

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Employment Committee
Date: 9th September 2019
Report for: Information
Report of: Sara Saleh, Corporate Director of People

Report Title

Agency and Consultant Spend for Q1 - Period 1st April 2019 to 30th June 2019

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 Q1 of 2019/20 (April to June 2019) 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 30th June 2019.

2. Directorate Overview

2.1 Children's Services

- 2.1.1 In Q1 2019/20, spend in Children's Services totalled £216,823 and as at 30th June 2019 there were a total of 36 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 more than doubled as compared with Q4 2018/19 which was £77,291. However when comparing the spend with the corresponding period in 2018/19 (£152,848) the increase was much lower.
- 2.1.3 82% of the spend is on interim qualified Social Worker roles. The spend on Social Worker roles has increased significantly since the previous quarter. The next biggest spend is on Childcare workers which is only 6% of the total.
- 2.1.4 Following the recent Ofsted inspection outcome which highlighted high caseload numbers, additional resources are being put in place but there is an urgent requirement to resource additional management capacity until permanent recruitment has taken place. Due to the volume of agency workers required, our umbrella agency, Reed, have been unable to meet our current demands and the candidates put forward are not the calibre that is required.

There is a national shortage of suitably qualified and experienced social workers on the market and councils across GM are all experiencing difficulties in recruiting. This is being addressed at a GM level together with concerns regarding the Reed contract.

It is vital that the assignments are filled to ensure the service meets its statutory requirements in order to keep children safe and that the service successfully delivers the Ofsted Improvement plan. As such there has been a need to go off framework and 11 agency workers have been sourced which has resulted in higher costs. The service is monitoring this situation very closely and ending assignments as soon as permanent workers have commenced in post.

- 2.1.5 In addition, the Families Matter team is now in operation, and the newly recruited un-qualified Family Practitioners will case manage a number of low level child in need cases under the supervision of a qualified Social Worker. 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 Workers by taking open low level Child in Need cases and preventing cases escalating to child protection cases.
- 2.1.6 We still have in place 1.5 FTE Social Work Development Officers to support staff with their professional development as this is a crucial aspect of looking after our Social Workers. 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).

2.2 Adult Services

- 2.2.1 In Q1 2019/20, spend in Adult Services totalled £220,385 and as at 30th June 2019 there were a total of 50 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. In addition, agency workers have been recruited on a short term basis to get through a backlog of 400+ cases awaiting allocation in the Neighbourhood teams.

- 2.2.2 This is a significant decrease as compared with Q1 2018/19 which was £257,225. Spend has also reduced as compared with the previous quarter (Q4, 2018/19) which was £244,314. However real spend has reduced more as staff from Commissioning have moved to this area from April and spend on agency has also moved from this directorate into Adults.
- 2.2.3 51% of the spend is on interim qualified Social Worker roles. The next biggest spend is on Care Assistants at 45% where there is a high demand to cover the rotas at Ascot House. However, the service is currently setting up a staff back which should reduce costs in the future.

There was no use of agency Support Workers in the quarter which is further to the review in Supported Living where substantive roles were recruited to and casual staff are 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 Trafford in collaboration with 3 other GM authorities were the first to launch the Social Worker apprenticeship degree in England. This route enables Trafford to grow our own Social Workers.

2.3 Commissioning

- 2.3.1 In Q1 2019/20, the total agency spend in this area equated to £6,037 and as at 30th June 2019, there was 1 active assignment. All of the spend is on a Customer Engagement Support Officer.
- 2.3.2 The spend has decreased significantly as compared with Q1 2018/19 which was £28,660 and Q4 2018/19 when the level was £56,445. This is due to Community Mental Health staff plus associated agency spend moving under the Adult Services directorate. The spend now relates solely to Public Health and Commissioning.

2.4 Governance and Community Strategy

- 2.4.1 In Q1 2019/20, the total agency spend in Governance and Community Strategy equated to £46,166 and as at 30th June 2019, there were 4 active assignments. Agency spend in this Directorate is due to the need to bring in specialist skills.

2.4.2 The spend has reduced both compared to Q1 2018/19 which was £58,222 and the previous period, Q4 2018/19 which was £55,525.

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 Q1 2019/20, the total agency spend in Finance and Systems equated to £10,486 and as at 30th June 2019, 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 has reduced nearly by half as compared with Q1 2018/19 which was £20,080. There has also been a significant reduction as compared to the previous period, Q4 2018/19 which was £17,592.

2.5.3 The spend is all within Finance for a Senior Accountant.

2.6 People

2.6.1 In Q1 2019/20 there was no spend on agency in People and there were no active assignments at the end of the quarter.

