



Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

Time and Date

10.00 am on Thursday, 19th July, 2018

Place

Diamond Room 2 - Council House

Public Business

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**
 - (a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March, 2018 (Pages 3 - 6)
 - (b) Matters Arising
4. **Final Hospitality Statement and Charity Appeal for the Lord Mayoralty of Councillor Tony Skipper 2017/18** (Pages 7 - 14)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)
5. **Housing Benefit Overpayment Resources** (Pages 15 - 20)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)
6. **12 Month Cumulative Sickness Absence 2017/18** (Pages 21 - 38)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People)
7. **Agency Workers and Interim Managers - Performance Management Report Quarter 4 (1 January, 2018 to 31 March, 2018)** (Pages 39 - 54)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People)
8. **Outstanding Issues** (Pages 55 - 58)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place)
9. **Any other items of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

Private Business

Nil

Martin Yardley, Deputy Chief Executive (Place), Council House Coventry

Wednesday, 11 July 2018

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is
Suzanne Bennett Tel: 024 7683 3072

Membership: Councillor J Mutton (Cabinet Member)

By invitation Councillor K Taylor (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Please note: a hearing loop is available in the committee rooms

If you require a British Sign Language interpreter for this meeting
OR if you would like this information in another format or
language please contact us.

Suzanne Bennett

Tel: 024 7683 3072

Email: Suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources
held at 10.00 am on Thursday, 22 March 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor J Mutton (Cabinet Member)

Councillor K Taylor (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Directorate):

Place S Bennett, P Jennings, R Parkes

D Ashmore, B Barrett, J Gregg

People

Public Business

69. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

70. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February, 2018 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

71. Policy Contingency Funding Requests - Coventry Law Centre and Coventry Pride 2018

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which sought approval for two separate requests for funding from the Policy Contingency budget, which is set aside to cover any ad hoc one off requests for funding that are deemed to be in line with the Council's policy priorities. The Policy Contingency budget was reduced to £75,000 as part of the 2017/18 budget setting process.

The Coventry Law Centre are concerned that the level of support they currently offer could become unsustainable due to the increased demand for their services which have been compounded by welfare reforms, the rising number of sanctions and previous reductions to their grant funding. To help manage these pressures, Coventry Law Centre have asked for funding to recruit an additional full time expert benefits advisor for an initial period of 12 months at a total cost of £34,535.

Coventry Pride is an organisation that runs an annual lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans pride event and a series of other events that promote equality and diversity for the public benefit. The report recommends providing a £5,000 contribution to Coventry Pride 2018.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources:-

(1) Approves one-off grant funding of £34,535 to be paid to Coventry Law Centre for an additional benefits adviser to supplement their existing grant.

(2) Approves on-off grant funding of £5,000 to support the Coventry Pride 2018 event.

72. Agency Workers and Interim Managers - Performance Management Report Q3 (1 October to 31 December, 2017)

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) which provided performance information on the use of agency workers procured for the Quarter 3 period from 1 October to 31 December, 2017 and interim manager and other agency workers spends for the same period.

Further to Minute 56/17, the Cabinet Member had requested that information be provided on how departments intended to reduce agency staff costs in Directorates and information regarding the agency spend in relation to the Performing Arts Service and this additional information was provided within the report.

The total Directorate expenditure on agency workers up to and including Quarter 3 2017/18 for spends with the Master Vendor supplier was detailed in an appendix to the report. The justification for new orders placed by Directorates for agency workers and equalities data for workers supplied through the Pertemps contract were contained in further appendices.

A table in the report provided comparative expenditure in Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 2017/18 and indicated an increase in total spend from £989,406 in Quarter 2 to £1,056,222 in Quarter 3. A breakdown of spend within each Directorate was also provided.

The report detailed expenditure outside of the Pertemps contract in the following areas:-

People:- Childrens Services
Education
Customer Services
Adults

Place:- Professional Services Contract

The report also detailed work undertaken on alternative solutions to agency staff, such as banks of casual workers and the recruitment to specialist roles.

At the request of the Cabinet Member, John Gregg, Director of Children's Services attended the meeting and provided the Cabinet Member with information in relation to work being done to reduce agency spend in that area.

The Cabinet Member outlined his continuing concern regarding the amount of money being spent on agency staff and confirmed his commitment to reducing the level of spend in this area.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategic Resources:-

- (1) Notes the agency/interim spend for Quarter 3**
- (2) Notes the work done on providing in-house solutions as an alternative to agency and interim workers.**
- (3) Requests that officers submit a report to the next Cabinet Member meeting providing assurances that the process of filling vacancies, where appropriate, is undertaken at the earliest opportunity to ensure continuity of posts.**
- (4) That all engagement of agency staff be approved by senior management and that all future quarterly reports on agency workers include details of the number of agency staff engaged and the reasons for that engagement.**

73. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

74. Any Other Items of Urgent Public Business

There were no items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.00 am)

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Public report Cabinet Member Report

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

19 July 2018

Name of Cabinet Member

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor J Mutton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title:

Final Hospitality Statement and Charity Appeal for the Lord Mayoralty of Councillor Tony Skipper 2017/2018

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

This is the end of year hospitality budget report for the Mayoral Year of Councillor Tony Skipper 2017/2018. The report updates the Cabinet Member on how the budget was allocated during the Mayoral Year. The total spend was £65,153.03; this was £442.97 less than the allocated budget and this balance was returned to corporate reserves.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is recommended to :-

- (i) Note the contents of Appendix 1 which sets out detailed expenditure of £65,153.03 against the hospitality budget; and
- (ii) Note the final sum of £15,492.88 raised for the Lord Mayor's Charity Appeal 2017/2018

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 – Breakdown of the Hospitality Budget for whole Mayoral Year 2017/2018.

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Final Hospitality Statement and Charity Appeal for the Lord Mayoralty of Councillor Tony Skipper 2017/2018

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The annual hospitality budget for the Mayoral Year was £65,596. This report provides detail of the expenditure against the budget for the year which totalled £65,153.03.
- 1.2 The Office of Lord Mayor works for the good of the city and all its people. As Coventry's first citizen, the Lord Mayor is the non-political, ceremonial head of the city. The Lord Mayor will:
 - Promote work with other organisations.
 - Help to encourage investment and opportunity for businesses.
 - Encourage equal opportunities for all
 - Work with those who can help the city to be successful.
 - Thank those individuals and organisations who have brought success to the city.
 - Welcome visitors to the city, promoting its historic past and exciting future.
 - Represent the city at home, nationally and internationally as an "Ambassador" for Coventry.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The Cabinet Member is recommended to approve Appendix 1 of the report which sets out how the hospitality budget was spent, including the return of £442.97 to corporate reserves.
- 2.2 The Cabinet Member is also recommended to note the total of £15,492.88 raised for the Lord Mayor's Charity Appeal. This year's beneficiaries were the Zoë's Place Baby Hospice and The Teenage Cancer Trust.
- 2.3 Expenditure against the hospitality budget is carefully monitored throughout the year to ensure that activities undertaken support the aims of the Lord Mayoralty and the City Council and stays within budget.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 No consultation is required.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 There are no further events planned as the Mayoral Year 2017/2018 has now come to an end.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services

24.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report. Expenditure of £65,153.03 against the budget for the year of £65,596 ensured that the balance of £442.97 was returned to corporate reserves.

