstrated impact. Analysis of their information from the 12 families (14 children) worked with and closed to the team in 2021-2022, 10 children have not entered care to date. Feedback from families as to the support provided is extremely positive as is the recognition from social work teams that the approaches and intensive support provided can make a difference to the outcomes achieved. Children’s records who have received the team’s support have also been sampled and the impact of the work as well as efficacy of the model has been demonstrated.

Whilst the model for the existing Preventing Family Breakdown (PFB) service is good there are some challenges. The size is too small for the geographical scale of Derbyshire and the increase in demand of children at risk of entering care. As has been proven, such a small team lacks resilience when issues of sickness or recruitment challenges arise. Additionally, the model is self-limiting in that it requires an assessment be completed and families consenting to the intervention before the team can get involved. The team is also social work led which makes it relatively expensive and given the challenges of recruiting social workers, not the most effective model with a non-case holding team as the children accessing the PFB team will also have an allocated social worker, who will be managing the safety and care planning alongside the PFB worker. Additionally, whilst the team was designed to support children returning

home from care this has not been possible due to the capacity within the team. The current budget for the PFB service is £0.320m although the actual spend in 2022-2023 was £0.260m.

4.4 *The proposed way forward: Edge of Care and Prevention*

Following the commissioned review and consultation the proposal is to develop the Edge of Care and Prevention service, building on the foundations of the existing Preventing Family Breakdown (PFB) team. In practical terms this involves incorporating the existing PFB team into the new Edge of Care and Prevention service, enhancing the current team and providing additional early intervention and prevention support. This will enable Derbyshire to develop their early intervention 'family first' approach; strengthening families and looking to those connected to the child within their wider network to offer support, rather than professionals. The overall focus of the service will be to support social work teams to prevent children entering care when safe to do so and to enable children to return home or to their wider network of support from care. The service will be more proactive through an increased capacity offering a quick response that can work robustly with families from initial referral in their homes supporting the behaviour and relationship changes that need to occur. The service will work closely with friends and wider family networks as well as partner agencies involved in the child and families lives to improve outcomes through support and cohesive planning.

Whilst some children will need to come into care for their own safety and because there are no alternative safety plans, there is evidence from a review of recent admissions into care and learning from the Achieving Greater Futures (AGF) Programme that some of these may have been avoided if there had been an enhanced service available. There is also evidence that some of the work undertaken through the Planning Permanence Outside of Care (PPOC) workstream within the AGF Programme would benefit from additional support to work with families to enable children to return to their family networks from care, therefore, the criteria and focus of the new service will include reunification work as an element of the team.

4.5 The proposed new service would contain three elements:

1. **Crisis and de-escalation:** a responsive approach with flexible hours that aims not to remove the child but support the family and networks to enable the child to remain at home or within their network.
2. **Risk of care identified:** longer term planned work to support the family and wider identified network to reduce risks, increase safety

and improve relationships to allow for the child to remain at home or within their network.

3. **Reunification:** supporting children to return to the family or wider network when safe to do so and as part of their care plan.

As stated earlier in the report, none of these three elements are a substitute for statutory safeguarding services and support. Rather they are designed to help improve conditions for children and young people that would otherwise need to come into or remain in the care system.

The model for all elements will be relationship based and systemic, working closely with all the relevant connected family and professionals. The criteria for the service will be focused on those older adolescent children, however, there will be a whole family approach so that younger siblings will be included. If there is a significant indication that a younger child (aged 9 for example) and their family could benefit from additional support and that this could avoid care these families will not be excluded from the service. Given the size of Derbyshire and the modelling from other teams the structure requires two teams with a north and south of the county focus. This allows increased responsiveness through reduction in travel times and requirements, as well as enabling better relationships with both internal teams and partner agencies. The size of the teams allows for increase in resilience, and a duty rota with flexible hours and the ability to meet the demand.

- 4.6 The caseloads of the team will remain small (between 5-7 families) to allow intensive work with the family alongside building relationships with other agencies so that the family can build their networks of support that allow for resilience in the future. It is estimated that given the likely complexity of needs and building relationships with the family the work will take approximately six months to have an impact. The capacity of the teams to work with families per year therefore will approximately be:

1. Crisis and de-escalation: 60 (some of which may lead into longer term work below)
2. Risk of care: 120
3. Reunification: 60

The capacity to work with children, young people and families at this scale is intended to deliver improved outcomes whilst reducing the overall costs of providing the right support at the right time for children, young people and families in Derbyshire. For an overview of the financial model which underpins the Edge of Care and Prevention Service, please see the “Financial Implications” section of Appendix 1.