2.7 Place

2.7.1 In Q1 2019/20 there was no spend on agency in Place and there were no active assignments at the end of the quarter.

3. Summary Agency Spend Position

3.1 The total agency spend in Q1 2019/20 was £499,897. This is an increase on the previous period, Q4 2018/19 when spend was £462,944. However promisingly it was a significant decrease on the figure for Q1 2018/19 which was £584,626. Agency spend has decreased across all directorates apart from Children's Services. The increase in this area is linked to the Ofsted report for Children's Social Care and managing vacancies in this area. It is really positive that there has been no agency spend in both People and Place and minimal spend in Commissioning and Finance and Systems.

4. Consultant Spend

4.1 The total spend in Q1 2019/20 was £47,380. The spend breaks down as follows.

Children and Families	Adult Services	Governance and Community Strategy	Finance and Systems	People	Place	Commissioning
£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£47,380	£0

4.2 This spend was a significant decrease as compared with Q4 which was £62,780 however it was an increase on Q1 in 2018/19 which was £38,945.

4.3 There was only consultant use in the Place directorate and this relates to One Trafford Response.

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 Q1 - 2019/2020

Monthly breakdown by Directorate (cost and number of active assignments)

April 2019

Directorate	Job Title	Number of Active Assignments in Month	Total Cost
Children and Families	Business Support Officer level 2 [Trafford]	1	£725.77
	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	7	£1,993.67
	Customer Service Advisor (MARAT) [Trafford]	1	£1,243.04
	Family Contact Worker - [Trafford]	1	£2,043.24
	Personal Advisor [Trafford]	1	£2,437.66
	Residential Childcare Officer [Trafford]	5	£1,656.37
	Social Worker Level 2 [Trafford]	1	£2,336.22
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	2	£7,135.18
	Social Worker level 3a [Trafford]	2	£5,635.07
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	9	£25,462.21
	Team Leader [Trafford]	1	£482.83
Adult Services	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	26	£40,591.92
	Cleaner [Trafford]	1	£1,396.95
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	1	£2,751.49
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	8	£16,414.31
Commissioning	Customer Engagement Support Officer - [Trafford]	1	£1,926.76
Governance & Community Strategy	Community Safety Manager - [Trafford]	1	£4,551.30
	Community Safety Officer -[Trafford]1	2	£3,192.39
	Solicitor [Trafford]	2	£7,725.29
Finance & Systems	Senior Accountant [Trafford]	1	£3,891.54
Total		74	£133,593.21

May 2019

Directorate	Job Title	Number of Active Assignments in Month	Total Cost
Children and Families	Business Support Officer level 2 [Trafford]	1	£1,858.41
	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	17	£5,954.37
	Customer Service Advisor (MARAT) [Trafford]	1	£1,494.96
	Early Help Intervention Worker	1	£2,060.58
	Family Contact Worker - [Trafford]	1	£1,682.68
	Personal Advisor [Trafford]	1	£1,792.93
	Social Worker Level 2 [Trafford]	2	£5,008.20
	Social Worker level 3a [Trafford]	2	£4,767.64
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	13	£32,321.85
	Team Leader [Trafford]	3	£11,114.21
Adult Services	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	19	£21,413.73
	Cleaner [Trafford]	1	£982.07
	Community Safety Officer -[Trafford]1	1	£2,747.38
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	3	£11,973.19
	Social Worker Level 3 (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	2	£3,461.65
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	9	£22,711.30
Commissioning	Customer Engagement Support Officer - [Trafford]	1	£2,367.01
Governance & Community Strategy	Community Safety Manager - [Trafford]	1	£4,313.23
	Community Safety Officer -[Trafford]1	1	£2,757.08
	Solicitor [Trafford]	2	£7,509.04
Finance & Systems	Senior Accountant [Trafford]	1	£3,567.24
Total		83	£151,858.75