24.1 Legal implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

The Lord Mayor's Hospitality Budget is spent to reflect the Lord Mayor's Mission Statement as outlined in the Council's Constitution which aligns itself to the Council's core aims and objectives.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

No significant risks are associated with the budget management. Health and Safety issues are considered for all events with the more significant events being monitored by the Council's Safety Events Group.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

No impact, the events are managed by the Lord Mayor's office.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

An Equality Impact Assessment for the Lord Mayor's Office was last undertaken in February 2012 to ensure the Mayoralty promotes equality across the city and the recommendations in this report do not constitute a change in service or policy.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s):**Name and job title:**

Jane Barlow, Principal Private Secretary to the Lord Mayoralty

Directorate:

Resources

Tel and email contact:

024 7683 3047 jane.barlow@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Carol Caley	Accounting Technician	Place	26.06.18	29.06.18
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Democratic: Suzanne Bennett	Governance Services Officer	Place	26.06.18	02.07.18
Adrian West	Members and Elections Team Manager	Place	26.06.18	29.06.18
Finance: Paul Whitmore	Lead Accountant	Place	26.06.18	29.06.18
Legal: Rob Parkes	Place Team Leader, Legal Services	Place	26.06.18	26.06.18
Barry Hastie	Director of Finance and Corporate Resources	Place	26.06.18	02.07.18
Councillor J Mutton	Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources			

This report is published on the council's website:

www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

Hospitality Budget for Mayoral Year 2017/2018 – Councillor Tony SkipperACTUAL Costs of Functions of 1st Quarter: 19th May – 18th August 2017

<u>Date</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Number of Guests</u>	<u>Actual Cost</u>
18.05.17	Contribution towards the Annual Meeting of the City Council	-	£3,000.00
19.05.17	Lord Mayor's Table at Zoe's Place Baby Hospice Charity Ball	12	£644.79
20.05.17	Commencement of Mayoral Year Dinner	96	£3,220.95
24.05.17	Civic Event to mark the 50th Anniversary of Midland Aircraft Preservation Society	40	£1,801.07
25.05.17	Reception following Service to mark 35th Anniversary of Sinking of HMS Coventry	50	£310.00
30.05.17	Business Lunch to recognise partnership between Warwick Medical School	40	£454.00
01.06.17	Costs associated with attendance at Royal Garden Party	3	£28.25
14.06.17	Lunch with the High Commissioner of St Vincent's & The Grenadines	5	£23.25
12.06.17	Lunch during the West Midlands Deputy Lieutenant's Meeting	16	£121.19
16.06.17	Civic Visit to Kiel (flights only)	2	£436.63
24.06.17	Costs associated with Armed Forces Day and 605 Squadron Freedom Parade	-	£2,235.02
25.06.17	Drinks Reception prior to Tudor Feast Coventry Event	120	£1,242.59
04.07.17	Special Freeman's Court Ceremony for Mr S Gough	10	£17.00
07.07.17	Lunch with Band from Kiel performing at The Godiva Festival	10	£143.40
11.07.17	Refreshments for Good Citizen Recipient prior to Full Council	5	£18.75
01.08.17	Special Freeman's Court Ceremony for Mr B Finlay	6	£42.90
06.08.17	Costs associated with Hiroshima Day Service at Coventry Cathedral	50	£128.90
	Mayoral Stock between 19 th May – 18 th August 2017		£959.83
	1st Quarter Budget Total		£14,828.52

ACTUAL Costs of Functions of 2nd Quarter: 19th August – 18th November 2017

<u>Date</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Number of Guests</u>	<u>Actual Cost</u>
31.08.17	Refreshments for meeting with visitors from India	11	£18.70
01.09.17	International Children's Games Presentation	60	£79.92
05.09.17	Refreshments for Good Citizen Recipient prior to Full Council	5	£19.00
08.09.17	Civic Visit to Kiel re 70th Anniversary of Twinning Link - Flights	3	£536.03
21.09.17	Tickets for Legal Services Indian Summer Nights Charity Ball	2	£70.00
22.09.17	Queen's Award for Voluntary Service to Savers	60	£493.68
25.09.17	Civic Reception for volunteers of Radford Community Association	25	£283.92
26.09.17	Celebration Event for Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre	50	£594.00
27.09.17	Retirement Dinner for His Honour Judge Richard Griffith-Jones, Honorary Recorder	32	£1,238.20
28.09.17	Civic Reception for Myke Grimes, British Cycle Speedway Champion	90	£1,244.16
28.09.17	Tickets for Warwick Town Council Charity Fashion Show	2	£20.00
01.10.17	Civic Visit to Belgrade re 60th Anniversary of the Twinning Link - Flights	3	£1,033.75
05.10.17	50% of costs for National Transport Pensioners Conference held in Coventry	-	£276.50
17.10.17	Lunch following visit to Fibromyalgia UK (Coventry Branch)	20	£168.00
18.10.17	Visit of Japanese Students	12	£20.40
24.10.17	Lunch following City of Culture Steering Group Meeting	10	£226.34
8.11.17	Visit of Pupils from Moat House School	27	£32.40
13.11.17	Costs associated with Annual Peace Lecture		£212.88
12.11.17	Remembrance Sunday Parade, Service and Refreshments	-	£5,000.87
10.11.17	Hosting visitors from Twin City of Kiel on the 70 th Anniversary of twinning link		£1,140.63
	Mayoral Stock between 19 th August – 18 th November 2017		£ 97.61
	2nd Quarter Budget Total		£12,806.99

ACTUAL Costs of Functions of 3rd Quarter: 19th November 2017 - 18th February 2018

<u>Date</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Number of Guests</u>	<u>Actual Cost</u>
30.11.17	Lord Mayor's Christmas Gift Fair	-	£375.00
01.12.17	Contribution towards the Lord Mayor's Charity 'Love Cov' Music Show	-	£2,000.00
04.12.17	Coventry & Warwickshire Magistrates Festive Evening		£174.78
05.12.17	Festive Pre-Council Lunch for Good Citizen Recipient	30	£772.50
07.12.17	Festive Civic Heads Dinner	96	£3,312.85
08.12.17	Post Announcement UK City of Culture 2021 Media Event	30	£60.00
19.12.17	Festive Open House	-	£100.00
20.12.17	Site Services Retirement Reception	20	£55.00
11.01.18	UK City of Culture 2021 Celebration Event	110	£4,314.53
16.01.18	Refreshments for Good Citizen Recipient prior to Full Council	5	£9.40
17.01.18	Afternoon Tea for Raffle Prize Winners	6	£13.05
18.01.18	Lunch with New Minister for Arts and Culture re UK City of Culture 2021	30	£130.50
26.01.18	Refreshments following Holocaust Memorial Day	50	£358.00
29.01.18	Civic Visit to Volgograd re 75th Anniversary of Battle of Stalingrad	3	£3,478.68
05.02.18	Lunch for Employability Skills Programme delegates	7	£26.60
07.02.18	Lunch with pupils from Grange Farm Primary	13	£49.40
12.02.18	Afternoon Tea with pupils from Finham Primary	20	£83.00
16.02.18	Mayor of Royal Leamington Spa's Charity Event	2	£105.00
	Mayoral Stock between 19 th November 2017 - 18 th February 2018		£40.24
	3rd Quarter Budget Total		£15,458.53

ACTUAL Costs of Functions of 4th Quarter: 19th February – 18th May 2018

<u>Date</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Number of Guests</u>	<u>Actual Cost</u>
19.02.17	Afternoon Tea with Strictly Christmas Winners for Zoe's Place	8	£21.60
20.02.18	Refreshments for Good Citizen Recipient prior to Full Council	4	£9.60
23.02.18	Rotary International Peace Building Conference - VIP Reception	60	£555.70
04.03.18	VIP Reception for Cyrille Regis' Memorial Service	150	£2,703.25
13.03.18	Lunch prior to Full Council for Good Citizen Recipient	5	£14.40
15.03.18	Afternoon tea with representatives from Enterprise Club for Disabled People	7	£16.80
19.03.18	Costs associated with official delegation from Dresden	11	£1,728.50
27.03.18	Refreshments following Freeman's Admission Ceremony	35	£136.40
03.04.18	Afternoon tea with visitors to the Parlour	4	£6.80
06.04.18	Civic Reception for European City of Sport 2019 Judging Panel	40	£1,421.75
07.04.18	Reception following joint Spire Music & Lufthansa Philharmonic Concert at Coventry Cathedral	130	£1,252.44
10.04.18	Civic Reception for Wasps 150th Anniversary	100	£2,359.11
16.04.18	Lunch at Rising Café with Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff & Dean	8	£45.13
21.04.18	Tickets for Shakespeare's Birthday Lunch	2	£89.25
23.04.18	Afternoon tea with Pupils from Bablake School	12	£48.00
26.04.18	Costs associated with Shakespeare & Wars of Roses Event	150	£295.52
27.04.18	Contribution towards Lord Mayor's Charity Fundraising Dinner	200	£3,115.06
22.05.18	Contribution towards costs of Ricoh Arena Model in aid of Lord Mayor's Charity Appeal	-	£750.00
30.04.18	Civic Visit of Lord Mayor of Norwich	6	£52.35
01.05.18	Civic Reception for Coventry Rugby re National League One Champions	96	£3,014.95
02.05.18	Civic Lunch with Faith Leaders to welcome the Archbishop of Canterbury	50	£1,382.50
03.05.18	Refreshment for pupils from Styvechale Primary School	15	£12.75
03.05.18	UNICEF Baby Friendly Event	25	£21.25
06.05.18	Lunch following Freeman's Sunday Service and Parade	50	£731.14
09.05.18	Civic Visit to Dresden	2	£657.44
16.05.18	Donation to the International Children's Games	-	£1,000.00
	Mayoral Stock between 19 th February – 18 th May 2017		£617.30
	4th Quarter Budget Total		£22,058.99
	Total Budget		£65,153.03



Public report Cabinet Member Report

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor J Mutton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Housing benefit overpayment resources

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

Since April 2018, Local Authorities have the opportunity to refer details of customers who have a Housing Benefit Overpayment to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in order for a matching exercise to take place with Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs data. This is called the Housing Benefit Debt Service (HBDS). The objective of this exercise is to identify if the individual is working, with a view to recovering any Housing Benefit overpayment directly from the customer's earnings (Direct Earnings Attachment).

