

USE OF AGENCY STAFF UPDATE

Cabinet Member(s):

Responsible Officer: Stuart Noyce, Waste & Transport Officer

Reason for Report: To receive an update on the use of agency staff in operational services.

RECOMMENDATION: That member's note the contents of this report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The Council is committed to delivering high quality services, at the lowest operational cost.

Financial Implications: This report is for information only.

Legal Implications: This report is for information only.

Risk Assessment: This report is for information only.

Equality Impact Assessment: This report is for information only.

1.1 At the meeting of Scrutiny on the 17th July 2017 It was **AGREED** that a report be prepared for the next meeting of the Committee providing detail on the amount spent on agency staff and the reasons for this.

1.2 The Council currently uses agency staff primarily to cover holiday, sickness, seasonal demand and short term vacancies. For this reason the number of staff needed on each day goes up and down. The use of agency staff gives flexibility to respond to fluctuations in staffing demands and is the most cost-effective way to manage the service.

1.3 No permanent positions are filled long term by agency staff unless to cover a vacancy that is currently in the process of being recruited to. Recruitment is undertaken normally a couple of times each year to keep recruitment costs down.

1.4 Agency staff are used to cover seasonal demand during the peak grass cutting season or to cover permanent staff during short term project work such as the roll out of the new waste scheme or the depot move.

1.4 In Street Scene services there is a small pool of staff already in place to cover some leave especially in higher skilled areas such as HGV Drivers. Due to peaks and troughs in taking leave the number of staff in the pool is kept at low levels to ensure staff are always fully utilised.

1.5 The hourly cost of using agency staff has increased in recent years due to increases in the national minimum wage. However, it is still more cost effective to use agency staff for short term needs than a pool of contracted staff. This is due to

higher on-costs such as local government pension scheme contributions and the inability to utilise contracted staff each day as demand fluctuates.

1.6 The Council is currently in a contract with ACORN Recruitment for the supply of its temporary staff requirements. This was part of a Devon wide contract with other authorities to help achieve best value. This joint contract is currently being retendered as the current contract is due to expire in 2017.

1.7 The cost of agency staff was approximately 6.9% of the total refuse and recycling staff costs budget for 2016/17. The detail of spends for each operational service for the last two years can be seen in Table A below.

Table A – Agency Spend – Operational Services 2015-17

Service Area	2016-17	2015-16
Domestic Waste	£79,589	£71,953
Domestic Recycling	£118,275	£96,893
Trade Waste	£8,582	£5,730
Street Cleansing	£12,731	£11,194
Grounds Maintenance	£27,061	£29,508
TOTAL	£246,237	£215,277

Contact for more Information: Stuart Noyce, Waste & Transport Manager (01884 244635 snoyce@middevon.gov.uk)

Circulation of the Report: Cllrs, Management Team

List of Background Papers: None