

## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

**Report to:** Employment Committee  
**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015  
**Report for:** Information  
**Report of:** Acting Director of HR

### Report Title

**Agency Spend for Period August 2014 to January 2015**

### 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**

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. Vacancies will then be subject to approval by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) for advertisement to internal staff in order to minimise the number of compulsory redundancies and the incurrence of additional spend on external resources, including agency fees. Only after all internal processes have been exhausted and in exceptional circumstances, e.g. the Council

must fill the post in order to meet a statutory requirement, will CMT approve the post to be advertised externally and/or an agency route will be explored.

### 1.1 Use of Agency staff

There will be exceptional circumstances whereby the resourcing needs are short term in nature and require access to time limited and/or specialist skills that cannot be found within the organisation. For these reasons, access to temporary agency support is essential to meet critical gaps in service provision as outlined below. The breakdown of agency spend over the last 6 months (from August 2014 to January 2015 inclusive) is provided in the document accompanying this paper.

### 1.2 Children, Families and Well-Being Directorate

The majority of agency spend is due to the service discharging its statutory responsibilities for providing social care services for vulnerable children and adults. The interim staffing need is primarily required to cover staffing resource gaps, created as a result of staff absences and cover is critical to ensure that service users receive the appropriate level of care and support.

Spend activity primarily relates to the procurement of interim qualified Social Workers and Adult Support workers, which represents 85% total spend for the Directorate. The remaining spend primarily relates to provision of childcare services where the Council has statutory obligation to meet minimum staffing ratios

### 1.3 Transformation and Resources Directorate (T & R)

Agency spend in this Directorate is due to the need to bring in specialist skills to provide transformational technical and consultancy support to the organisation as it reshapes, which includes transformation support to other Directorates, for example the CFW programme in particular, with the Health integration and transformation programme. Total spend in this area equates to circa 35% of total spend in the T & R Directorate

Remaining agency spend relates primarily to interim resources required to support core services in this Directorate whilst they go through their own transformation and staffing restructures, which will support the realisation of Directorate savings.

### 1.4 Economic Growth, Environment and Infrastructure

The agency spend in this area is on technical interim support, which is used on an ad-hoc basis to cover workload pressures.

## **2. Conclusion**

Employment Committee is recommended to note the content of this report.