

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Employment Committee
Date: 25th March 2019
Report for: Information
Report of: Sara Saleh, Corporate Director of People

Report Title

Agency and Consultant Spend for Q3 - Period 1st October 2018 to 31st December 2018

Recommendations

That the content of this report is noted.

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	These proposals align with the council's Corporate Priorities in respect to 'Low Council Tax and Value for Money' and 'Reshaping Trafford Council'.
Financial	The cost of using agency workers is carefully managed and monitored through existing budgets and budget management frameworks.
Legal Implications:	Agency assignments are carefully monitored to ensure that they are legally compliant and any employment liability is mitigated.
Equality/Diversity Implications	None
Sustainability Implications	None
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	The use of agency workers supports critical resourcing gaps.
Risk Management Implications	See Legal Implications section.
Health & Wellbeing Implications	None
Health and Safety Implications	None

1. Background

- 1.1 A robust vacancy clearance process is in place that ensures that posts are only filled where there is a compelling case to do so and that where a post is filled, the aim is to match to the vacancy in the first instance in a priority sequence; employees on notice from redundancy (redeployees), "at risk" staff (those employees where there is a real risk of redundancy) and apprentices.
- 1.2 Vacancies are subject to approval by HR and Finance and then the relevant Corporate Director, for advertisement initially to internal staff in order to minimise the number of compulsory redundancies and the incurrence of additional spend on external resources, including agency fees.

- 1.3 There will be circumstances whereby there are immediate resourcing needs that are predominantly short term in nature and require access to time limited and/or specialist skills that cannot be found within the organisation, or where cover is required for day-to-day absences. For these reasons, access to temporary agency support is essential to meet critical gaps in service provision as outlined below. In some cases due to the specialist nature of the work, consultants are required.
- 1.4 The breakdown of agency spend over Q3 of 2018/19 (October to December 2018) is attached at Appendix I. It should be noted that the agency costs for the quarter have been met from within existing staffing budgets, whilst services have been restructuring, reshaping and recruiting to resultant vacant posts and ensuring that statutory obligations are met on a day-to-day basis.
- 1.5 Appendix II provides information on the length of tenure for those assignments that were still active as at 31st December 2018.
- 1.6 Towards the end of 2018, the Council underwent a restructure, with a move from three directorates to seven. Due to this, the historical agency data has been mapped across to the new directorates to allow for comparison of the data for the current quarter with the previous quarter and the same quarter in the previous year.

2. Directorate Overview

2.1 Children and Families

- 2.1.1 In Q3 2018/19, spend in Children and Families totalled £79,344 and as at 31st December 2018 there were a total of 7 active assignments across the Directorate. The majority of agency spend is due to the service discharging its statutory responsibilities for providing social care services for vulnerable children. The interim staffing need is primarily required to cover staffing resource gaps, created as a result of short-term staff absences or whilst recruitment to permanent posts is underway and cover is critical to ensure that service users receive the appropriate level of care and support.
- 2.1.2 The spend has decreased significantly, by over 90%, as compared with Q3 2017/18 which was £151,105. Spend has also significantly decreased as compared with the previous quarter (Q2, 2018/19) which was £134,626.
- 2.1.3 66% of the spend is on interim qualified Social Worker roles. The spend on Social Worker roles has nearly reduced by half since the previous quarter.
- 2.1.4 The next biggest spend is on Business Support which is 12% of the total. However the spend in this area has reduced by 33% as compared with the

previous quarter. This is as a result of the admin review and should continue to reduce as vacancies have now been recruited to.

- 2.1.5 In order to reduce both the need for and the cost of agency social workers and to maintain continuity of service, a permanent, peripatetic team of children's social workers remains in place. These experienced social workers are deployed on short-term/time-limited placements in response to service demand. Further to the comprehensive review of Social Services, with recommendations to address the range of issues affecting staff wellbeing, work is ongoing to make improvements.
- 2.1.6 In order to improve the recruitment and retention of Social Workers, which is still problematic due to national issues, we have employed 1.5 FTE Social Work Development Officers to support staff with their professional development. In particular, they are providing additional support for newly qualified social workers undergoing the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment and for children's social workers and practice supervisors who have volunteered for the National Assessment and Accreditation system. This pathway has also been added as an option for staff under-going career progression from social worker (level 2) to Experienced Social Worker (Level 3).
- 2.1.7 Following the Ofsted inspection which looked at children's social worker workloads we have re-aligned resources to ensure that the caseloads are manageable across all teams.
- 2.1.8 In addition, a Child in Need case review was also undertaken and a new model is currently being implemented. The new model will consist of a standalone centralised team of non-social work qualified, 'Family Practitioners', who will case manage a number of low level child in need cases. It will also include a small cohort of Family Support Workers, who will work across all service areas. The Family Support Workers will provide a resource for low level family support tasks and family crisis intervention, as required. This model will provide a career pathway for social care staff to develop and progress to become qualified. It will also help reduce the workloads of Social Worker by taking open low level Child in Need cases and preventing cases escalating to child protection cases.

