



Imperium Solutions
Service Delivery Partners

Case Study: Bradford Council

Children's Social Care Managed Service Solution

CONTEXT

Following Ofsted's monitoring visit in 2018, Bradford Children's Services has been following a programme of improvement. As part of this, a workforce analysis identified a need for additional capacity in order to build resilience across the service and stabilise staff numbers, in order to provide continuity for vulnerable children and young people.

The existing temporary staffing arrangement was not able to provide sufficient numbers of experienced Social Workers, in the volumes needed, and Imperium Solutions was appointed to develop a standalone locality service to support increased demand. This service consisted of 1 Service Manager, 3 Team Managers and 18 Level 3 Social Workers.

Imperium Solutions proposed a new and improved model of working which meant engaging temporary workers on a 12-month fixed term contract to provide stability and reduce the constant change in case allocation.



1 SERVICE
MANAGER



3 PROGRAMME
MANAGERS



18 LEVEL 3
QSWs



**INCREASE IN QUALITY OF
WORK, TEAM MORALE AND
THROUGHPUT OF CASES**



**SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION
IN THE CHURN/TURNOVER
OF SOCIAL WORK STAFF**

KICK OFF

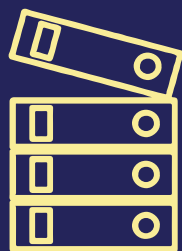
The project kick-off was scheduled for December 14th, shortly after the third lockdown had started and a week before Christmas. Although this represented additional resourcing challenges our teams were still mobilised within agreed timescales and were able to have an immediate impact.

Within the new locality service, our three fixed-term teams were allocated highly complex cases to include PLO, CP and Care Proceedings. Most of these cases had experienced drift and delay with high turnover of previous social workers. Due to the complexity of the cases, we capped the individual caseloads at 20. However, this (almost immediately) gave Bradford City Council the capacity to hold an additional 360 cases, which provided some much-needed respite to other teams in the Locality Service.

Due to the success of the initial fixed-term teams, we were asked to mobilise an additional team (within the Locality Service) to replace a project team that had proved ineffective. Within two weeks all transferred cases had been audited and brought up to date.



20
CASELOAD CAP



360
ADDITIONAL
CAPACITY

4X
EXTRA TEAMS
TO MEET DEMAND



UNDERWAY

In January Bradford began to roll out a brand new service structure, splitting out to Duty Teams, C&F and Long-Term CIC. Imperium Solutions were further commissioned to identify 4 more teams (4 x TM and 24 SW) to provide further capacity for six months whilst a full permanent campaign was planned.

These teams were made up of two Duty Teams and Two Assessment Teams with Social Workers having to meet a minimum criteria of being a level 3 Social Worker with recent experience in single assessments, high-quality references and a firm commitment to an initial 6-month contract. The timeliness of these teams meant that Bradford City Council were able to respond to an increased demand following the return of Children to school.

OUTCOME

We have created a detailed, exciting and encouraging narrative regarding Bradford's improvement journey. Individuals employed on the fixed-term model report a high level of satisfaction with their agency consultant, benefit from ongoing CPD support and feel a real team ethos/"in it together" culture that we have created in the fixed term specialist service. This is further borne out by conversations we've had with individuals who enjoy working for Bradford so much that they are considering permanent



**REGULAR INTERACTION
WITH CONSULTANT**



**ONGOING CPD
SUPPORT**



**TEAM ETHOS AND
"IN IT TOGETHER" CULTURE**

roles once our fixed-term agreement ends. We would like to reiterate that our commitment is to ensure the best possible outcomes of the services users inline with the Authorities requirements. Our approach is that of a partnership and we pride ourselves on transparency and our strength based outcomes.

The use of fixed-term teams has enabled Bradford to be proactive in changing their narrative and there has been a real step-change in their workforce. To highlight this, out of the 57 professionals engaged on fixed term contracts, only one has left and this was to pursue a non-case-holding role elsewhere.