The council currently has 2,770 invoices outstanding that are not currently in recovery (value of @ £3million) because we have been unable to trace the debtors. In order to maximise the opportunity we have to use the HBDS, it is requested that an officer is recruited on a temporary basis, for a period of 6 months, to work within the Housing Benefit Overpayments team. This resource will focus on the 2,770 invoices and refer the customer's details to the DWP. Data will be returned to this resource, and will instigate a Direct Earnings Attachment Order to the debtor's employer. Where a match is identified via the Housing Benefit Debt Service; this will result in the Overpayment being placed in a recovery stream and income will be received by the council as a consequence.

For the purposes of the project this member of staff will be essentially fulfilling an enforcement role and will not be providing advisory support to our debtors; rather the issue and undertaking of Direct Earnings Attachment Orders in order to increase recoveries and boost collection will be the sole focus.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is recommended to approve the funding of a temporary G3 officer resource for a period of six months.

List of Appendices included:

None

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Housing benefit overpayment resources

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 In response to the national increase in Housing Benefit overpayment debt, in December 2017 the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) asked councils to volunteer to be part of a pilot scheme – the Housing Benefits Debt Service (HBDS) project.
- 1.2 The objective of this project was to match customer information held by the council, with real time employer information held by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). On return of the data, where a "match" was found, the council could then apply for a Direct Earnings Attachment (DEA) from the customer's wages to recover the Housing Benefit overpayment.
- 1.3 Coventry volunteered to be part of this project, and referred data for the matching exercise for a four month period. The pilot was very successful with Coventry seeing the number of overpayment invoices subject to a DEA increasing by 24 per cent.

- 1.4 Due to the success of the councils involved in the pilot, in April 2018 the DWP rolled this service out nationally, allowing councils to send a maximum of 1,200 records per month to be matched.
- 1.5 Due to limited resource, Coventry are sending on average 188 cases per month whereas we have the potential to send far more; we currently have 2,770 customers who have a Housing Benefit overpayment debt that is not in recovery. This is generally where the customer is not in receipt of benefits and the Council have been unable to trace them. This debt totals around £3 million. Potentially these customers could be employed and the HBDS could provide a match for a percentage of them and thus enabling the Council to take enforcement action.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 Calculations based on current resources indicate that, following a period of training, it would take approximately five months for an officer to work through the 2,770 cases. This work involves sending the data to the DWP and then processing the information when it is returned. This will involve applying for a DEA where the data has been matched, or deciding on the recovery action to be taken with the case where there is no match.
- 2.2 It is difficult to predict how much of this data will be matched. However, based on the results from the pilot, successful matches could be around 40 per cent. A 40 per cent match rate represents £1.2 million of the stated £3 million overpayment debt that could be put into recovery.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

Not applicable

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

As soon as approval is granted, the service will take steps to recruit a temporary member of staff for a six month period (which includes a training period) – potentially August 2018 –January 2019.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services

5.1 Financial implications

The cost for a G3 officer for a period of 6 months is estimated at £13,000. At a 40 per cent match rate £1.2 million could be recovered in the fullness of time and ultimately the project will comfortably cover the initial investment.

5.2 Legal implications

The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 as amended set out when overpayments take place and how and from whom they can be recovered.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 supported by the Social Security (Overpayments and Recovery) Regulations 2013 introduced Direct Earnings Attachments (DEAs) from April 2013. A DEA allows for recovery of overpaid benefit directly from a debtor's earnings without having to apply via the court system.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

This project will help to maximise corporate revenue.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

It is possible that the match rate will be significantly lower than expected or that DEAs will prove unsuccessful (if, for example, employees have left employment). The temporary resource will then be moved onto other enforcement work, appropriate to the grade, to support the maximisation of Housing Overpayment recovery.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

Increased corporate revenue.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

No impact

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

No impact

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

No impact

Report author(s):**Name and job title:**

Karen Gist
Senior Operational Manager – Revenues and Benefits

Directorate:

Place

Tel and email contact:

02476 831314

Karen.gist@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Suzanne Bennett	Governance Services Co-ordinator	Place	21/06/18	02/07/18
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Phil Helm	Finance Manager	Place	20/06/18	20/06/18
Legal: Gill Carter	Team Leader, Regulatory	Place	20/06/18	21/06/18
Communications: Julie Fairbrother	Communications Officer	Place	20/06/18	
Director: Barry Hastie	Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Place	20/06/18	21/06/18

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Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

19th July 2018

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor J Mutton

Director Approving Submission of the report:
Deputy Chief Executive People

Ward(s) affected:
None

Title:
12 Month Cumulative Sickness Absence 2017/2018

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

To enable Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources to monitor:

- Levels of sickness absence for the 12 month period of 2017/2018.
- The actions being taken to manage absence and promote health at work across the City Council.

Recommendations:

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is requested to receive this report providing sickness absence data for the 12 month period of 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018 and endorse the actions taken to monitor and manage sickness absence.

- Note the need to revise our sickness and absence policies and procedures and invest in sickness absence management training as part of the ongoing workforce strategy programme. This is to support the delivery of the corporate target of reducing the absence to 8 days per full time equivalent employee (FTE) by 2019/20.

Future Reporting Methodology for 2018/19

In future years improvement to our systems and employee record keeping systems will enable us to report more effectively and consistently, including:

- A rolling 12-month period
- Focus on core council workforce data separate from schools workforce data
- A change from “days lost” to reporting sickness absence per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) as the main measure.
- Align the reporting of long term absence to our policy and procedure framework

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1	Coventry City Council: Targets vs Actual Days Lost per FTE 2013-18
Appendix 2	Directorate Summary Out-turn 2016/2017 vs. 2017/2018
Appendix 3	Coventry City Council Reasons for Absence (2017/2018)
Appendix 4	Days Lost per FTE, by Directorate (2016/2017 vs 2017/2018)
Appendix 5	Coventry City Council Short/Long Term Breakdown of Absence (2017/2018)
Appendix 6	Coventry City Council Breakdown of Short Term Absence, by Length of Days (2017/2018 vs 2016/17)

Other useful background papers:

None.

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No.

Has it, or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No.

Report title: 12 Month Cumulative Sickness Absence 2017/2018

1. Context (or background)

1.1 This report provides the cumulative sickness absence figures for the Council and the two directorates.

1.2 **Annual** and bi-annually employee information is based on full time employee equivalent (FTE) average days lost per person against the FTE average days per person available for work. This is the method that was previously required by the Audit Commission for annual Best Value Performance Indicator reporting. The City Council continues to use this method to ensure consistency with previously published data.

1.3 Performance

The below table shows days lost per FTE for the period of 2017- 2018 – Coventry City Council corporate target is 8 days

Performance for Q1 - Q4 2017/2018				
April 2017 - March 2018 Q1 - Q4 Days lost per FTE (Full Time Equivalent) Employee	Combined Q1 - Q4 (All Directorates including School)	Core Council & School Support		School Teachers
April - March 2017/18 Actual (cumulative) Report Total	9.41 Days lost per FTE	10.32 Days lost per FTE		5.53 Days Lost per FTE
April 2017 - March 2018 Q1 - Q4 - Sickness Costs	Combined Q1 - Q4 (All Directorates including School)	Core Council & School Support		School Teachers
April - March 2017/18 Actual (cumulative) Report costings	£8,160,700	£6,822,862		£1,337,838

1.3.1 The method for calculating the cost of absence has been revised this year. It now uses real time employee data, which more accurately reflects working hours, rates of pay and employer contributions, rather than using assumed levels. This is now possible because we are able to access and collate data held on various systems.

1.3.2 A comparison of the last 5 year figures actuals against target are shown in Appendix 1, and appendix 2 shows the figures per council area.

1.3.3 Comparison Information

Coventry City Council has collected sickness out turn data for 2017/18 for 3 other West Midlands Metropolitan Authorities in order to benchmark against Coventry City Council. Please see table below.