2.2 Adult Services

- 2.2.1 In Q3 2018/19, spend in Adult Services totalled £229,033 and as at 31st December 2018 there were a total of 25 active assignments across the Directorate. The majority of agency spend is due to the service discharging its statutory responsibilities for providing social care services for vulnerable adults. The interim staffing need is primarily required to cover staffing

resource gaps, created as a result of short-term staff absences or whilst recruitment to permanent posts is underway and cover is critical to ensure that service users receive the appropriate level of care and support.

- 2.2.2 The spend has increased by 28%, as compared with Q3 2017/18 which was £179,352. However despite this rise from last year, spend has reduced as compared with the previous quarter (Q2, 2018/19) which was £262,987.
- 2.2.3 60% of the spend is on interim qualified Social Worker roles. The next biggest spend is on Care Assistants and Support Workers at 26% and then Business Support and MI at 12%. As compared with the previous quarter the reliance on Social Workers has increased and the requirement for Care Assistants and Support Workers has increased. Part of the reduction in usage of agency Support Workers is due to the review in Supported Living where substantive roles were being recruited to and casual staff were being used to fill gaps in provision.
- 2.2.4 In order to improve the recruitment and retention of Social Workers the Service is introducing the Trafford Academy. This will provide a mechanism for a rolling recruitment programme, in addition to access to continuous professional development opportunities and defined career pathways, for new starters and existing staff who are embarking on a career progression journey.
- 2.2.5 A phased approach will be adopted with phase 1 linked specifically to the three pathways across Adult Social Care.

Pathway A- Internal Pathway. Current Social Care Assessors (unregistered staff-Band 5) who will be afforded the opportunity to progress onto the Social Work degree (accessed via the apprenticeship levy) or the registered manager accreditation.

Pathway B- University Pathway (MMU). Candidates nearing completion of the Access to Social Work course will be interviewed for a Social care assessor position within the Council (non-registered staff-Band 5). This would be an alternative to self-funding the degree independently and enable the candidate to obtain full training and development in readiness for the social work degree/registered manager award post two years of employment (in accordance with the current requirements aligned to Pathway A).

Pathway C- College Pathway (Trafford College). Support workers (grade 3) will be recruited from Trafford College following completion of the BTEC National Diploma in health and social care. This pathway lends itself to the development of support workers who would develop the necessary skills in both health and social care to commence on their career development pathway. This pathway also encompasses our current support worker workforce.

2.2.6 In addition the Service is supporting three Social Work apprenticeships for existing social care staff, which will commence in March 2019.

2.3 Commissioning

2.3.1 In Q3 2018/19, the total agency spend in this area equated to £69,459 and as at 31st December 2018, there were 3 active assignments. The majority of the spend is on Social Workers who work in the Community Mental Health Team.

2.3.2 The spend has increased significantly as compared with Q3 2017/18 which was £15,924 and Q2 2018/19 when the level was £42,921. This has been due to cover for maternity leave, sickness and on-going recruitment issues. The service is looking at a long-term strategy to improve the recruitment of Approved Mental Health Professionals.

2.4 Governance and Community Strategy

2.4.1 In Q3 2018/19, the total agency spend in Governance and Community Strategy equated to £56,525 and as at 31st December 2018, there were 3 active assignments. Agency spend in this Directorate is due to the need to bring in specialist skills.

2.4.2 The spend has remained very stable and in line with Q3 2017/18 which was £55,052 and the previous period, Q2 2018/19 which was £54,552.

2.4.3 The spend is split fairly equally between Solicitors and Community Safety Officers. There have been difficulties in retaining and attracting solicitors of the right calibre and different options continue to be explored.

2.5 Finance and Systems

2.5.1 In Q3 2018/19, the total agency spend in Finance and Systems equated to £11,011 and as at 31st December 2018, there were 2 active assignments. Agency spend in this Directorate is due to the need to bring in professional and specialist skills.

2.5.2 The spend has nearly doubled as compared with Q3 2017/18 which was £5,743. However there has been a reduction of 36% on the previous period, Q2 2018/19 which was £17,296.

2.5.3 The spend is split between Finance (70%) and Procurement (30%).

2.6 People

2.5.1 In Q3 2018/19, the total agency spend in People equated to £5,012 and as at 31st December 2018, there were no active assignments. Agency spend in this Directorate is due to the need to bring in professional and specialist skills.

2.5.2 The spend is currently very low and has decreased significantly as compared with Q3 2017/18 which was £44,901. There has also been a huge reduction on the previous period, Q2 2018/19 which was £40,499.

