

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Employment & Appeals Committee

DATE: 12 October 2022

Subject: Temporary Workers

Chief Officer: Stephen Brown, Chief Operating Officer

Contact Officer: Surjit Nagra, Associate Director HR / Dipak Mistry, Employee Relations & Policy Manager

Ward(s): All

Exempt: NO

Appendices: Nil

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report provides Members of the committee with an update on the Council's use of temporary / agency workers for Quarter 1 (1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022).

Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to note the report.

Commissioner Review

Commissioners have seen this report.

2. Report

Introductory paragraph

The Council continues to offer roles to staff on a permanent basis. Opportunities for vacant roles are advertised internally first, and where there are roles with an associated skills shortage, they are advertised both internally and externally at the same time. The turnover of staff continues to be a cause of concern as this is affecting services with key specialist skills / knowledge requirements.

The council engages temporary workers when permanent workers are not available, or specialist skills are required. Matrix (provider 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

3. Implications

3.1 Financial implications

The agency expenditure on temporary workers for quarter 1 (1st April 2022 – 30th June 2022) is £ 4.1 million. This quarter breakdown is as follows:

Quarter Period	Total expenditure	Increase - ↑ Reduction - ↓ Unchanged - ↔
1 – April	£1,192,982	Increase from March
2 – May	£1,677,481	Increase from April
3 – June	£1,272,846	Reduction from May
Total	£4,143,309	

The increase in May is attributed to 40 new agency workers that were appointed to various roles in the council. The table below shows total numbers and types of roles that were engaged. The Corporate Operations and Place Directorate shows the largest numbers of new agency workers, which are particularly around key roles in Customer Service Advisors and Finance roles.

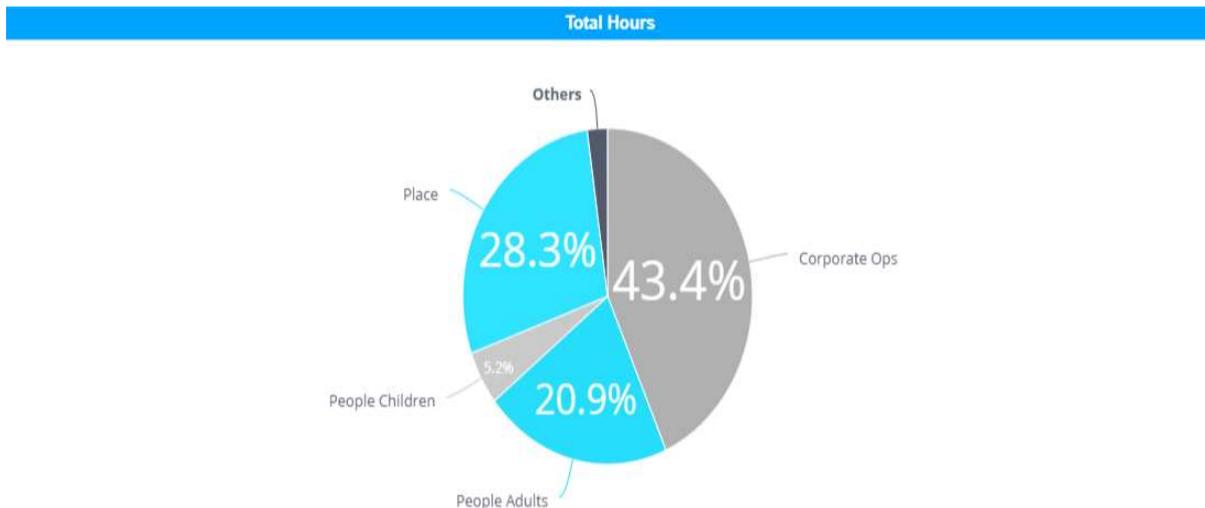
The increase in spend will also be attributed to the total number of leavers 28 in the month of May 2022, these included roles in Corporate Operations and Place that had the significant turnover.

Table 1 – Rationale for increase in May 2022 spend

Directorate	No of new workers	Types of newly appointed roles	No of leavers	Types of roles
Place	13	Grounds Maintenance; Housing; Education; Planning	8	Housing; Ground Maintenance, Prevention; Construction
Corporate Operations	20	Customer Services Advisors; Finance Business Partners; IT, HR	13	Finance Business Partners; Customer Services Advisors
People Adults	3	Contract Tracer; OT	4	Social Work Assistant; Business Support, Market intelligence;
People Children	4	Early Years; SEND Coordinator	3	Allocations Officer; Head of Music;
	40		28	

The Chart below shows the total hours of temporary workers in any one directorate for quarter 1. Please note that the data reflects the structure of the organisation at the time.

Chart 1 – Summary Usage



The above chart demonstrates the Corporate Operations Directorate has 43.4% which is an increase of 4.4% from previous quarter, and with highest usage of temporary workers. This is followed by Place 28.3%, which is a 3% increase from previous quarter. Adults Directorate has shown a reduction of temporary workers by 2% and Children's Directorate have a reduction of 0.8%.

Key activity to reduce agency spend

To address the reduction in agency spend across the organisation the following work is on-going:

- a. Through recent consultations in Corporate Operations the Finance Department and ICT Department have launched and closed consultations in the summer of 2022. Both restructures should contribute to a reduction in agency spend as we complete the current recruitment process to permanent structures over the coming months.
- b. The HR Business Partnering team continues to work with each of the directorate managers to review their current usage of agency workers to ensure the need to continue with the placement.
- c. The Expenditure Control Panel is also scrutinising the need for resources on a temporary basis which includes any extension of existing workers.

(b) Risk Management

The key risk for the council is the inability to deliver services where skills shortage and turnover of staff are creating gaps, which must be filled with the short-term use of agency / temporary workers. As a long-term issue this risk must be balanced against the over reliance on agency workers and the longer-term use of agency workers where recruitment to permanent roles is unsuccessful. Fully costed recovery plans have been developed which outline proposals to realign services to secure permanent resources.

(c) Legal Implications

There are no Legal implications.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The council does not hold equalities data on agency or temporary workers as they are not council employees. In schedule 2a of the Matrix contract requires monitoring of agencies are required to sign and upload, to Matrix CR, a copy of Matrix's Supplier Addendum and Diversity Policy, which will also include adherence to any specific policies the council holds. Section 19.7 of Matrix contract complies with requirements of Equality Act 2010. This will be reviewed at the next Matrix contract review meeting in June 2022 in response to the Corporate Plan. Annually agency workers will be encouraged to engage with SBC's Staff Survey.

(e) Workforce

There are no implications for permanent staff. Priority is given to any staff member that is displaced following a restructure to apply for any suitable vacant posts where they have transferrable skills.