West Midlands Metropolitan Authorities	Days Lost Per FTE (Excluding schools)
Coventry City Council	11.44
Birmingham City Council	10.45
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council	8.94
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	11.39

*We have been unable to obtain figures from Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton

1.4 Reasons for Absence

- 1.4.1 Appendix 3 illustrates the overall reasons reported for sickness absence; the charts below show the most common 3 'Reasons by Days Lost' and 'Number of Occasions':

Top 3 Reasons for Absence by Days Lost (2017-2018)		
Reasons	Days Lost	Position
Reporting of Stress, Depression and Anxiety	16225	1st Highest Days lost
Musculo-Skeletal Problems	11983	2nd
Infections, Colds & Flu	7448	3rd

Top 3 Reasons for Absence by Occasion (2017-2018)			
Reasons	Occasions	Days Lost	Position
Infections, Colds & Flu	2872	7448	1st Highest occasions
Stomach, Liver, Gastroenteritis	2472	6682	2nd
Reporting of Stress, Depression, Anxiety	868	16225	3rd

- 1.4.2 A comparison of 2016/17 with 2017/18 indicates that there has been a reduction of 1017 occasions of sickness absence, and an overall increase in the total numbers of days lost per FTE of 1678. Appendix 4 illustrates the increase in days lost per FTE across the areas within Coventry City Council.

The table below illustrates where the reasons for sickness absence have either increased or decreased by both 'Occasions' and 'Days Lost' per FTE

Comparisons of Absence Results from Q4 2017/18 with Q4 2016/17 by FTE Days Lost and Occasions			
Impact in 2017/18	Type	By Days lost	By Occasions
Increased ↑	Reporting of Stress	1229	54
Reduced ↓	Musculoskeletal Problems	979	77
Increased ↑	Infections, Colds & Flu	147	232 (reduction)
Reduced ↓	Chest Respiratory, Chest Infection	465	90
Reduced ↓	Stomach, Liver, Gastroenteritis	372	445

1.5 Frequent and Long Term Absence

- 1.5.1 Appendix 5 demonstrates a comparison between the short-term and long-term sickness absence levels during 2016/17 and 2017/18

Appendix 6 shows a more detailed breakdown of length of absence for 2017/18.

1.6 Outcomes of the Promoting Health at Work Corporate Procedure

- 1.6.1 During 2017/2018 there have been a total of **15** employees who left the council in accordance with the 'Promoting Health at Work' Corporate Procedure. **8** have been due to ill health retirement and **7** are due to the required standards of attendance not being met.

2. Activities during Quarter 4

2.1 HR Support Teams

The HR teams aim to ensure a consistent approach to sickness absence management and to provide information on sickness absence to management teams/senior managers on a monthly basis. HR colleagues also support managers in the application of the Council's 'Promoting Health at Work' procedure.

- 2.1.2 Management teams review summary sickness absence reports on a monthly basis to monitor the progress and determine actions needed to address any hotspots.

2.1.3 HR teams undertake proactive strategies to support the managers in the reduction of sickness absence levels. This includes:

- Robust approach in the management of sickness absence casework with the application of a revised model, resulting in no more than 4 meetings having to take place before a decision is made about an employees' continued employment.
- A monthly system to alert senior managers when employees trigger a sickness absence point and have not been seen as part of the 'Promoting Health at Work' procedure.
- Training is provided to managers to support dealing with both practical and procedural issues. An ongoing programme of training is taking place across Coventry City Council as a whole. This includes: receiving the absence phone call, conducting effective 'Return to Work' interviews, supporting employees with a disability, and understanding the rationale for making reasonable adjustments in the workplace to facilitate an employee's return to work.
- Training has enabled managers the opportunity to refresh their knowledge and understanding of the 'Promoting Health at Work' procedure.

2.1.4 A number of service areas across Coventry City Council hold regular 'performance summits / clinics' on a monthly, quarterly or as needed basis. These incorporate both the management of sickness cases as well as areas of performance concerns, which in some cases have a direct link.

2.1.5 These serve as a useful mechanism to safeguard the general well-being of the organisation ensuring performance and attendance are well-managed for all parties. This guarantees absence levels remain a high priority with the aim to reduce these levels for the Council and to enable services to be cost-effectively delivered to the public.

2.1.6 The purpose of 'performance clinics', is to provide an opportunity for management teams with the relevant Head of Service/Directors to review sickness and performance patterns and cases within a given area. This is to ensure cases are being addressed in a timely manner and are being robustly, consistently, fairly and appropriately managed through the application of the Promoting Health at Work procedure and other relevant processes.

2.1.7 The clinics provide an opportunity for managers to share good practice and experience in managing absence levels, as well as to gain further advice, support and updates from HR colleagues on the application of changes to procedure and the full support the available to its employees and managers.

2.1.8 One of the particular key benefits of performance clinics has been to identify hotspot areas, or key issues/reasons for absence within service areas. This enables the advice, support and resources to be tailored to ensure these issues are addressed and managed and that our employees are appropriately supported. This has proved to be very useful in making a positive impact in the working environments and on attendance levels.

- 2.1.9 There are no significant risks arising from sickness absence levels in any service area of the Council

2.2 Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service

Activities from the Occupational Health Team

- The Fast Care Clinics at 3 City Arcade and Whitley Depot will continue to support high risk areas for musculoskeletal problems.
- The 137 (36% of referrals) incidents of musculoskeletal problems assessed as aggravated by work, were distributed across directorates and schools, no single area was represented as a specific hot spot. No single condition was significantly represented.
- From the 378 cases closed in 2017-2018, 55% of those employees seen more than once reported a significant improvement in pain and function.
- **The Corporate Health and Safety Training Programme**

Mandatory courses for health and safety are now accessed through Melearning or the Health and Safety Training Calendar

- **Courses currently available on Melearning:**

- An introduction to Managing Health and Safety (this replaces the introduction to H&S Management and H&S at Work)
- Working with DSE
- Manual Handling (objects)
- Handling Violence and Aggression at Work
- Fire Awareness
- CoSHH

- **The Mandatory Mental Wellbeing Audit Programme**

The revised Mandatory Mental Wellbeing Programme has been piloted in payroll service area and with an external client. The improved programme will be rolled out over 2018. Sickness absence statistics are currently being analysed to inform the next six months of the programme.

- **Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Information Portal**

The Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service has created an Information Portal on Sharepoint which was launched on 7th May 2018. Access to health and safety committee meeting documents, as well as information on managing health and wellbeing in the workplace, will now be more easily accessible to managers, employees and trade unions.

3. Public Health

- 3.1 Public Health is developing the Year of Wellbeing programme for 2019 across Coventry and Warwickshire with a key theme around workplace wellbeing. Working in partnership with the Business Development team, Public Health is providing funding to widen the support under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) scheme to provide opportunities for all organisations to sign up to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter (THRIVE).
- 3.2 The Council has held the Workplace Wellbeing Charter status from 2014 to February 2018 and we now require assessment against revised standards and reaccreditation. We are leading this work across businesses in Coventry, so as exemplars of this approach we need to have a strong organisational focus on prevention, especially around preventative action to reduce stress and improve wellbeing in the workplace.
- 3.3 Public health supports the adult social care Making Every Contact Count (MECC) programme: social workers will be trained to deliver motivational interventions around health behaviours with clients and also get an opportunity to build the benefits of this into their own working lives. A MECC officer has been recruited and training and implementation will commence in September

4. Results of consultation undertaken

Trade union colleagues are kept up to date on the latest absence figures and are actively involved in casework regarding sickness absence management.

Absence from work is also as part of the reported Health & Safety Governance arrangements.

5. Timetable for implementing this decision

None

6. Comments from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

6.1 Financial Implications

Sickness absence impacts on the ability of the Council to deliver its services with replacement cover required in many service areas at an additional cost to the Council

6.2 Legal implications

Employees are able to make a claim against the Council if they can demonstrate that the Council has failed in its duties as an employer when dealing with sickness absence.

7. Other implications

There are no other specific implications.

7.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard)/organisational blueprint/LAA (or Coventry SCS)?

Sickness absence is one of the Council's corporate plan targets and performance is reported to Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance & Resources) twice a year at the end of Q2 and the end of Q4.

7.2 How is risk being managed?

The Promoting Health at Work Strategy will require further development to examine more intensively issues such as working conditions, accidents, work related ill health, and industrial injuries in addition to managing absence. This will involve liaison with colleagues in the area of safety management and Occupational Health, and will also include analysis of sickness data to identify the relationship between specific causes of absence and occupational groups.

The CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel) findings suggest average days lost to be 6.6 days, which represents an increase in 2018 for the majority of organisations (as per the Health and Well-being at Work Survey Report May 2018)

7.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

Human Resources

The HR/OD teams support absence management across the whole City Council. The teams support managers to deal with sickness promptly and consistently within all directorates.

Information and Communication Technology

Data warehouse: Throughout 2018/19 HR data including sickness absence will be stored on the Data warehouse enabling us to use the latest corporate reporting tools improving consistency, timeliness, analyses and presentation of statistics.

7.4 Equalities/EIA

The application of the sickness absence management processes are continually reviewed to ensure compliance with the Council's duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

7.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None.

7.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None.

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Julie Newman	Head of Legal Services	Place	27/06/18	29/06/18
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Gail Quinton	Deputy Chief Executive	People	27/06/18	29/06/18

This report is published on the Council's website:

www.coventry.gov.uk/meetings

Coventry City Council
Target Vs Actual Days Lost per FTE
2013 - 2018

Page 32

Coventry - 5 Year Corporate Sickness Summary (Figures include School sickness)			
Year	Target	Actual	RAG Rating
2013/14	8.5	9.14	☹
2014/15	8.5	9.4	☹
2015/16	8.5	8.51	☺
2016/17	8	8.64	☹
2017/18	8	9.41	☹

RAG Key Code

Red	☹	Above Target
Amber	☹	Less than 1 day above target
Green	☺	On Target

Corporate / Directorate Comparisons against Corporate Target**Coventry City Council**

2017/18	2016/17	Annual Target 2017/2018
9.41	8.64	8

This demonstrates an increase of 0.77 days per FTE compared to 2016/17

Place Directorate

2017/18	2016/17	Annual Target 2017/2018
10.89	10.16	8

This demonstrates an increase of 0.73 days per FTE compared to 2016/17

People Directorate

2017/18	2016/17	Annual Target 2017/2018
11.58	11	8

This demonstrates an increase of 0.58 day per FTE compared to 2016/17

Teachers in Schools

2017/18	2016/17	Annual Target 2017/2018
5.53	5.44	8

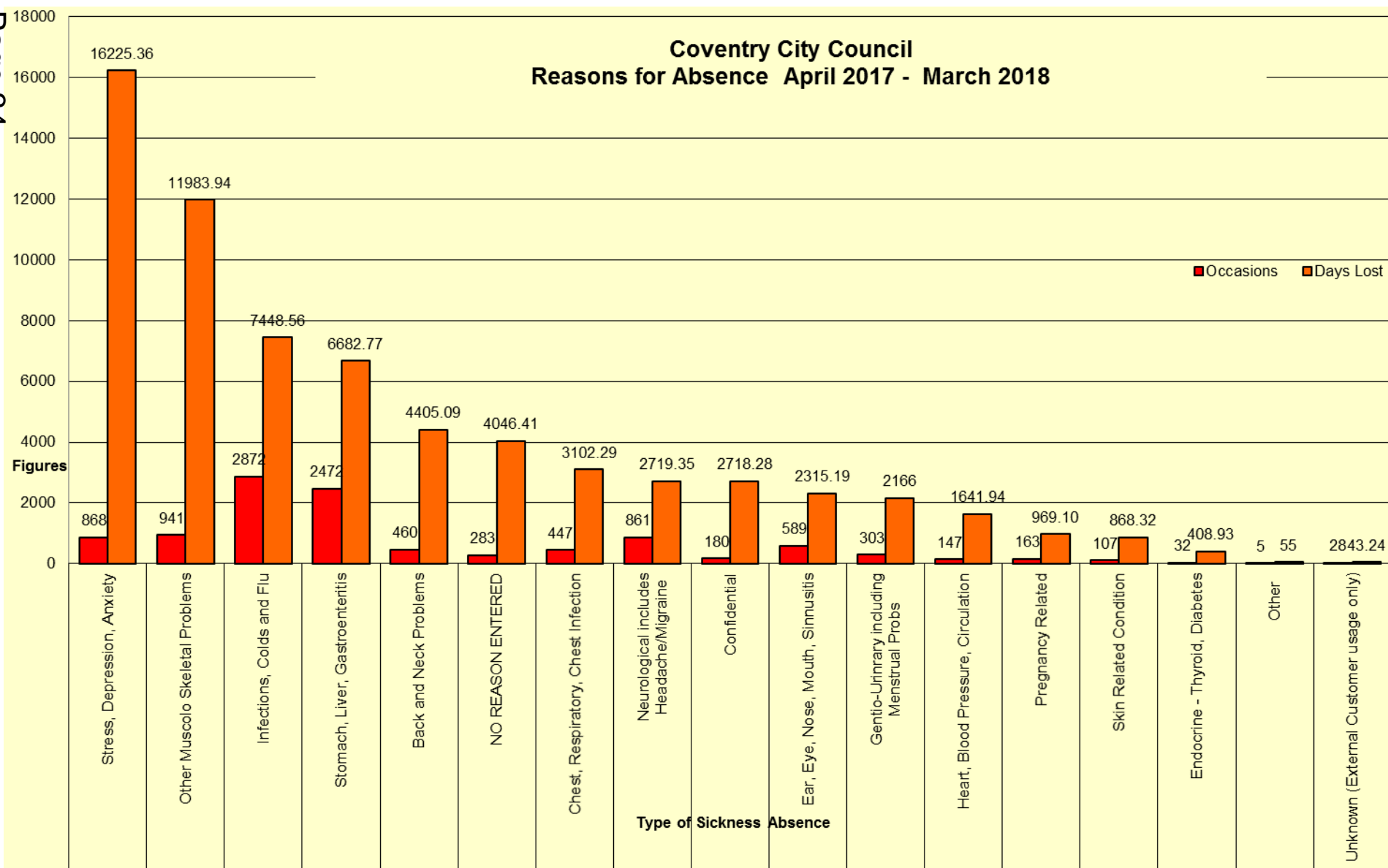
This demonstrates an increase of 0.09 days per FTE compared to 2016/17

