

## IMPROVING RECRUITMENT

1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2005

---

**This report sets out the key aspects of the project that will take the work forward on improving recruitment during 2005-6.**

In late 2004 a report on recruitment activity within the Council was commissioned and the findings considered. It was clear that the Council needed to improve recruitment activity in order to secure significant efficiency savings. These could be achieved through modernising the approach, streamlining activity, centralising certain aspects to achieve economies of scale, better use of ICT and improved working with external partners and agencies.

It is envisaged that improving recruitment using the approach outlined in this paper will enable to Council to

- make an estimated 20% saving against current recruitment advertising costs;
- make an estimated 30% saving against temporary staffing costs;
- bring the cost per hire down to an estimate £2,315 (a saving of £854 per vacancy against current costs per hire of £3,169);
- save over 200 manager days by a centralised response handling of adverts, and pre-screening applications; save 'one manager year' by centralising application pack and dispatch;
- save 125 administration days by improving web automation with the Human Resource Systems.

The reliance on agency and/or temporary employees as a consequence of current recruitment timescales needs to be addressed. Temporary employees are used in the Council currently for the following reasons:

1. Targeted central government funding for a particular project.
2. Employing short term teachers and non teachers depending on the intake for the year and expected intake in the following year.
3. Maternity leave cover.
4. Long term sickness absence cover (cheaper than getting agency teachers)
5. Supporting children who have medical and behavioural issues on a term by term basis.

Education (schools) are necessarily the biggest user of Agency and temporary staff, where posts are attached to the pupil and follow that funding.

Improvements and efficiency gains have already been made in reducing advertising copy space in composite adverts, but more fundamental change is needed. The Pay and Workforce Development Strategy operational plan for 2005-6 includes a stream of activity around improving recruitment activity within the Council, principally to realise the gains suggested by the initial report. The improvement project aims to:

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from David Johnson on 01432 383055

- provide clarity on what range of activities falls within the HR team, and what falls within Directorates/Services – to include any corresponding budget, funding or resource implications;
- set in place Key Performance Measures e.g. the costs of recruitment, and length of time it takes to recruit, where recruits come from, geography and sector, internal and external, track web based contacts and successes;
- promote best practice (as the largest local employer);
- realise the savings indicated above;
- ensure stakeholders are engaged and fully communicated with.

The project will be led by Human Resources and will comprise of two main areas of focus that will receive simultaneous attention in order to have a comprehensive approach ready for launch. The two areas are a) in depth recruitment process mapping to identify the resource and skill requirements of the new function, and the separation out of line versus central activities, plus look at resource implications, and b) tactical strategies and supporting projects for specific areas of attention. An interim resource will be drawn on to provide the expertise and additional capacity to cover a), plus support elements of b).

2. The main project deliverable will be a centralised recruitment function ready to operate from April 2006, that will
  - be modern, fit for purpose, using up to date techniques and practices for recruitment with improved use of e-technology (web based applications, on-line processes and information);
  - improve how the Council seeks employees from within the community and improve how the Council promotes itself as an employer;
  - will make the recruitment processes more visible and transparent for job seekers; better engage all sectors and groups of the local community, and help ensure a balanced workforce profile that represents the community (In particular disadvantaged groups, minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities and the younger age group). It will link directly to the project looking at the recruitment and retention of young people in the Council;
  - improve working with others to promote a positive image, build capacity and work in partnership so we are not competing against each other unnecessarily (e.g. Herefordshire Partnership Strategic partners – *PCT, Police etc*; other local authorities, Connexions, Job Centre Plus);
  - make use of pool/bank recruitment to reduce reliance on agency staff and so make measurable efficiency gains;
  - provide clarity on what selection methods should be used for different types of roles/posts, and why.