4.7 *Monitoring Impact*

In order to monitor the impact of the service, service managers and leads will capture and monitor outcome data which aligns with criteria for access to the service – for example, numbers of children and young people in crisis supported to safely remain at home; the numbers of children and young people supported to safely return home from the care system where this is in their best interests; numbers of children and young people assessed as being at high risk of coming into care who, with the appropriate support, could remain with their family.

Beyond numbers and volumes, the service will also undertake work to track impact of support from the service on broader life outcomes – for example educational attainment, physical and mental health and well-being, outcomes relating to independent adulthood and employability.

Regular reviews and monitoring of the profile of children and young people placed in care will also enable service leads and senior staff in Children's Services to determine the effectiveness of the service in helping to manage demand for placements in care, and progress towards the requirement to achieve long-term financial viability for the service.

Appendix 2 sets out a Full Equality Impact Assessment and Equality Action Plan, which sets out a series of actions that will be taken prior to go-live and once the service is operational, in order to monitor and determine the impact of the service on groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Overall responsibility for monitoring and governing the total impact of the service will rest with the Strategy Delivery Board in Children's Services (Chaired by the Executive Director of Children's Services). Reports on impact will also be given to key governance groups and stakeholders, including Cabinet, the Council's CMT, and partnership groups as appropriate.

4.8 *Risk and Risk Management*

The criteria for the proposed service means that those children, young people and families who receive support from the Edge of Care and Prevention Service are likely to be more vulnerable than the majority of children and young people in Derbyshire County. Although there are significant costs associated with placements within the Care system, and a substantial body of evidence to show that typically speaking children in care and care-experienced children and young people tend to achieve

poorer outcomes than their non-care-experienced peers, there is a degree of protection and oversight which being placed in care offers. By contrast, supporting children and young people to re-unite with their families, and managing vulnerability and risk in the community, carries a degree of risk. In order to manage this risk effectively, professionals working within the Edge of Care and Prevention service, and colleagues across children's services and the wider system of children's services, will need to work closely together. Robust approaches to risk management will be embedded in service practice, delivery and performance management, and any issues or areas of concern will be addressed as core business for the service. This is why there are two team managers in the design to support the management of risks and interagency working. At any point if a child or young person needs to come into or remain the care system for their own safety and/or wellbeing, appropriate statutory safeguarding processes and procedures will apply and be followed.

Future updates and reports to Cabinet once the service is established will contain sections on risks and risk management, to provide Members with an opportunity to seek assurance over the approaches taken to these issues by the Edge of Care and Prevention service.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 A staff reference group has been involved in the review work underpinning design of the proposed service, and the design process itself. Feedback from children and families to existing services has been incorporated into design of the service. Formal consultation may be required with existing staff in the Preventing Family Breakdown service as there will be a change in expectations for working hours to allow for a more flexible service. HR advice is being sought to enable this according to statutory requirements. Partner agencies are being consulted and engaged in development with the model starting with an Early Intervention and Prevention-focused partnership event on 21st April, and further consultation and engagement in development and implementation of the model will follow that event.

6. Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 **Do nothing-** keeping services as is has been considered, however, as demand grows there are children potentially entering care where we may have been able to avoid this if more support was available. This sets up an unsustainable system where costs continue to escalate and outcomes for children and young people will be worse than if alternatives were put in place. There is considerable evidence that outcomes for children who

enter care later are poorer and the costs are greater for their care provision. Existing resources both within early help and the preventing family breakdown team have offered as much resource as available but more capacity and a more flexible, proactive response is required to meet the needs and risks of the families.

6.2 Implement Alternative models- National models have been reviewed and particularly the 'No wrong door model' pioneered by North Yorkshire. Whilst Derbyshire does have residential facilities that could potentially be adapted to offer short term care and a team that works from this base it is not felt that this would be the right model at this time for Derbyshire. Based on the existing services, the demand and needs of children and families in Derbyshire it is our view that a more effective solution is have a preventative model based within communities, for children to remain at home and within their networks wherever this is in their best interests.

7. Implications

7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

7.2 Appendix 2 sets out the Equality Impact Assessment carried out as part of the work referred to in this report.

8. Background Papers

8.1 None.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Implications.

9.2 Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

10. Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

a) Approve the creation of an Edge of Care and Prevention service within children's services, specifically focused on edge of care and prevention support, as part of the Council's strategic objective to improve outcomes for children and young people through early intervention and prevention.

b) Approve the investment of £330k for the first six months within this financial year and £660k for the following financial year from the Supporting Families

Reserve, enabling the Edge of Care and Prevention model to be recruited to and implemented from October 2023.

c) Supports the development of the service and keep oversight of the impact through an interim report, which will be provided to Cabinet in the form of the first full-year evaluation.

11. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

11.1 This approach enables recruitment to commence with a view to launching the service from October 2023, with full-year implementation from April 2024.

11.2 Subsequent monitoring and oversight of the impact of the service enables the Cabinet to have confidence that the service is achieving its stated intention and objectives, and future plans for the service are realistic and cost effective.

12. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?

12.1 No

Report Author: Amanda Radley

Contact details:

Amanda.radley@derbyshire.gov.uk

Implications**Financial**

1.1 As described in the report, £320k of the total costs of the service will be provided through the existing Preventing Family Breakdown team budget. The proposal is that the additional costs of the service as outlined in the report are funded from the Supporting Families reserve. During the first eighteen months of funding the impact of the service will be monitored, and an evaluation will be carried out after the first twelve months of operation. If outcomes from evaluation indicate that the service is performing and achieving the intended outcomes, ongoing funding for the service will then be incorporated into the children's services budget after having evidenced savings achieved.

Part-year and full-year costs, in addition to the £320k Preventing Family Breakdown funding, are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Part-Year and Full-Year costs for the proposed Edge of Care and Prevention service

Costs*	October 2023- April 2024 6 months costs (£)	April 2024-31 March 2025 Full year costs (£)
Team Manager x 2	64,409	128,818
Senior Practitioner x 4	103,200	206,400
Family Support workers x 16	290,064	580,128
Business Support	31,935	63,870
Total	489,608	979,216
Existing Preventing Family Breakdown Team in budget	160,000	320,000
Total additional funding required	329,608	659,216

**Includes on costs in salary calculations and top of scale.*

1.2. Financial viability and long-term sustainability of the Service

As described earlier in the report, the primary driver for the establishment of the Edge of Care and Prevention service is to improve outcomes for children and young people, through early intervention and prevention. Part of this involves ensuring that there is sufficient resource in place to ensure that those children and young people who require placement in care can access a placement which meets their needs. This also involves ensuring there are safe and robust systems in place to ensure that demand for placements is managed effectively.

The interventions and support which will be provided through the proposed Edge of Care and Prevention service are designed to contribute to these objectives, as part of strategic early intervention and prevention. In order to ensure the proposed service is financially viable into the longer term, it is important to assess the potential for the service to generate efficiencies to help contribute to the coverage of its own costs.

Given the significant costs of care provision, particularly the costs of residential placements, and the demand for these for older children who are late entrants into care, the financial benefits arising from safely preventing adolescents from coming into residential care could prove significantly greater than the costs of the Edge of Care and Prevention service. The service will ensure a robust database is developed and maintained that will evidence both cost avoidance in preventing new entrants into care alongside savings when children have left their placements and either moved to lower cost care or ultimately returned to their family networks.

In the detailed analysis of placement spend it was calculated that a 5% reduction in spend across the 13–16 year old cohort would save **£1,814,844** per annum. This reduction in spend would effectively require a reduction in demand for **14 placements** (4.3% of all placements within the 13-16 years cohort).

Assuming the team aimed for a 50% success rate within the target “risk of care” cohort, the service would support **60 children** who were predicted to enter care to not enter the care system.

In the light of success rates reviewed from similar models elsewhere, and data from comparable national models, a 50% success rate is considered realistic.

Even if half of this group would have been supported outside the care system *without* the proposed new service, that would still mean **30 children** would have been safely prevented from entering care as result of the Edge of Care and Prevention service. This number exceeds the **14 placements** mentioned above which could, given average costs, deliver as much as a £1.8m financial return.

To evidence that the service is paying for itself based on current average costs for care of 13–16-year-olds, the Edge of Care and Prevention service would need to safely prevent approximately **4 children** entering care. This is because the current average cost of residential care is currently running at £298,000 per annum per child.

Legal

2.1 Children referred to the service will be considered at risk of care, or already in care and therefore require a statutory response as outlined in the Childrens Act 1989. Children will be allocated a social worker and assessments and safety planning will be carried out according to statutory requirements. Where required legal advice will be sought to ensure that necessary requirements are being followed where decisions are made for a child to remain with their family or networks.

Human Resources

3.1 Overall the proposed Edge of Care and Prevention service represents an opportunity for future staff development, with the creation of new roles and enhanced support functions.