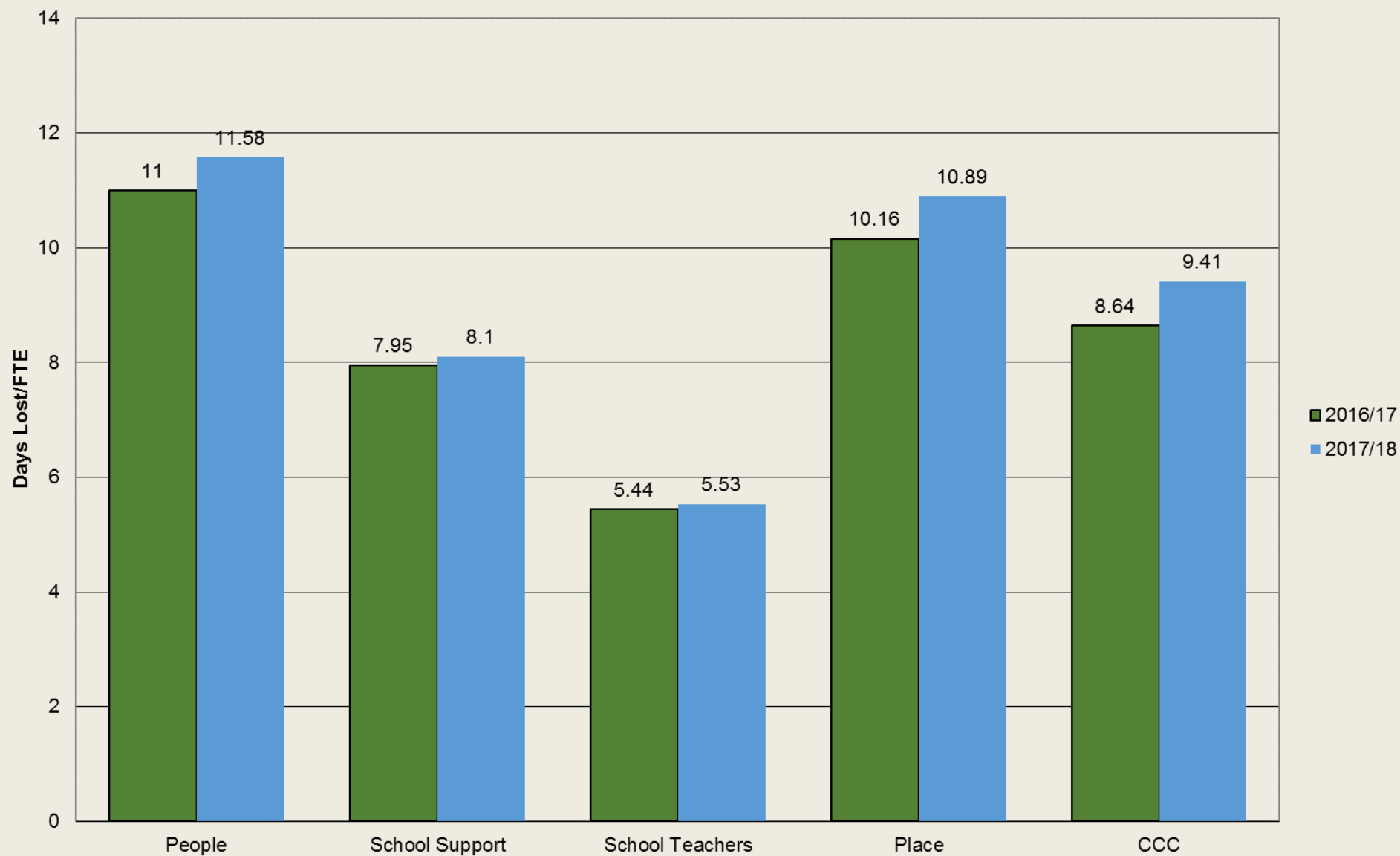
Support Staff in Schools

2017/18	2016/17	Annual Target 2017/2018
8.10	7.95	8

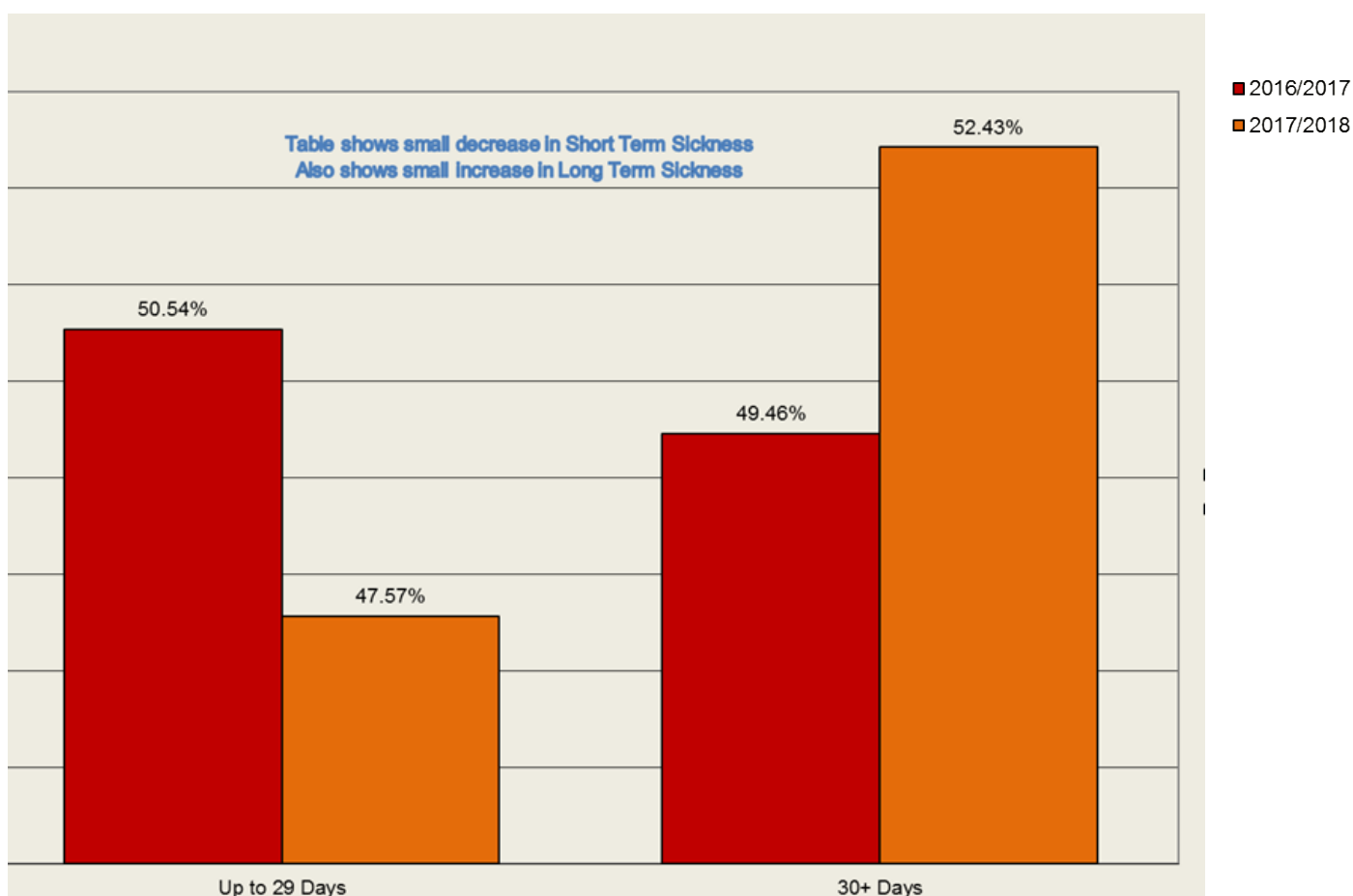
This demonstrates an increase of 0.15 days per FTE compared to 2016/17

Coventry City Council Reasons for Absence April 2017 - March 2018



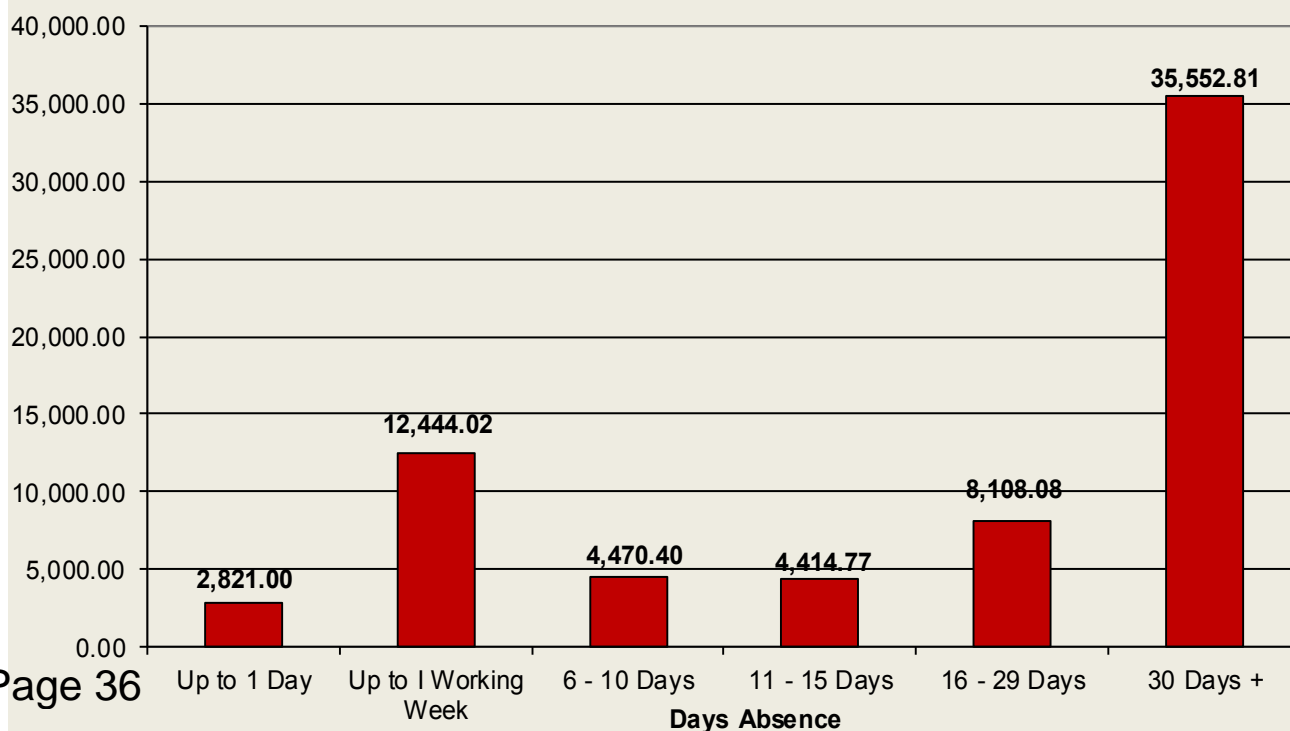
2016/2017 vs. 2017/2018 - Days Lost Per FTE

Coventry City Council
April 2016 – March 2017 Vs April 2017 – March 2018
Sickness Absence – Short/Long Term Breakdown



Appendix 6

Coventry City Council
Breakdown of Short Term Sickness Absence per number of 'Days Lost' -
April 2017-March 2018



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Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

19 July 2018

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor J Mutton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Deputy Chief Executive (People)

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title:

Agency Workers and Interim Managers – Performance Management Report Q4 (1 January to 31 March 2018).

