

Agenda Item 6.

TITLE	Delivering Effective Safeguarding Services - Recruitment and Retention Strategy Update
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 21 July 2015
WARD	Non Specific
DIRECTOR	Judith Ramsden, Director Children's Services

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The update on delivering effective safeguarding services focuses on the effectiveness of the recruitment and retention strategy. Improvements made to this strategy will improve our service and lead to increased staff retention, which will lead to better outcomes for children across the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION

The attached is a progress report on the overseas recruitment campaign and staff recruitment and retention data to be noted.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	(£8K)	Yes – within existing budget	R
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	(£95K)	Yes – within existing budget	R
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	(£95K)	Yes – within existing budget	R

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)

None

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

Informational

List of Background Papers
Workforce Strategy, Recruitment and Retention Strategy

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Date 15 th June 2015	Version No.

Overseas Recruitment Campaign – recruiting experienced social workers from Australia

On 2nd March 2015, we presented a report to Overview and Scrutiny explaining the rationale for attracting and recruiting social work candidates from Australia to work in Wokingham. This is in response to the well documented, nationwide challenges in relation to the recruitment and retention of experienced social workers and the competitive nature of local recruitment and forms part of the Children's Workforce Strategy and Children's Social Care's Recruitment and Retention Strategy. The report presented on 2nd March 2015 described the approach taken for the overseas campaign. We can now update Overview and Scrutiny on the progress of this campaign.

By way of a recap

- Working with Hays Recruitment
- We developed a microsite with full details of the offer, the job specification and 'about Wokingham' (a link to the microsite was sent to Tricia Hardcourt on 3rd March 2015 for Overview and Scrutiny's information).
- Locally adverts were placed in Australia and Hays' job site directed candidates to the microsite, or candidates could apply directly.
- Direct sourcing activity via LinkedIn and Hays' database
- Compliance and onboarding

Key dates were

- Advertising ended 13th March 2015
- Shortlisting meeting 19th March 2015
- Hays Consultant 1st interviews in Australia w/c 30th March 2015
- Final interviews by Skype (London) 17th April 2015
- Offers to candidates 20th April 2015

Key campaign statistics

Via LinkedIn:

Directly Contacted: 396
Replied: 115

Job Board

Direct Applications through Job Ad: 10

Whilst there were a significant number of responses, many did not fit the specific need of the Council in terms of Signs of Safety and years of post-qualification experience.

Shortlisting and Interview

- Shortlisted applications from both LinkedIn and the Job board: 15
- Shortlisted by Wokingham Borough Council: 10 (these candidates then completed the numerical and verbal and personality tests*, prior to the interviews in Australia).
- Interviewed in Australia by Hays Consultant: 10
- Progressed to final stage interview following interview and assessment: 7
- Skype Interview at Final Stage: 6 (1 cancelled interview)
- Offered: 5 **

*The personality tests specifically tested the Candidate's motivation and attitudes towards social work to ensure alignment.

**The shortlisting ratio is generally 2:1 for in-country campaigns. For overseas campaigns it is usually 3:1, but Hays commented that the detailed brief provided by Wokingham made the Consultant's decisions in Australia far more exact as to who should be progressed to final stage. This meant all but one candidate was successful at final stage.

The 5 appointees are now subject to the HCPC registration, checking and Visa processes. They are also busy making their personal and domestic arrangements. All start dates are dependent on HCPC registrations process, references and other checks and Visas. 3 are starting in July, 1 in August and we are waiting confirmation of a date from one candidate.

Onboarding and Welcoming Appointees

We recognise that appointment of the candidates is not the end of the campaign. It is critical that the Appointees are supported, orientated and inducted effectively; not just into their team and workplace but also as far as we can into their new life in the UK. To that end we have

- Identified the team they are joining and are encouraging the Team Managers to reach out to their Appointee before their arrival in the UK.
- We developed an 'on-boarding' site to support our Appointees at the point of offer, during the appointment process and on their arrival in the UK and thereafter. It offers workplace information as well as information about Wokingham and life in the UK generally.
- We reached out to Wokingham's workforce asking them to offer temporary accommodation to an overseas worker. 3 employees have made this offer and they are being 'matched' with Appointees.
- A generic induction program has been designed (team, service and organisational levels) and this will be owned by the Assistant Team Managers, working with the Practice Consultants, and personalised for each Appointee.
- 3 training sessions are being designed, run by Practice Consultant, to orientate the Appointees with social work in the UK (the legal framework, recording, chronologies, role of Ofsted etc)
- Buddies have been identified for each Appointee, and their role clarified

