

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION - REPORT CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL  
INFORMATION**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET MEMBER**

**24 JUNE 2021**

**Report of the Executive Director of Adult Care, Helen Jones**

**Future procurement of Approved Mental Health Professional Training  
Adult Social Care and Health**

**1. Divisions Affected**

1.1 County-wide

**2. Key Decision**

2.1 This is not a key decision

**3. Purpose**

3.1 To seek Cabinet approval to re-procure the Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) training course for the next three years with the option of extending this by one year.

**4. Information and Analysis**

4.1 Since 2019, work has been undertaken to formalise and strengthen Derbyshire County Council's AMHP service to ensure provision of a clear and sustainable AMHP workforce across the whole department through the development of a career pathway. In January 2021, it became evident that the current service level agreement with Sheffield

Hallam University to provide AMHP training for Derbyshire expires in June 2021. We therefore are currently unable to send any further social workers to undertake AMHP training and must enter into the full re-procurement of this training course.

It is vitally important that we continue to train social workers to become AMHPs as we are unable to recruit AMHPs to existing vacancies and have an ageing AMHP demography (48% over age of 50). Despite our commitment to train between 6-10 AMHPs per year for many years, the same number either leave or are de-approved after failing to meet the required standards.

Derbyshire currently has 56 AMHPs (equating to 43 FTEs). Without arrangements in place to train 10 new AMHPs over a 3-4 year period there is a risk that the workforce will be unable to meet the increased service demand.

Within Derbyshire, Mental Health Act activity has risen by 16% from 2011 to 2021. We are expecting an increase in referrals in 2021 as we transition out of the pandemic lockdown. We also have evidence that individuals have been impacted by the consequences of the pandemic, i.e. loss of employment, isolation, worsened mental health/wellbeing, grief etc.

Whilst it is currently unclear which of the MHA review recommendations will be agreed in the final legislative framework (expected within the next 2 years), the formal submission to the White Paper review by the AMHP Leads network estimates that the additional responsibilities of AMHPs may necessitate an increase in AMHP capacity of 7% to meet our statutory responsibilities. Within Derbyshire this would equate to an increase of 5 AMHPs, making a total number required of 78 FTE AMHPs as opposed to the 43 FTE AMHPs the Council currently has.

It has been calculated that the Council needs to train 10 AMHPs per annum. Part of the criteria for AMHP training is for social workers to attend pre-AMHP training beforehand. The Council currently have 14 social workers waiting to attend AMHP training having completed their pre-AMHP training and the Council propose that these social workers are prioritised and released to attend the next 3 cohorts (autumn 2021, spring 2022 and autumn 2022).

The duration of the contract with the successful provider will initially be three years with the opportunity to extend for a further year. Some soft market research has been undertaken and based on an average figure taken from 8 universities an estimated total cost to procure AMHP training per year is £46,740 (breakdown contained in Appendix 1).

In summary the Council does not have the suggested minimum number of FTE AMHPs required within Derbyshire (43 as opposed to suggested 73) and 48% of the current AMHP workforce is over 50 years of age. The Council also acknowledges that its AMHP workforce is at risk of becoming 'burnt out'. Derbyshire's population is set to rise in the coming years and referral rates have increased over successive years. The proposed additional duties placed on AMHPs under the reform of the MHA will place an additional strain on the AMHP workforce.

The Council is seeking approval therefore to enter into the full re-procurement process to enable future AMHP training to be provided within Derbyshire to ensure that it continues to maintain a safe, sustainable and legally compliant service.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 Consultation has been undertaken with DCC Human Resources, Finance and Accountancy, Learning and Development, Adult Care Contracting and Compliance and the Principal Social Worker.

## **6. Alternative Options Considered**

- 6.1 Do Nothing, however this is not a viable position the local Authority can take as there is a statutory duty upon Local Authorities to provide a robust 24/7 AMHP service. The current levels of AMHP provision are unsustainable and unless the Council can re-procure this training it will significantly impact on our ability to provide a safe and legally compliant AMHP service.

There is no alternative to re-procuring this training as it has to be delivered by a provider accredited by Social Work England.

## **7. Implications**

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

## **8. Background Papers**

- 8.1 None

## **9. Appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix 1- Implications.

## 10. Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet Member:

- a) Approve the re-procurement of the AMHP training course for the next three years with the option of extending this by one year.

## 11. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

11.1 Providing a 24/7 AMHP service is a statutory responsibility for Derbyshire County Council as confirmed within the MHA Code of Practice. Without re-procuring AMHP training to ensure new AMHPs are trained and approved it is very likely that we will be unable to continue to provide a safe, sustainable and legally compliant service.

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

12.1 No

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**This report has been approved by the following officers:**

<b>On behalf of:</b>  Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Director of Finance and ICT Managing Executive Director Executive Director(s)	
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**Implications****Financial**

- 1.1 Cost of AMHP Training for 3 year duration + additional flexibility to increase for a further year:
- |   |   |                        |
|---|---|------------------------|
| Estimated cost of training 10 AMHPs pa        | = | £36,740.               |
| Estimated cost of pre-AMHP training pa (x 10) | = | £10,000                |
| Combined total per annum                      | = | £46,740                |
| Combined total over a 3 year period           | = | <b><u>£140,220</u></b> |

This cost can be met from the existing Adult Social Care and Health budget.

**Legal**

- 2.1 Each local authority **must** make sure a 24/7 AMHP service is provided. The local authority is also responsible for the approval and registration of AMHPs (***MHA Code of Practice***).

The procurement procedure is in line with Derbyshire County Council's Financial Regulation protocol 5 standing order.

**Human Resources**

- 3.1 HR representation has been included within the Work Group taking forwards this re-procurement

**Information Technology**

- 4.1 N/A

**Equalities Impact**

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out but the expectation is that providers tendering for this training will have undertaken one.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 6.1 N/A

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

7.1 N/A

Report Sign Off and Version Control

Report Title	
Author	
Meeting and Date	
Version	
Key Decision (published)	
Exempt item (notice of private meeting published)	

Implications	Name and Comments	Date Approved
Finance		
Legal		
Human Resources		
Information Technology		
Equalities		
Corporate Objectives and priorities for change		
Consultation		
Other – please specify		

Author's Directorate Sign Off

		Date
Managing Executive Director/Executive Director		
DMT – if applicable		

CMT – if applicable		
Cabinet Member briefed		
Other – please specify		