

NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF AN URGENT KEY DECISION PROPOSED TO BE MADE BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL IN MAY 2022 (published 11 May 2022)

In accordance with paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the Council hereby gives notice of a Key Decision which the Leader intends to consider.

The Council also hereby gives notice in accordance with paragraph 5 of the above Regulations that it may determine this Key Decision in private.

*If you have any queries on this Key Decisions List, please contact **Katia Neale** or by e-mail to katia.neale@lbhf.gov.uk*

Decision to be Made by	Date of Decision-Making Meeting and Reason	Proposed Key Decision	Lead Executive Councillor(s), Wards Affected, and officer to contact for further information or relevant documents	Documents to be submitted to Cabinet (other relevant documents may be submitted)
Leader of the Council	May 2022	Business case for Covid Funding for the Contact and Assessment Service (CAS) and Early Help (FS)	Cabinet Member for Children and Education	A detailed report for this item will be available at least five working days before the date of the meeting and will include details of any supporting documentation and / or background papers to be considered.
	Reason: Expenditure/Income - Revenue between £500,000 and £5m and Capital between £1.5m and £5m	<p>All referrals to Children's Services that meet the threshold for support from social care services must be progressed quickly and accurately to our Contact and Assessment Service (CAS) for fuller assessment and safeguarding intervention. The effectiveness of our front door service is critical to meeting our statutory duties to support and protect vulnerable children and families.</p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a reduction in referrals through the front door; however, we are now seeing activities returning to above pre-pandemic levels with contacts increasing from 1667 contacts in 19/20 before the</p>	<p>Ward(s): All Wards</p> <p>Contact officer: Alistair Ayres, Sophie Veitch</p> <p>alistair.ayres@lbhf.gov.uk Sophie.veitch@lbhf.gov.uk</p>	

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		<p>pandemic, to a forecast of 1884 contacts in 21/22. The Early Help (FS) team are now predominantly dealing with attendance issues and have less capacity to work with families requiring other early help support. Delays in commencing other early help work can lead to more entrenched concerns and the need for statutory intervention.</p> <p>High case allocations were highlighted as a concern by Ofsted in the 2019 Inspecting Local Authorities Children's Services (ILACS) and in the January 2022 Focused Visit and if this continues, is likely to impact on the quality of safeguarding service provided and retention of the workforce. This presents a risk to our vulnerable families and the council in meeting its statutory duties.</p> <p>This report therefore seeks approval to establish an additional team in CAS for a fixed period of two-years; this increased staff capacity will enable CAS to meet the increased need and latent demand following the pandemic. The service already has a number of workstreams in progress to address the demand on statutory services, including interim additional resourcing of the school attendance front door function. Over the next two years, we will continue to assess demand and evaluate the need for fourth CAS team going forward.</p> <p>Reasons for Urgency:</p> <p>It is imperative that additional resource is in place by the start of July, and recruitment commences as soon as possible. The longer the additional resource is not in place, the higher the risk of not</p>		

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		meeting current levels of demand, fulfil our statutory duties and provide high quality safeguarding services. In turn, this is likely to impact on service resilience and lead to an increased reliance on costly agency workers.		