

Appendix B

Temporary Worker Report

Executive Summary

This report contains the data from the end of quarter 2 for 2022/23, and the narrative that would normally be provided alongside this data as part of the quarterly Personnel Board report regarding the use of temporary workers in each of the Directorates.

- It is important to recognise that there are specific scenarios where reliance on temporary workers is both a necessary and appropriate resourcing solution to meet service delivery needs especially in areas where staffing numbers are governed by statutory requirement e.g., in the care services.
- Agency Workers make up 6% of our workforce; Consultants make up 0.7% of our workforce
- We continue to focus on reducing reliance on high-cost temporary workers by appropriate strategic resourcing solutions supported by ongoing improvement work on our management information systems & resourcing process.
- Notwithstanding the above, it is important to recognise that there are specific scenarios where reliance on agency workers is both a necessary and appropriate resourcing solution obviously underpinned by commercial cost governance.
- As at end of Q2 there were 95 agency workers at a cost of £2,261,599, 11 Consultant workers at a cost of £257,135.

Analysis by Directorate

1. Adult Social Care and Health

There remain national difficulties in recruiting permanent Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and Advanced Mental Health Practitioners and this has required the directorate to use agency workers to ensure consistent, safe provision of services and maintain performance against KPI's. This has been combined by an increase in referrals, a steep rise in Safeguarding inquiries and evidence of increased complexity for customer as a result of Covid, mental health problems and social isolation. Agency staff have been used to cover time-limited, grant funded initiatives to respond to the impact of these pressures.

The long-standing agency staff have mainly been utilised flexibly across the whole service to meet the needs as they arise, cover vacancies that we have been unable to recruit to and to fulfil the roles created by grant funded initiatives. There is currently a 15% vacancy rate that is being covered by agency workers.

As part of a longer-term strategy, a specialist Recruitment and Retention post has been appointed with a view to improving recruitment of key staff, to reduce the reliance on agency staff and to focus on permanent solutions. This will be supported by the recent launch of a dedicated ASCH recruitment page designed to better promote careers in Social Care and the benefits and advantages of working for Wokingham Borough Council.

Additional transformation funding in 2022/23 has also been used to secure agency support to drive demand down, review high cost packages and contribute towards savings targets.

2. Children's Services

There continue to be challenges regionally, sub regionally and nationally in recruitment to the children's workforce. This includes social work, Educational Psychology and other key parts of the workforce such as data and intelligence. There is a national shortage of trained and qualified workers for particular roles- eg the Doctorate level qualification for Educational Psychology has had a notable impact. We continue to be in competition with other LAs to attract, recruit and retain in these key roles.

We are responding creatively to these challenges by recruiting trainees and growing our own social work workforce.

3. Resources & Assets

A national skills shortage challenge continues to impact the Council's ability to recruit auditors however reliance is decreasing, and a review of the internal structure has helped to encourage and generate more interest from applicants. Recruitment strategies will continue to be developed to reduce reliance on agency workers through internal development and opportunities.

Agency workers are being used to fill vacancies in several departments including Income & Assessments whilst work is being undertaken to move to a permanent structure following consultation.

Agency usage within the property team is being used to support specific projects whose cost is capitalised against the projects worked on.

4. Chief Executive Office

Engagement of temporary consultant resource has been necessary to support the transitional arrangements to improve the HR provision for the organisation. This is constantly under review and will be removed as the new HR structure embeds.

5. Place & Growth

Within Place and Growth, Highways is a national sector that is underpinned by an agile, contracting labour force. Across the sector, due to the nature of national schemes and projects, specialists are interim in nature – contracting when and where schemes are financed and as such, there are nationally very few specialists who undertake permanent placements. Most of the high-cost agency workers identified in the report fall into this category and as such, whilst we continue to apply good governance and replace contractors with permanent staff as and when we can, the nature of this industry remains reliant on agency workers.

**Consultant/ Interim Workers as at 1st october
2022**

Service	Total Number of Consultant/ Interim Workers	Tenure				
		<6 mths	6 mths-1 yr	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3+ years
Adult Social Care & Health	0	0	0	0	0	0
Children's Services	4	0	0	1	2	1
Place & Growth	3	0	1	1	0	1
Resources & Assets	1	1	0	0	0	0
Chief Executives Office	3	3	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	11					

**Agency Workers
as at 1st october
2022**

Service	Total Number of Agency Workers	Posts	Number in Posts	Tenure				
				<6 mths	6 mths-1 yr	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3+ years
Adult Social Care & Health	29	Social Worker	21	3	5	8	2	3
		Others	8	6	2	0	0	
Children's Services	35	Social Worker	20	7	5	3	1	4
		SEND Officer	5	1	0	1	3	0
		Others	10	4	4	2	0	0
Place & Growth	13	Highways & Transport	5	2	1	0	1	1
		Housing	6	1	2	1	0	2
		Others	2	0	1	1	0	0
Resources & Assets	14	Revenue	7	6	0	1	0	0
		Procurement	2	2	0	0	0	0
		Others	5	3	1	1	0	0
Chief Executives Office	4	Others	4	3	0	1	0	0
TOTAL	95							

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