2.5.3 The spend relates to a professional HR role and a PA role. The reason for the significant reduction is largely due to previous requirements for professional marketing and communications support whilst they underwent a review. This has now been concluded and the team has a permanent establishment.

2.7 Place

2.7.1 In Q3 2018/19, the total agency spend in this area equated to £20,387 and as at 31st December 2018, there were 2 active assignments. Spend in this area is solely on Building Control.

2.7.2 The spend has reduced significantly (by over a third) as compared with Q3 2017/18 which was £32,035. However spend has doubled as compared with Q2 2018/19 when the level was £10,090.

3. Summary Agency Spend Position

3.1 The total agency spend in Q3 was £470,771. This is a decrease on the corresponding period in 2017/18 when spend was £484,112. This is also a significant decrease (16%) as compared to the previous period, Q2 2018/19 (£562,971).

4. Consultant Spend

4.1 The total spend in Q3 2018/19 was £233,514. The spend breaks down as follows.

Children and Families	Adult Services	Governance and Community Strategy	Finance and Systems	People	Place	Commissioning
£0	£0	£0	£60,249	£0	£173,265	£0

4.2 This spend was a significant increase as compared with Q2 which was £75,380 and also Q3 in 2017/18 which was £152,790.

4.3 Spend in Finance and Systems relates to CCG work and in Place it relates to Property, One Trafford Response and Urban Vision Planners.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Agency and consultant spend will continue to be monitored on a regular basis and reports will be presented to Employment Committee, for information.
- 5.2 Employment Committee is recommended to note the content of this report.

Appendix 1

Trafford Council Agency Spend By Directorate Q3 - 2018/2019

Breakdown by Directorate (via cost and number of active assignments)

Oct 2018

Directorates	Job Title	Number of Active Assignments in Month	Total Cost
Children and Families	Business Support Officer Level 2	2	£1,856.92
	Business Support Officer Level 3	1	£1,737.72
	Childcare Worker	2	£455.14
	Family Support Worker	1	£320.52
	Independent Reviewing Officer	1	£4,307.32
	Residential Childcare Officer	4	£2,536.30
	Social Worker Level 3	2	£5,019.57
	Social Worker Level 3 (Hospital/EDT)	1	£2,396.46
	Social Worker level 3a	1	£1,960.01
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT)	1	£1,518.95
	Travel Assistance Officer	1	£2,442.32
Adults	Business Support Officer Level 2	2	£2,792.15
	Business Support Officer Level 3	2	£3,843.83
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	19	£13,650.08
	Management Information Officer -	1	£1,841.91
	Senior Business Support Officer	1	£1,945.36
	Social Care Assessor	1	£1,745.37
	Social Worker Level 3	12	£37,164.24
	Social Worker level 3a	1	£4,896.77
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT)	3	£6,627.00
	Support Worker - Adults	3	£1,522.65
Support Worker Adults Physical Intervention Trained	4	£600.90	
Commissioning	Project Support Officer	1	£1,528.95
	Social Worker Level 3	3	£10,025.03
	Social Worker level 3a	3	£8,869.50
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT)	1	£3,554.81
Governance & Community Strategy	Community Safety Manager -	1	£4,719.36
	Community Safety Officer -	2	£5,528.41
	Solicitor	2	£7,031.04
Finance & Systems	Senior Accountant	1	£322.57
People	Assistant Business Partner	1	£3,206.00
Place	Building Control Officer	1	£6,342.28
Grand Total		82	£152,309.44

Directorates	Job Title	Number of Active Assignments in Month	Total Cost
Children	Business Support Officer Level 3	1	£1,737.72
	Family Support Worker	1	£1,087.26
	Independent Reviewing Officer	1	£4,510.50
	Social Worker Level 3	3	£5,966.72
	Social Worker Level 3 (Hospital/EDT)	1	£3,386.23
	Social Worker level 3a	1	£3,947.62
	Travel Assistance Officer	1	£2,542.87
	Social Worker Level 3	1	£2,794.11
Adults	Business Support Officer Level 2	2	£2,901.99
	Business Support Officer Level 3	2	£3,126.37
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	17	£20,342.01
	Management Information Officer -	1	£2,291.30
	Senior Business Support Officer	1	£1,296.90
	Social Care Assessor	1	£2,259.65
	Social Worker Level 3	13	£33,824.56
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT)	3	£7,430.27
	Support Worker - Adults	2	£517.40
	Support Worker Adults Physical Intervention Trained	1	£361.69
Commissioning	Project Support Officer	3	£1,120.82
	Social Worker Level 3	1	£10,334.49
	Social Worker level 3a	1	£6,822.66
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT)	1	£3,500.46
Governance & Community Strategy	Community Safety Manager -	1	£4,775.38
	Community Safety Officer -	2	£5,853.11
	Solicitor	3	£12,912.01
Finance & Systems	Procurement Officer	1	£1,249.96
	Senior Accountant	1	£3,333.02
People	Personal Assistant	1	£774.17
Place	Building Control Officer	1	£7,092.46
Grand Total		69	£158,093.71

