

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

For Information

8th July 2010

Joint Report of: Chief Executive and Strategic Director: Resources

Title: Agency Review

Officer Presenting Report: Robert Britton, Service Director:
Human Resources

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RECOMMENDATION

This report is submitted to this Committee for its information.

Summary.

This report highlights progress in relation to the Council's review of its agency workers (internal and external).

The significant issues in the report are:

The total number of agency workers has reduced by 276 since December 2009 as set out in Appendix A. A further 214 are the subject of ongoing review during the current calendar year.

1. Policy

The Council has utilised agency workers supplied through external agencies, and through the in-house Employment Agency, to fill vacancies, cover the maternity & sickness absence of permanent staff, and undertake project work.

It was agreed in December 2009 that the Council would review and phase out

agency workers as part of its Vacancy Management Programme.

2. Consultation

2.1 Internal

Consultation was carried out with the trade unions at the outset of this review. The unions' position was that, in principle, they did not support the on-going use of agency workers.

2.2 External

Not applicable.

3. Context / Analysis

3.1 The level of agency workers was not included in the Employment Statistics Report to this Committee at its previous meeting. However for Members' information, since the review commenced in December 2009 (as part of "vacancy management"), there has been a significant reduction in the use of agency workers within the Council, as set out in Appendix A.

3.2 The Bristol City Council in-house agency employees have reduced as follows:

Date	Head-count	FTE
March 2009	215	144
March 2010	114	76
May 2010	49	44

External agency worker data is not recorded by the STS HR System Team, as they are paid via the Finance System and not by Bristol City Council Payroll. However, the finance data is as follows:

Date	Head-count	FTE
December 2009	277	**
March 2010	To follow	203
May 2010	165	**

**Full time equivalent statistics not available for these dates.

- 3.3 The agency workers referred to in Appendix A excludes those working in residential care, which are being reviewed separately as part of the 2010/11 H&SC Workforce Plan. Directly employed “casual staff” are also excluded.
- 3.4 In-house agency workers shown on Appendix A are City Council employees. As stated, 28 of these had been continuously employed by Bristol City Council for more than 2 years, and were transferred to permanent employment status. *(They were not included in the Employment Statistics for March 2009, as reported to this Committee at its previous meeting, as this report excluded all agency workers).*

4. Proposal

- 4.1 It is intended that the remaining agency workers as set out in the Appendix, will be phased out before the end of 2010. Some on-going/ ad hoc use of agency workers may be required, but these will be for periods of up to 3 months only, subject to vacancy management controls.
- 4.2 Where directorates require additional workers on, say, a seasonal or relief cover basis, revised arrangements will be contained within their annual Workforce Plans, and wherever appropriate for operational and financial reasons, will be engaged in-house.

5. Other Options Considered

None, given the Council’s financial position.

6. Risk Assessment

Service Directors are reviewing their staffing requirements as part of the strategic options process. Decisions around the non-filling of posts, take into consideration any key risks which may arise.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

This Report details the review of all agency workers within the Council.

It is important to ensure that where an agency worker has been continuously employed for 12 months or more, advice from HR and Legal Services is sought before a decision is made to terminate the placement.

Advice from Husinara Jones for Head of Legal Services

Financial

(a) Revenue:

Not applicable - report for information.

Advice from Stephen Skinner, Finance Business Partner Resources, Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive

(b) Capital:

Not applicable.

Land

Not applicable.

Personnel

As set out in paragraph 4 above.

Appendices Appendix A: Summary of Agency Workers

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 Background Papers:

None

Appendix (8) A - Agency Review Summary as at 31.05.10

	Number of placements as at 31.12.09			Number of placements as at 31.05.10			Number of leavers as at 31.05.10			Internal 2 yrs + service made permanent	
	Internal	Randstad / Eden Brown	TOTAL	Internal	Randstad / Eden Brown	TOTAL	Internal	Randstad / Eden Brown	TOTAL		
CYPS	25	29	54	11	12	23	1	13	17	30	1
CD	46	37	83	16	18	34	2	20	19	39	10
DCX	8	5	13	1	2	3		7	3	10	0
HSC	17	55	72	8	47	55	3	5	8	13	4
NH	63	56	119	6	23	29		49	33	82	8
RE	10	8	18	2	5	7		8	3	11	0
TRF	44	87	131	5	58	63	4	34	29	63	5
TOTAL	213	277	490	49	165	214		136	112	248	28

Notes:

¹ CYPS admin review placements expire 30/9/10

² includes 3 extensions granted by VMP for Passenger Services

³ H&SC admin review placements expire 30/6/10

⁴ CSC placements under discussion with HR BP

All other placements approved & reviewed in line with VMP.