

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Employment & Appeals Committee

**DATE:** 21 January 2021

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

#### **TEMPORARY AGENCY STAFF**

##### **1 Purpose of Report**

This report seeks to provide Members with an update on the Council's actions regarding the supply and control of temporary workers / labour.

##### **2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Committee is requested to resolve:

- a) That the actions from the last meeting be noted in section 6
- b) That the report and its contents be noted.

##### **3 Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

###### **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The provision of temporary workers does not directly impact on the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy.

The provision does, however enable the Council to deliver its services to the community through the provision of specialist skills or replacement labour where required.

###### **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The proposals within this report meet the Five Year Plan objectives as follows:

## **Outcome 1, 2, 3, 4**

The services provide labour necessary to deliver these outcomes when permanent labour is not available or specialist skills are required. This is being closely reviewed and monitored as we progress through the transformation programme.

## **Outcome 5**

The supplier of temporary workers engages with local suppliers of temporary labour whilst also working with a wider pool to ensure Slough has access to the best available talent to make Slough an attractive place to operate and work.

## **4 Other Implications**

### **(a) Financial**

The last report stated the Council will expect to generate savings of circa £110k per year from the new contract; this still remains to be the case. This saving will be generated from reductions in contributions to statutory labour fees such as National Insurance, Pensions and Apprenticeship Levy charges in relation to the agency worker.

### **(b) Risk Management**

There are no specific risks to be managed for temporary labour provision beyond the need to ensure ongoing provision at appropriate costs.

### **(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

There are no Human Rights Act implications.

### **(d) Equalities Impact Assessment**

There is no requirement for an Equalities Impact Assessment as we do not hold equalities data on temporary workers as they are not our employees.

### **(e) Workforce**

There are no implications for permanent staff.

## **5. Update on Matrix Contract Management**

A contract review meeting was held with Matrix – our temporary provider on 9th December 2020. The contract is managed in line with the agreed key performance indicators in **Appendix 4**. All the KPI's were achieved with the exception of percentage of appointed workers completing the assignment. This

had reduced by 2% in November and can be attributed to the announcement of phase 2 consultation. This led to some agency workers leaving their positions and the ending of placements coming to an end.

## **6. Action points from meeting in October 2020**

The Committee requested information regarding the number and job roles of all temporary workers earning over £75,000 per annum be provided in the next report. In addition, further information was requested regarding the specific job roles of all temporary workers. In **Appendix 2** this information is shown and reference is made to where the roles are difficult to recruit.

Total number of temporary staff earning over £75,000 were 31 staff and **Appendix 3 highlights** details of the type of post and which directorate these roles are.

The Committee also expressed frustration that over the last three years there did not appear to have been a reduction in the number of temporary workers engaged at Slough.

The transformation work intends to bring a significant reduction overall on agency workers and the associated spend, already there has been a 0.8% reduction in the overall spend. In the coming months as the Phase 2 structure begins to be embedded we anticipate to see further reductions as agency contracts are ended. This will be through either converting to permanent roles, where this is applicable, or ending of the current placements.

Concerns were also raised that a high percentage (47%) of workers had chosen not to state their ethnicity on monitoring forms. It was agreed that this would be raised with Matrix to discuss how this could be improved.

During the monitoring contract meeting with Matrix in November 2020, they have actively taken diversity data from candidates submitted and included in active placements. Matrix's Regeneration Manager will undertake a diversity data capture exercise for further disclosure from the 'prefer not to say' during the next quarter. We hope to present this data at the next committee.

## **7. Statistics and Key Trends**

Committee Members are provided in **Appendix 1** statistics relating to the usage of temporary labour. The emerging themes are the total spend in this quarter is £3.5 million, which is a slight increase of £0.17 million. The total hours of 3,086 are 718 hours increase compared to the last report. The above increase signifies the demanding needs of services in particular in Finance and Adults Social Care services.

The above increase relates to the increasing work around Transformation; IT and more recently the emerging programmes for delivery of Covid-19 projects; including Slough's Lateral Flow Testing; Track and Trace; Vaccination Programmes have required an increase in capacity to support these new programmes of work.

Despite the increase in agency spend this quarter members are also asked to note that in comparison to the previous quarter the overall difference in spend is £231,309 and a net saving for the council of £176,163.00 which is a 4.90% saving.

As part of the transformation programme significant work continues around the alignment of staff in matched positions across the council almost 85% of posts have been matched. Further work is being undertaken with each directorate to provide business cases for Temporary Workforce that continues to be needed for CMT consideration and approval.

#### **8. Phase 1 Matrix project-efficiency saving project**

The above work continues with each directorate and negotiations continue in particular with Adult's and Communities encouraging key agency workers to move onto Client Direct Limited's (CDL). To date, 11 Workers have transferred to CDL in the last quarter. Six workers for Myriad have negotiated margins and savings from this during the last quarter and we have had a total of £23,748.49 in rebate savings. Key challenges include the longevity of the agency worker relationship.

#### **9. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Usage of Temporary Workers and total spend

Appendix 2 – Summary of specific types of job roles of all temporary workers, includes difficult to recruit roles highlighted.

Appendix 3 – Number of Workers earnings over £75,000

Appendix 4 – Key Performance Indicators

#### **9. Background Papers**

None