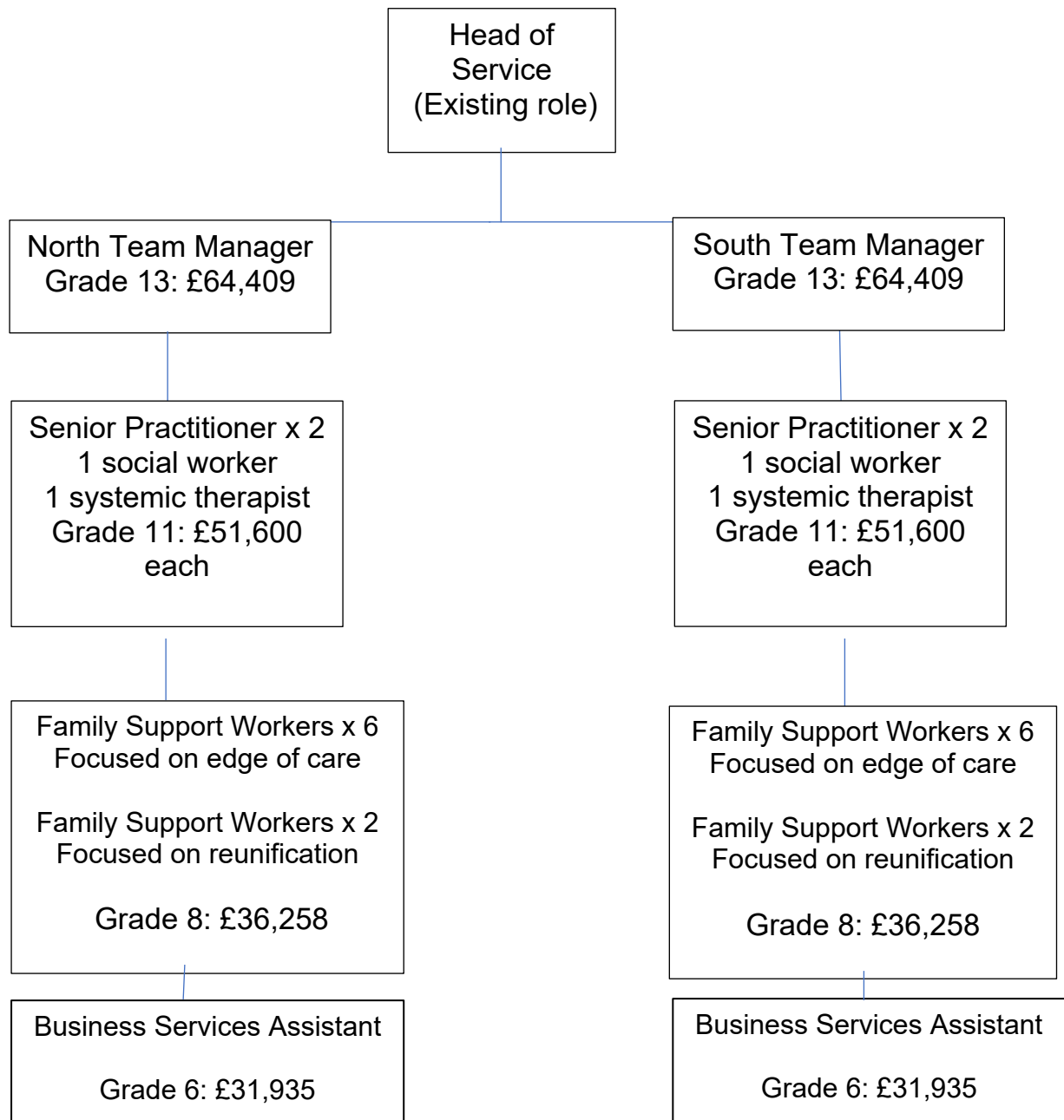
A staff reference group has been involved and engaged in the review work underpinning design of the proposed service, and the design process itself. Formal consultation may be required with existing staff in the Preventing Family Breakdown service as there will be a change in expectations for working hours to allow for a more flexible service. HR advice is being sought to enable this is done according to statutory requirements.

The existing terms and conditions for current staff in the Preventing Family Breakdown team will need reviewing and advice will be required to ensure appropriate processes are followed. The existing job roles of family support workers also need reviewing to ensure they meet the requirements of the service for flexible hours.

A considerable amount of recruitment activity will be required for the posts to be filled. This will be prioritised by the appropriate managers within Childrens services with some limited consultancy support already commissioned from within the Children's Services budget.

The proposed structure for the Edge of Care and Prevention service is set out in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Proposed Structure of the Edge of Care and Prevention service



Information Technology

MOSAIC workflows will need to be amended and created for the service. There is also a need for the monitoring and measurement of performance to be created and supported.

Equalities Impact

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of this report, and is attached as Appendix 2.