Is this a key decision?

No.

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Cabinet Member with performance information on the use of agency workers procured for the Q4 period 1 January to 31 March 2018 and to consider Interim Manager and other agency worker spends for the same period. In addition, the Cabinet Member asked for further information to be provided this quarter and in the future, on the number of agency staff engaged and the reasons for that engagement. Where the information is available, it is provided within this report. Where this information is not available, commentary is made on the feasibility and timescales to implement this change to information reporting.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is requested to:

1. Note the agency / interim spend for Q4 and the corresponding numbers of agency workers
2. Note the work done on providing in-house solutions as an alternative to agency and interim workers.
3. To note the inclusion in this report on the level of corporate staffing requirement met by agency workers from Pertemps.

4. To note the directorate assurances on the approval processes for ordering agency workers and on the filling of vacancies contained in section 5

List of Appendices included:

The information attached in Appendix 1 shows the total Directorate expenditure on agency workers up to and including Q4 2017/18 for spends with the Master Vendor supplier, Pertemps, including interims. The dotted line shows the trend line for the data shown; it does not predict spend in future quarters.

The information attached in Appendix 2 show the justification of new orders placed by Directorates for agency workers during Q4 2017/18 which resulted in spend with Pertemps.

Appendix 3 shows equalities data for workers supplied through the Pertemps contract.

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it, or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title:

Agency Workers and Interim Managers – Performance Management Report Q4 (1 January to 31 March 2018)

1 Context (or background)

- 1.1 Coventry City Council has a Master Vendor Contract with Pertemps for the supply of agency workers. This came into effect in December 2013 and has been extended. Through the contract, Pertemps will supply all suitable agency workers through their own agency or via a 2nd tier arrangement with other agencies on behalf of the Council, using rates of pay based on an agreed pay policy and a negotiated mark-up rate with the Master Vendor. The information supplied by Pertemps gives detailed information on agency worker usage and expenditure. However, Pertemps is not always able to supply the required agency workers and where this is the case service areas will use other suppliers.

Having re-tendered this contract, a new provider, Reed, will be supplying agency workers with effect from 25th June 2018

2 Directorate Commentary on Agency Worker Spend for Q4 2017/18

Table 2.1 below shows comparative expenditure in Q4 2017/18 and Q3 2017/18 and indicates an overall increase in total spend. The Master Vendor Contract covers all agency workers required by the core Council. The Pertemps contract does not cover agency workers in schools.

Table 2.1: Spend with Pertemps: comparing Q4 2017/18 with Q3 2017/18

Division / Directorate	Spend Q3 2017/18	Spend Q4 2017/18	Increase / decrease	
Adult Services	£96,756	£206,201	£109,446	Increase
Children's Services	£614,826	£690,482	£75,656	Increase
Customer Services & Transformation	£97,705	£93,325	-£4,380	Decrease
People Directorate Total	£809,287	£990,008	£180,721	Increase
City Centre & Major Projects	£214	£398	£184	Increase
Finance & Corporate Services	£43,838	£33,406	-£10,432	Decrease
Streetscene & Regulatory Services	£201,958	£225,358	£23,400	Increase
Transportation & Highways	£925	£5,917	£4,992	Increase
Place Directorate Total	£246,935	£265,080	£18,144	Increase
TOTAL	£1,056,222	£1,255,088	£198,866	Increase

Table 2.2 below is new in this report and provides the percentage of staffing requirement met by agency workers from Pertemps.

An order for an agency worker may require a worker full-time or a period of months. Alternatively the order may be for a person to work for a few hours as a one-off event. Also there may be an order for one worker for the whole quarter, but we may actually receive a different worker each month. Both of these circumstances means that it is not straightforward to count the number of workers. As an alternative, the full-time equivalent of agency staff have been calculated for each service area for this report and gives the percentage of staffing requirement met by agency workers from Pertemps for each Service Area.

Table 2.2: FTE of Pertemps Workers: comparing Q4 2017/18 with Q3 2017/18

CCC	Supplied by Pertemps			Incr Decr	FTE (Perm & Temp)	%
	FTE Q3	FTE Q4	Chge			
Overall *	63.83	78.21	14.38	Incr	3,693.71	2.1%

2.1 People Directorate

The table below shows the main areas that contribute to the Children's and Adults spend in the table above:

	Q3 £'000	Q4 £'000
Children's Services: Social workers	522	525
Children's Services: Senior roles, including Social Work Managers.	50	80
Adults' Services: Social workers	87	175
Adults' Services: Care Workers & Driver	13	28

Children's Services

The number of Children's social workers supplied by Pertemps has increased from 41 in December 2017 to 48 in March 2018.

The recruitment campaign continues with the Recruitment Team working closely with colleagues in the People Directorate to ensure a co-ordinated process for recruitment and the retention of employees and the permanent recruitment of Agency workers where possible. The ongoing recruitment campaign is attracting Children's social workers to Coventry with some Agency workers opting to take permanent roles with the service.

The recruitment of social workers continues to be a national issue. A shortage of competent and experienced social workers regionally means that Children's Services continues to require Agency Social Workers, albeit that the numbers are decreasing in the longer term. The Children's Services Workforce Strategy and Recruitment Action Plan set out how the Service is addressing this issue. Good progress has been made but ongoing and continual recruitment is required to ensure we maintain sufficient social workers to meet our statutory duties.

The cost of Children's Social Workers is controlled by the West Midlands regional agreement. This involves 14 local authorities and has the effect of capping the rates paid to all newly appointed agency social workers. The Pertemps Q4 spend on Children's social workers, including senior roles and managers is £605,146.

Adults Services

The number of Agency Social Workers in Adults has increased from 11 in December 2017 to 15 in March 2018 at an overall cost of £175,207 for the quarter. The reasons for employing agency social workers is:

- To cover vacancies and ensure that statutory duties are met in the All Age Disability, Mental Health and Older People Service areas.
- The need to meet increased demand during the winter period in order to minimise the need for hospital admissions and to facilitate hospital discharge. This was recognised as a need by the system-wide CQC review.

2.2 Place Directorate

The table below shows the main areas that contribute to the “Streetscene and Regulatory Services” line in the table above:

	Q3 £'000	Q4 £'000
StreetScene: Waste Services	94	120
StreetScene: StreetPride	81	67
StreetScene: Planning & Regulation	20	16

Waste Services Q4 agency costs were associated with cover for the Christmas / New Year period which extended into January, maintaining the service during inclement weather.

To ensure we have enough agency staff to cover the festive period, recruitment starts in November. This allows time for training and retention to man a full service during a highly competitive period for seasonal staff.

Agency staff were retained throughout January to support any additional waste associated with the festive period, and to provide cover for annual training of the domestic and commercial waste front line staff (approximately 160 individuals).

Inclement Weather:

The adverse weather at the beginning of the year created a backlog of waste on multiple occasions during Q4. The decision was taken to retain a proportion of the agency staff to minimise disruptions to services.

Agency staff were transferred to the Councils Casual Pool in April where applicable.

StreetPride are now actively recruiting to a number of vacancies presently being filled by agency staff however a number of vacant post are been held back as a result of a service review which is presently being undertaken. These vacant posts are being filled by agency staff. This review is at its later stages and implementation is anticipated to happen during July 18. We will then be recruiting full time permanent positions and will see long term agency use reduce.

It is however anticipated that some agency use will continue during the high work demand summer period to cover for permanent staff annual leave and sickness.

A spend of £33,406 within Finance and Corporate Services reflected the need to cover vacancies pending recruitment and to cover maternity absence, specifically for Lawyers and a Senior Solicitor.

Planning has now successfully recruited to fill the vacant post and the person is due to start on 23rd July after working their notice. Agency cover is still required during this period leading to the cost of £16k for the quarter. In the past quarter one of our existing planners has handed in their notice; this pending vacancy is currently being advertised. In addition another planner has indicated that they will be leaving soon, although formal resignation has not been received yet. It is anticipated that agency spend will continue into the coming quarter.