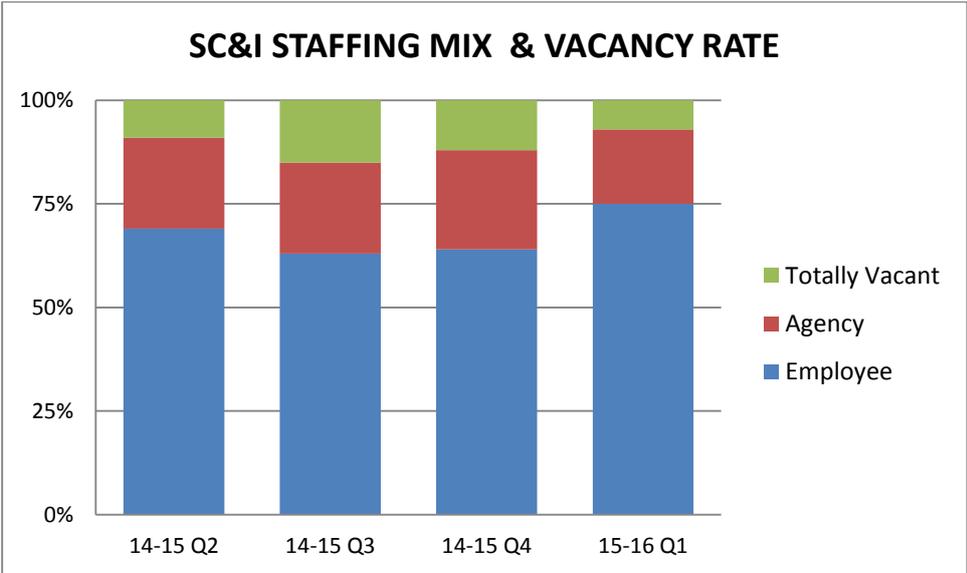
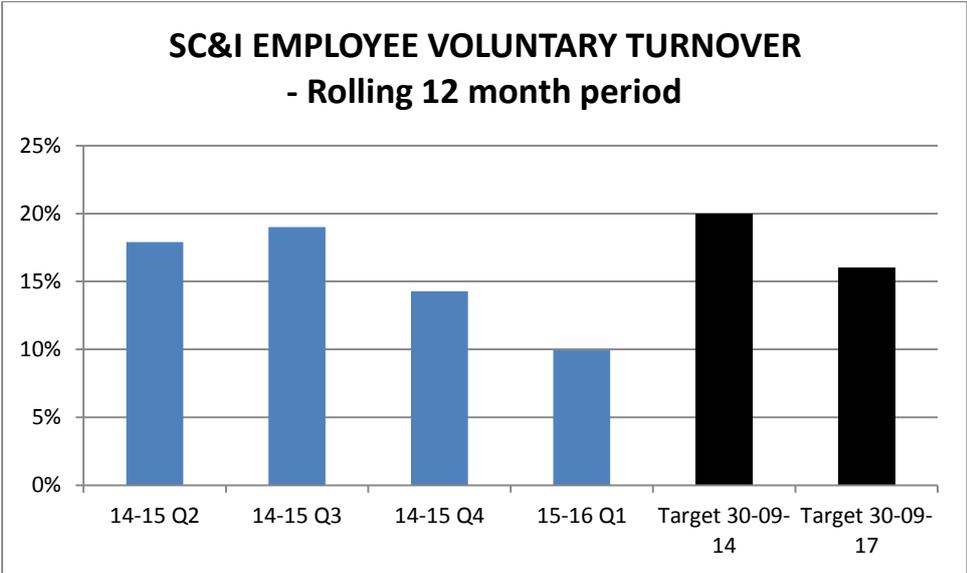
Cost of agency worker for full 12 weeks based on average agency day rate of £281 = £16,860

Cost of permanent worker per 12 weeks based on average day rate including on costs of £203 = £11,880

This represents an agency premium of 39% over the cost of a permanent employee.

Turnover and Staff to Agency Mix Data

The graphs below show the rolling turnover and the mix of agency to permanent staff, including vacancies which are key indicators in relation to recruitment and retention; they show an improving picture resulting from activity under the CSC Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2014-17. 4



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