The intended beneficiaries of this service are vulnerable children and young people whose circumstances are such that, with appropriate early intervention and preventative support, they may not need to come into or remain in the care system. These children and young people could each have very different and specific circumstances, and the cohort intended to benefit from support may include children and young people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Analysis of Placement spend and placement allocations carried out in January 2023 showed that children and young people from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups are over-represented in the care system, compared with White British children and young people (96% of Derbyshire's children and young people are White British, yet 86% of the Children in Care population in Derbyshire are White British). The service aims to help keep children and young people safely with their families and will carry out targeted work with at-risk-of-care groups to achieve this. This could result in having a positive impact on the ethnicity profile of children and young people in Care in Derbyshire, and bring the profile of children and young people who need to come into the Care system more into line with the overall demographic profile of the County.

Under the Equality Act 2010, disability is a protected characteristic. An internal review of service data demonstrates that for some children and young people there are some intersectional relationships between social care vulnerability and risk of coming into the care system, and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Rates of exclusion from school are higher on average for children and young people with SEND; and this can heighten their vulnerability, and as a result, their risk of coming into the care system. The Edge of Care and Prevention service will help to support these children and young people through early help and intervention. In doing this, the service aims to have a positive differential impact Equalities and for children and young people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

There are also relevant points to note about the proposed service in relation to potential impact on Age and Sex or Gender.

In terms of Age impact, the proposed service is designed to support children and young people in the County, particularly those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable to bad outcomes, and/or worse outcomes than their peers. This does mean that vulnerable older people are not targeted for support through this service, meaning that the service intends to deliver a positive

differential impact on outcomes for children and young people in the County. However, the support provided by the proposed service will also include delivery of support to families, including parents and carers, which could help to balance the impact on the Age protected characteristic. Internal placement data analysis carried out in January 2023 showed that the highest proportion of children in care are young people aged 14+. The focus of the service and support offered – based on reviews of data relating to vulnerability and needs of children and young people in Derbyshire – indicates that some vulnerable children aged 10-12 could benefit from enhanced support of the kind proposed to offer through the new service, in order to reduce the likelihood of coming into care from age 13 and thereby improve the prognosis for better life outcomes in the longer term. Consultation with professionals has brought to light that there could be a range of significant benefits arising from targeted support for vulnerable children and young people aged 10-12, as support for older children in care can have limited impact on improved outcomes in the longer-term. As with the issue relating to the over-representation of boys in the Care system, there is a possibility that the criteria for accessing support may apply more to some children and young people at certain ages than others, which could potentially mean that some children and young people of particular ages (e.g. 10-12) are more likely to receive support than children of other ages. The age profile of the children and young people receiving support from the proposed service will be closely monitored once the service is operational, and any differential impacts reported to governance groups such as the Strategy Delivery Board within Children's Services (chaired by the Executive Director for Children's Services) with any issues flagged for discussion.

In terms of Sex or Gender impact, it is worth noting that boys are over-represented in the care system: the internal Placements Analysis completed in January 2023 showed that there are 33% more male placements (566) than female placements (424). The proposed Edge of Care and Prevention service aims to support children and young people to remain with their families and outside the care system whenever it is safe and in their best interests to do so; given the over-representation of boys in the care system it is possible that vulnerable male children and young people may also be over-represented in the overall group of children and young people eligible for support from the service. This will be closely monitored once the service is operational, and any differential impacts reported to governance groups such as the Strategy Delivery Board within Children's Services (chaired by the Executive Director for Children's Services) with any issues flagged for discussion.

The service will be available to all eligible children and families within Derbyshire County. Service performance and evaluation will set out a demographic and characteristic profile of the children, young people and families supported by the service – in order to help determine the scale and type of impact on Equalities made by the service once it goes live.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

6.1 This service will support the delivery of the Council's 2023-2025 plan and its stated aims to create resilient, healthy, and safe communities through ensuring our communities thrive, feel supported, and residents can live their best lives. Additionally, this service will deliver the councils ambition to ensure there is effective early help for individuals and communities.

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

7.1 This service is likely to help enable the Council to meet future requirements following the Government's response to the review of Care, 'Stable Homes, Built on Love: Implementation Strategy' (February 2023). Whilst this is still in consultation the key emphasis is on a 'family first' approach. The strategy includes two strands, referred to as pillars, which are particularly relevant to this service:

Pillar 1: Family Help provides the right support at the right time so that children can thrive with their families

Pillar 3: Unlocking the potential of family networks.

Whilst it is likely that some elements of the strategy may change throughout the consultation these central pillars will remain and Derbyshire will be well placed to progress on these elements with this new service.