June 2019

Directorate	Job Title	Number of Active Assignments in Month	Total Cost
Children and Families	Business Support Officer level 2 [Trafford]	1	£1,326.01
	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	9	£4,725.81
	Customer Service Advisor (MARAT) [Trafford]	1	£1,553.07
	Early Help Intervention Worker	2	£4,580.75
	Residential Childcare Officer [Trafford]	2	£1,185.88
	Senior Business Support Officer [Trafford]	1	£1,218.52
	Social Worker Level 2 [Trafford]	2	£6,391.34
	Social Worker level 3a [Trafford]	2	£7,492.99
	Social Worker Level 3 (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	1	£1,914.20
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	17	£60,712.53
	Team Leader [Trafford]	2	£6,514.50
Adult Services	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	28	£38,254.13
	Cleaner [Trafford]	1	£1,002.46
	Cook Manager [Trafford]	2	£554.65
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	3	£11,773.92
	Social Worker Level 3 (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	3	£5,685.76
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	10	£30,320.56
	Team Leader [Trafford]	2	£8,349.87
Commissioning	Customer Engagement Support Officer - [Trafford]	1	£1,742.86
Governance & Community Strategy	Community Safety Manager - [Trafford]	1	£4,607.32
	Community Safety Officer -[Trafford]1	2	£3,642.17
	Solicitor [Trafford]	2	£7,868.26
Finance & Systems	Senior Accountant [Trafford]	1	£3,026.75
Total		96	£214,444.31

Appendix 2

Trafford Council Agency Tenure by Directorate

Breakdown by Directorate showing full tenure of active assignments as at 30th June 2019

Directorate	Job Title	Booking Start Date	Booking End Date
Children and Families	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	18/02/2019	31/07/2019
	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	04/03/2019	30/07/2019
	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	13/05/2019	30/05/2019
	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	29/04/2019	30/07/2019
	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	20/05/2019	30/06/2019
	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	01/05/2019	30/07/2019
	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	01/05/2019	30/07/2019
	Childcare Worker [Trafford]	28/01/2019	30/06/2019
	Customer Service Advisor (MARAT) [Trafford]	08/04/2019	07/07/2019
	Early Help Intervention Worker	08/05/2019	29/07/2019
	Early Help Intervention Worker	10/06/2019	29/07/2019
	Senior Business Support Officer [Trafford]	10/06/2019	04/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 2 [Trafford]	08/05/2019	29/07/2019
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	21/02/2019	26/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	03/06/2019	03/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	13/05/2019	29/07/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	21/11/2018	12/07/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	13/05/2019	28/07/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	01/11/2018	02/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	25/02/2019	09/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	08/04/2019	08/07/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	26/04/2019	02/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	07/05/2019	29/07/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	24/05/2019	15/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	29/05/2019	15/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	03/06/2019	15/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	04/06/2019	15/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	05/06/2019	15/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	10/06/2019	15/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	25/06/2019	15/09/2019

	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	02/07/2019	15/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	22/07/2019	15/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	05/08/2019	15/09/2019
	Team Leader [Trafford]	07/05/2019	19/07/2019
	Team Leader [Trafford]	25/04/2019	02/08/2019
	Team Leader [Trafford]	17/06/2019	15/09/2019
Adult Services	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	07/07/2018	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	11/12/2018	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	10/02/2019	05/07/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	01/09/2018	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	05/12/2018	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	27/11/2018	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	20/05/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	07/04/2019	05/07/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	23/05/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	05/04/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	07/04/2019	05/07/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	05/11/2018	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	07/02/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	01/03/2017	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	03/02/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	01/03/2017	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	15/11/2018	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	14/01/2019	05/07/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	12/02/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	02/06/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	01/03/2017	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	04/04/2019	05/07/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	02/06/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	07/01/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	01/03/2017	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	17/05/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	03/04/2019	05/07/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	01/03/2017	01/11/2019

	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	01/03/2017	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	01/12/2018	05/07/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	01/03/2017	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	31/10/2018	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	06/04/2019	01/11/2019
	Care Assistant - Residential Homes & Day Centres [Trafford]	22/12/2018	01/11/2019
	Cleaner [Trafford]	20/02/2019	01/11/2019
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	21/02/2019	26/09/2019
	Social Worker level 3a (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	11/06/2018	06/07/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	05/06/2019	16/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	07/05/2019	07/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 (Hospital/EDT) [Trafford]	17/06/2019	16/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	07/05/2019	29/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	13/05/2019	29/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	28/08/2018	02/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	03/06/2019	03/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	15/05/2019	13/09/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	18/06/2019	29/08/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	21/11/2018	12/07/2019
	Social Worker Level 3 [Trafford]	15/10/2018	13/07/2019
	Team Leader [Trafford]	07/05/2019	21/07/2019
	Team Leader [Trafford]	03/06/2019	02/09/2019
Commissioning	Customer Engagement Support Officer - [Trafford]	19/02/2019	01/08/2019
Governance & Community Strategy	Community Safety Manager - [Trafford]	03/04/2018	30/06/2019
	Community Safety Officer -[Trafford]1	11/06/2018	30/06/2019
	Solicitor [Trafford]	21/01/2019	27/07/2019
	Solicitor [Trafford]	21/01/2019	29/07/2019

**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.*