Directorates	Job Title	Number of Active Assignments in Month	Total Cost
Children	Business Support Officer Level 2	1	£1,872.23
	Business Support Officer Level 3	1	£2,172.15
	Family Support Worker	1	£628.46
	Independent Reviewing Officer	1	£4,510.50
	Social Worker Level 3	3	£12,183.22
	Social Worker level 3a	1	£2,936.23
	Travel Assistance Officer	1	£1,826.50
	Social Worker Level 3	1	£2,690.89
Adults	Business Support Officer Level 2	2	£2,416.11
	Business Support Officer Level 3	2	£1,883.49
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	24	£22,220.42
	Cleaner	1	£90.56
	Management Information Officer -	1	£1,920.97
	Senior Business Support Officer	1	£2,240.55
	Social Care Assessor	1	£417.11
	Social Worker Level 3	9	£34,804.41
	Social Worker level 3a	1	£2,079.21
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT)	3	£9,798.46
	Support Worker - Adults	1	£131.66
Support Worker Adults Physical Intervention Trained	1	£47.18	
Commissioning	Project Support Officer	1	£1,817.78
	Social Worker Level 3	3	£9,842.48
	Social Worker level 3a	2	£5,176.92
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT)	2	£6,864.90
Governance & Community Strategy	Community Safety Manager -	1	£4,257.23
	Community Safety Officer -	2	£5,818.87
	Solicitor	3	£5,629.75
Finance & Systems	Procurement Officer	1	£2,234.40
	Senior Accountant	1	£3,870.56
People	Personal Assistant	1	£1,032.18
Place	Building Control Officer	2	£6,952.20
Grand Total		76	£160,367.58

Appendix 2

Trafford Council Agency Tenure by Directorate

Breakdown by Directorate showing full tenure of active assignments as at 31st December 2018

Directorate	Job Title	Booking Start Date	Booking End Date
Children	Travel Assistance Officer	02/05/2017	31/12/2018
Children	Business Support Officer Level 3	18/06/2018	31/12/2018
Children	Independent Reviewing Officer	30/07/2018	31/12/2018
Children	Social Worker Level 3 (Hospital/EDT)	07/10/2018	06/01/2019
Children	Social Worker Level 3	01/11/2018	22/01/2019
Children	Social Worker Level 3	21/11/2018	05/02/2019
Children	Business Support Officer level 2	01/11/2018	31/01/2019
Adults	Business Support Officer Level 3	08/05/2017	31/12/2018
Adults	Social Worker Level 3	21/08/2018	11/01/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	26/09/2018	01/03/2019
Adults	Social Worker Level 3	15/10/2018	14/04/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	05/10/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Social Worker Level 3	29/10/2018	22/01/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	05/10/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	05/11/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT)	12/11/2018	12/02/2019
Adults	Social Worker Level 3	10/11/2018	15/02/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	15/11/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	15/11/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	23/11/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Social Worker Level 3	14/11/2018	15/02/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	27/11/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	26/11/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Social Worker level 3a	10/12/2018	11/01/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	05/12/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	11/12/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	12/12/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	14/12/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Cleaner	20/12/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes	20/12/2018	01/02/2019

	& Day Centres		
Adults	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres	31/10/2018	01/02/2019
Adults	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT)	27/12/2018	25/02/2019
Commissioning	Social Worker level 3a	30/06/2018	31/12/2018
Commissioning	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT)	05/12/2018	29/01/2019
Commissioning	Social Worker level 3a	22/09/2018	25/01/2019
Governance & Community Strategy	Solicitor	14/06/2018	19/01/2019
Governance & Community Strategy	Community Safety Officer -	14/05/2018	31/03/2019
Governance & Community Strategy	Solicitor	03/11/2018	31/01/2019
Finance & Systems	Senior Accountant	18/12/2017	28/02/2019
Finance & Systems	Procurement Officer	12/11/2018	12/02/2019
Place	Building Control Officer	31/07/2017	31/12/2018
Place	Building Control Officer	05/11/2018	31/01/2019

**It should be noted that in many assignments, the agency worker will be working less hours than the full time equivalent (FTE) hours. 1 assignment does not necessarily equal 1 FTE.*

It should also be noted that there are assignments, particularly Support Worker and Care Assistant roles where, due to the ad hoc nature of the work and/or being based in various locations, an individual worker may have multiple assignments active concurrently. As an example, 5 Support Worker assignments during a given period of time may be covered by only 2 or 3 workers.