

Report

Report to:	Social Work Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	1 September 2021
Report by:	Director, Health and Social Care Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Practice Assessor/Mental Health Officer Post – Increase in Establishment
----------	---

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ seek approval to increase assessment with a post of Practice Assessor/Mental Health Officer to support Mental Health Officer capacity in the workforce

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the addition to the establishment of 0.6FTE Practice Assessor/MHO on a fixed-term basis for one year as detailed in Section 6.0 be approved.

3. Background

3.1. The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 requires local authorities to appoint sufficient Mental Health Officers (MHOs) to discharge the functions of MHOs in the Council area.

3.2. Many local authorities have faced challenges in recent years with the recruitment and retention of MHOs and in nominating Social Workers to undertake a Mental Health Officer Training Programme.

3.3. The Scottish Government established the MHO Capacity Building Grant Scheme to address the shortfall of MHOs nationally.

3.4. South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) has been successful for many years in nominating Social Workers to undertake the MHO Training Programme and supporting candidates well whilst undertaking the course.

4. Practice Assessment

4.1. The Post Graduate Certificate in Mental Health Social Work is a Masters level qualification which requires a high degree of commitment to complete academic assignments, practice requirements and self-directed learning.

4.2. Each candidate undertaking the Post Graduate Certificate in Mental Health Social Work is required to have a Practice Assessor to assess the practice element of the course. Candidates on the course value the knowledge, experience and support provided by MHO Practice Assessors.

- 4.3. MHO Practice Assessors are experienced Mental Health Officers who have completed Practice Assessor training provided by Strathclyde University.
- 4.4. Practice Assessment involves assessing shadow statutory reports, undertaking observations of practice, assessing a presentation, reading and discussing the content of reflective logs in relation to practice and mental health resources and assisting with the allocation of work for the course. Supervision with the candidate is provided for three hours per month minimum. Advice, guidance and information is provided as required. A report outlining how the Candidate has met the practice competences is completed at the end of module 1 and module 2 of the course.

5. Post of Practice Assessor/MHO

- 5.1. It is anticipated that within the Council there will be three candidates undertaking the Mental Health Officer Training Programme at Strathclyde University starting in August 2021 and ending in June 2022.
- 5.2. It would be beneficial to use the funds from the MHO Capacity Building Grant to appoint a dedicated Practice Assessor to assess the practice element of the course for the three Candidates undertaking MHO training in 2021-22.
- 5.3. The time commitment for Practice Assessment for three candidates is 0.6FTE. Appointing a dedicated Practice Assessor would decrease pressure on MHOs and allow MHOs to concentrate on completing statutory MHO work. Team Leaders would be able to allocate more statutory MHO reports in relation to the Adults with Incapacity Act.

6. Employee Implications

- 6.1. The employee implications are detailed below and are on a fixed term basis for 1 year.

Post	Proposed Number of Posts (FTE)	Grade	SCP Range	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	Gross Cost inc. on costs 30.3%
Practice Assessor /MHO	0.6	Grade 3 Level 8	79 -80	£22.89	£25,062	£32,656
				£23.24	£25,446	£33,156

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. The post will be funded for 12 months by a Scottish Government grant funding to increase MHO capacity in the workforce.

8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 8.1. There are no implications for Climate Change in terms of the information contained in this report.
- 8.2. There are no implications for sustainability in terms of the information contained in this report.
- 8.3. There are no implications for the environment in terms of the information contained in this report.

9. Other Implications

- 9.1. These posts are required to ensure that the Council continues to meet its statutory duties to provide assessment and care management functions for supported people and carers.
- 9.2. There are no sustainable development issues associated with this report.
- 9.3. There are no other issues associated with this report.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function, or strategy, or recommend a change to an existing policy, function, or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required. The Council's recruitment procedures in relation to equality and diversity will be followed.
- 10.2. Consultation has taken place with the Trade Unions regarding the recommendations contained within this report.

Soumen Sengupta
Director, Health and Social Care

Paul Manning
Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

2 August 2021

Link(s) to Council Values/Objectives

- ◆ Improve health, care and wellbeing

Previous References

- ◆ none

List of Background Papers

- ◆ none

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Lorraine O'Neill, Staff Development Officer Mental Health

Ext: 4867 (Phone: 07913697070)

Email: lorraine.o'neill@southlanarkshire.gov.uk