

Division(s): All

CABINET – 22 MAY 2018

STAFFING REPORT – QUARTER 4 2017/18

Report by Director of Human Resources

Introduction

1. This report provides an update on staffing numbers and related activity for the period 1st January – 31st March 2018. Progress has been tracked throughout the year on the movement of staffing numbers from those reported at 31 March 2017 as we continue to deliver our required budget savings. We also continue to track staffing levels since 1 April 2010 to reflect the impact on staffing numbers via delivery of our Business Strategy and Transformation programme.

Current numbers

2. The staffing number (FTE) as at 31 March 2018 was 3625.2 employed in post. These figures exclude the school bloc. We continue to monitor the balance between full time and part time workers to ensure that the best interests of the Council and the taxpayer are served. The numbers as at 31 March 2018 were as follows - Full time 2584 and Part time 1880. This equates to a total of 4464 employees; 3625.2 FTE employed in post. This increase on Q3 is due, in the main, by the transfer in of the cleaning and catering staff as a result of the demise of Carillion.
3. The changes in staffing numbers since 31 March 2017 are shown in the table below. A breakdown of movements by directorates is provided at Appendix 1.

	FTE Employed	Quarterly Change (FTE)
Q4 (31 March 2017)	3404.86	-15.26
Q1 (30 June 2017)	3367.20	-37.66
Q2 (30 Sept 2017)	3356.80	-10.40
Q3 (31 Dec 2017)	3439.60	82.80
Q4 (31 March 2018)	3625.20	185.6

Quarter 4 Update

4. We remain committed to redeploying displaced staff wherever possible. This is getting more difficult and is reflected by only one employee being redeployed this quarter.

5. Approval to recruit will, from 1st April be devolved to Service Managers with exceptions agreed by Directorate Leadership Teams as required, for example, where organisational change is planned. This will ensure that checks continue to be in place prior to any recruitment, but also give managers more flexibility to determine the types of roles best suited to their service needs while maintaining an accurate establishment and budget.
6. We recognise that operational services are critical and cannot be left without any cover. Prudent use of agency staff is therefore deployed to ensure continuity of service. In common with all employers, the council deploys agency staff as cover for instances of maternity leave, illness and short-term gaps in recruitment where a permanent replacement is not due to arrive until sometime after an employee has left.
7. The cost of agency and consultancy staff this quarter is reported as £3,035,339. This is a significant increase on Q3; however the figure does include all the final accrual costs for the 2017/18 year end plus the December spend for Comensura which would have been missing from Q3 - a detailed breakdown of Agency spend is shown at Appendix 2. There has been an annual reduction of approx £1.6m in agency spend compared to 2016/17. The council's new arrangements for the supply of agency workers and interims that went live on 7 December is already starting to provide a more accurate and detailed account of agency use and expenditure. New data sets will improve monitoring and control in this area and we will refresh the agency trend reporting from the new financial year.
8. We will continue to track progress on staff number movements during the year ahead. Since 31 March 2010 the Council has seen a reduction of 1658.8 FTE, an overall reduction of 31.39%. This quarter has seen a considerable increase in staffing levels however. There has been an increase of 323 members of staff this quarter, 185.6 FTE - due mainly to a transfer in of approximately 150 FTE catering, cleaning and maintenance staff (from Carillion) and the conclusion of a lengthy recruitment campaign for admin support staff for the People Directorate which reduces their future reliance upon agency and casual staff.

Accountability

9. Staffing numbers continue to be monitored rigorously, although the change of accountability enables Service Managers to manage their staffing budget in a way that best meets the needs of their service area.

RECOMMENDATION

10. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report.**

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STEVE MUNN

Director of Human Resources

Contact Officer: Sarah Currell, HR Manager (Business Systems),
Tel: 07867 467793.

30 April 2018