

Appendices: Nil



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Position Statement on Vacant Posts and Interim/Agency Staff
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Audit Committee Meeting Date:	06 March 2017
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Finance Directorate LGSS
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Cllr Brandon Eldred

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present Committee with a position statement as to the numbers of staff vacancies and interims/agency staff engaged.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To consider the contents of this finance report.
- 2.2 To consider whether Committee requires any additional information in order to fulfil its governance role.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 A Finance report is presented to Cabinet quarterly (including the outturn report) which are then brought to the first available Audit Committee meeting following their production.
- 3.1.2 At it's meeting on the 14 March Audit Committee raised a query requesting further information on:
- The number of interim/agency staff and vacant positions currently held at the Council

3.2 Interim/Agency Staff and Vacant Positions

3.2.1 The number of interim and agency staff engaged to provide cover for vacant posts in the establishment, and the total cost for the year to the end of January 2017 is summarised in the table below.

Directorate	February 2016	November 2016	January 2017	Total 2016/17 Cost to end January £000
Borough Secretary	9	5	5	144
Director of Customers & Communities	*13	*7	*7	140
Director of Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning	13	8	8	477
Housing and Well Being	4	7	4	283
Total	39	27	24	1,044

Note : *12 Posts removed from total relating to Enterprise Contract as costs are being recovered through the contract.

3.2.2 The number of interim and agency staff engaged and the length of engagement is summarised in the table below.

Directorate	January 2017	Length of time engaged				
		<1 month	1-3 months	3-6 months	6-12 months	12+ months
Borough Secretary	5	-	-	-	1	4
Director of Customers & Communities	7	-	3	2	1	1
Director of Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning	8	-	3	1	3	1
Housing and Well Being	4	-	-	1	1	2
Total	24	-	6	4	6	8

3.2.3 The number of staff vacancies is summarised in the table below.

Directorate	Total Posts	Vacancies (March 2016)	Vacancies (November 2016)	Vacancies (January 2017)	Recruiting to	Covered by Interims/ Agency
Borough Secretary	28	11	8	5	1	5
Director of Customers & Communities	16 9	23	11	12	10	7
Director of Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning	65	13	13	12	1	8
Housing and Well Being	37	5	9	8	6	4
Total	299	52	41	39	18	24

3.2.4 Borough Secretary. Of the 5 vacancies, through the department, 1 has been offered a permanent role, 1 is being re-advertised, 2 are under review and the remainder are being held pending restructures.

3.2.5 Of the 12 vacancies in the Directorate of Customers & Communities, 10 are in the process of being recruited to and the remainder are being held pending restructures to find further savings.

3.2.6 Of the 12 vacancies within the Directorate of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning, three posts were unsuccessfully recruited to; these posts are under review. One post is being recruited to, 2 have been offered a permanent role and the remaining posts are held for review.

3.2.1 Of the vacant positions in the Housing and Wellbeing Service, 6 are in the process of being recruited.

3.3 Choices (Options)

3.3.1 None

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 There are no specific policy implications arising from this report.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 Ongoing monitoring of the Council's budget and capital programme enables early intervention and appropriate remedial action, thus mitigating risks to the Council's financial viability and to its reputation.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 None at this stage.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

4.6.1 Regular reporting of the Council's financial position helps to ensure the proper stewardship of the Council's resources. Active financial management contributes to the delivery of value for money services, enabling public money to be used to maximum benefit.

4.7 Other Implications

4.7.1 The responsibility for determining whether agency/interim workers are deemed employees for tax purposes will be that of public sector bodies from April 2017. This will mean that the Council will have to assess all individuals who are doing work for the authority against a number of criteria being developed by HMRC, the assessment toolkit has not been finalised. This is a change from the current position where the individual has to make the assessment as to whether they are what is known as 'IR35' compliant.

4.7.2 Where the Council determines that individuals are inside IR35 then they will have to notify those individuals and the agency that represents them (in the case of NBC this is mostly Guidant) so that personal tax can be deducted at source through a PAYE system rather than leaving it to the individual as either an employee of their own limited company or as a self employed person to calculate and pay the relevant tax.

4.7.3 Management are actively working with the Council's preferred supplier Guidant and all other agencies to ensure that the new responsibilities are met, and processes are being put in place to manage it. All existing agency and temporary contracts are being reviewed against the draft criteria, and a prudent approach is being taken to minimize any potential risk

5. Background Papers

None

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