

Committee: Financial monitoring scrutiny task group

Date: 20 February 2017

Agenda item:

Wards:

Subject: Establishment Control and Vacancy reporting

Lead officer: Kim Brown – interim HR lead

Lead member: Councillor Mark Allison

Contact officer: Kim Brown ext 3152

Recommendations:

A. To note the contents of this report

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The last report to this committee reported data as at Q2 2016/17, 30 September 2016.
- 1.2. This report provides data as at 3rd quarter 2016/17, with data as at 31 December 2016. Subject to timing of committee dates it is intended to provide a quarterly update in future, tied to the financial quarters of 30 June, 30 September, 31 December and 31 March.
- 1.3. The December data also reflects further work to align on iTrent agency workers and interims with the established posts they are covering.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. Appendix A shows the position as at 31 December 2016. The appendix shows vacancies not filled by direct employees, and vacancies not filled by either a direct employee or an agency worker/consultant. The size of establishment is measured in terms of authorised Full Time Equivalents, rather than numbers of posts, and therefore the appendix totals FTEs for budgeted posts, employees, agency workers and vacancies.
- 2.2. Further work has been undertaken to ensure the accuracy of the data including close liaison with Heads of Service to review the detailed establishment for their areas.
- 2.3. The establishment can vary for a number of reasons, including planned budget changes, TUPE transfers in and out of groups of employees, and in-year adjustments due to reorganisations.
- 2.4. Apprentice data has been excluded as they are at present centrally funded on a case by case basis and do not form part of the formal establishment.

- 2.5. The base data behind these statistics is now being circulated to DMT officers on a monthly basis so that they are up to date on the current establishment and vacancy position, and have the opportunity to address any errors or corrections. Subject to the timing of committee dates it is then intended to provide a quarterly update in future, tied to the financial quarters of 30 June, 30 September, 31 December and 31 March.
- 2.6. HR provides information to Standards and General Purposes Committee on agency and interim usage.
- 2.7. HR has strategies in place to address recruitment to hard to fill roles, reduce dependency on agency staff. There will be situations where certain specialist roles can only be covered by agency, and shorter term usage of agency to cover vacancies during periods of planned organisational change.
- 2.8. The next report, for Q4 2016/17 (31 March 2017) will show a significant change in numbers with the completion of the Lot 1 and Lot 2 transfers.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. Without accurate establishment data, the Authority cannot appropriately plan for the future service or workforce needs. There is also a need to be able to report on unfilled substantive posts, and to monitor and control the use of agency workers to cover unfilled vacancies.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. Merton Improvement Board is kept up to date on work to refine the technical establishment and ensure robust establishment controls remain in place.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. Subject to the timing of committee dates it is proposed to provide a quarterly update to this committee, based on data as at 31st March, 30th June, 30th September and 31st December each year. Heads of Service will receive a monthly update of establishment details in their area so that they can address any corrections required.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Employees account for 25% of the gross General Fund spend in the authority. Having an accurate establishment helps managers plan their service and financial implications.

- 6.2. As a result of the earlier technical establishment exercise and ongoing establishment controls, each post will be linked to appropriate budgetary provision.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. There are no specific human rights, equalities or community cohesion implications arising from this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There are no crime disorder implications arising from this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. There are no specific risk or health and safety issues arising from this report.

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- Appendix A – establishment analysis including FTE agency workers and vacancies as at 30 September 2016

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1. 1 July 2015 report to Financial monitoring scrutiny task group on Update on Staffing Position

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