3 Spend outside of the Pertemps Contract

Table 3.1: Comparison of expenditure outside of the Pertemps contract; Q4 2017/18 with Q3 2017/18:

Directorate	Total Spend Q3 2017/18	Total Spend Q4 2017/18	Increase / Decrease	
People: Children's	£334,077	£107,266	-£226,811	Decrease
People: Education	£50,246	£67,437	£17,191	Increase
People: Adults	£0	£0	£0	
People: Cust. Serv.	£5,359	£34,639	£29,280	Increase
Place: Professional Services Contract	£526,156	£335,299	-£190,857	Decrease
Place: Other	£0	£0	£0	
TOTAL	£917,198	£544,641	-£372,557	Decrease

This includes both workers contracted through other agencies outside of the Pertemps contract or individuals contracted directly.

3.1 People: Children's Services

At the end of the quarter there were two interim contractors secured directly by the Council continuing to support service delivery and improvement. These posts are a Service Manager and an interim Strategic Lead who are required as part of the ongoing relationship with the Department of Education.

Spend on agency social workers outside of the Pertemps contract in this quarter is circa £400, which reflects late invoicing.

3.2 People: Education

Coventry Music Service (formerly the Performing Arts Service):

The changes made to the Coventry Music Service in September 2017 resulted in the service ceasing to use agency music tutors and this was reflected in the quarter 3 report which showed only a small residual charge. However, in quarter 4 unexpected charges were made which are included in the overall reported spend. These charges are all historic and relate to a period of time before the reorganisation of the service.

Centrally employed teachers/teaching assistants:

Q4 spend of £24.6k; Q3 was £23.7k

The LA maintains a range of direct teaching provision for vulnerable children, who are displaced from school or have SEN and attend a non-delegated 'unit' within a mainstream school. The law requires that the Local Authority ensures that children for whom it is responsible, receive an uninterrupted, full-time education. In addition we have a statutory duty to ensure that the specialist provision specified in an Education, Health and Care Plan is delivered. Failure to deliver opens up a right of complaint to the ombudsman. In summary, this means that action has to be taken to cover any sickness absence or vacancies. This applies specifically to the PRU, which operates as a school and the Enhanced Resourced Provisions (units) in schools. Staff have to be specialist in their field and can only be sourced from specialist agencies. These cover arrangements are always short-term.

Educational Psychology:

Q4 spend ££9.6k; Q3 spend £5.6k. Of this spend £6.4k is in direct support of the Psychology Service and £3.2k is to support the SEN Alternative Provision.

Educational Psychologists (EPs) in Coventry, provide both a statutory and traded service. There is an acute national shortage of EPs. To qualify as an EP, graduates ordinarily have a teaching background and then complete a Doctorate qualification. The Government sponsors a very limited number of Doctorate placements at UK University's. Placements are therefore highly competitive and the challenge of securing sufficient capacity, grows year on year. The Educational Psychology service provides the Council's statutory function under part 3 of the Children and Families Act. This equates to circa 1/3 of service activity.

The service then trades directly with schools and colleges to provide specialist SEN support at a day rate, set at a market forces rate. Our education providers have been very clear, that they regard this service as invaluable and want it to expand to meet local demand. The traded income is offset against the overall service cost and meets all elements the full cost of the traded service, without subsidy.

We can use the trainee's to deliver many of the EP functions, under supervision which we do. This is because trainees are in their 3rd year of post doctorate study and are therefore highly competent.

Many LA's have been unable to recruit or retain any EPs. Coventry has currently secured an EP service and is taking creative action to ensure that the service maintains a good reputation and continue to grow. However, service demand continues to exceed physical capacity. The trading demand of the service significantly outstrips supply. There is therefore no alternative but to balance the delivery of the service with independent/agency staff. The Council's 'grow your own' strategy, has enabled the service to recruit three trainee EPs, who will qualify in September 2018. The current indication is that the staff will then take up permanent posts with Coventry.

Quality Assurance Monitoring Officers:

Spend Q4 £13k; spend Q3 £21k

Coventry City Council aims to raise the achievement of Coventry pupils so that it is in line with, or better than, national standards, and to ensure all Coventry pupils attend schools that are judged by OFSTED to be at least good. The QA Monitoring Officers evaluate the effectiveness of support received for school improvement to ensure that all Coventry schools (primary, secondary and special schools) are making good progress.

3.3 People: Customer Services

Spend of £34.6k for Homelessness Officers (Q3 was £5.4k] and is in addition to those now supplied by Pertemps. This role is very hard to recruit to a permanent position. As of 28/02/2018, recruitment is underway for the 8 vacant posts for which verbal offers have been made to four candidates and a further assessment centre is planned for next week.

3.4 Place

This spend of £335.3k (Q3: £527.5k) was through the Professional Services Contract. Out of the total £335,299 was paid from Revenue. It is known that some of this figure will be recharged later.

In other areas we have filled a number of vacant posts, including an SM1 manager (Head of Transport & Innovation) who starts on 19th March 2018.

4 Alternative solutions to agency staff

4.1 To reduce the reliance on agency workers within Waste there is a bank of casual workers usually drawn from workers who have previously worked for the Council via an agency. The size of the pool is matched to the anticipated need to cover annual leave, sickness and peaks in demand so that we can offer work regularly. During the Christmas / New Year period the demand is much higher than can be met by the pool and it is judged that the use of agency workers during this period provides the most economical solution. At all other times of the year, use of agency workers is minimal.

4.2 Specialist Recruitment in Highways, Traffic & Transport

We continue to utilise the Transport & Highways microsite to recruit to our remaining vacant posts, and will be launching a fresh recruitment campaign in the coming weeks promoting the major programme of capital investment in highways and infrastructure within the city and highlighting the benefits of working for Coventry City Council.

For posts that have proved difficult to recruit to, we are looking at other options, such as career grading and graduate placement. Six vacant posts have been filled since February and these employees are now in place which has helped to reduce agency costs. Where possible, we recharge relevant revenue costs to Capital projects and external funding.

5 Overall Management Comment

The Master Vendor contract is a planned strategy to work towards reducing the level of agency spends and to better understand where and how we use agency workers.

There will always be the need to use agency workers. However, it is acknowledged that current usage is higher than we would like because of the need to cover sickness absence, short-term cover whilst Fundamental Service Reviews are taking place and to cope with sudden surges of demand. This will require the need for scarce skills and workers during these reviews; organisational restructures and sudden peaks in demand.

In terms of the cost of using agency workers, it is important to note that not all of the cost is in addition to normal staffing spend. Although agency cover associated with sickness

absence in front line services is often an additional cost, in the case of agency cover for vacant posts the cost will be funded at least in part by the relevant staffing budget.

Where opportunities exist for bulk recruitment campaigns to front line essential services, the Human Resources Recruitment Team will continue to work with service managers to identify workers, who are available for casual, temporary or permanent work in order to reduce the use of agency workers. However, some roles continue to be hard to recruit. In the case of children's social workers we have had some success with the current campaign which has been evolved to make extensive use of social media. Nevertheless recruitment of experienced, high quality children's social workers continues to be difficult.

The contract with Pertemps came into effect on the 2 December 2013 and is joint with Warwickshire and Solihull following an extensive tendering process. The contract is a hybrid Master Vendor arrangement which provides the Council with additional advantages to the existing Master Vendor contract. The contract has been re-tendered and the new contract with a new supplier is scheduled to start on 25th June 2018.

The need for managers to ensure that the process of filling vacancies is undertaken at the earlier opportunity has been communicated to senior management teams and this has been reflected in the process to be used for the new contract.

The requirement that all engagement of agency staff be approved by senior management has been communicated to management teams. This build for the new contract will incorporate this into the system set-up.

6 Results of consultation undertaken

- 6.1 The report sets out the steps the Council is taking to reduce expenditure on agency workers, particularly in those areas where they are used most intensively.
- 6.2 The report is able to identify more accurately spend on agency workers and the reasons for spend.
- 6.3 Officers will continue to bring the monitoring information to the Cabinet Member and steps will continue to be taken to endeavour to reduce the level of expenditure.
- 6.4 Management Information has given the opportunity for the Recruitment Team to target large areas with high usage of agency workers to try and reduce the need for agency workers. This work is ongoing.

7 Timetable for implementing this decision

Not applicable

8 Comments from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

8.1 Financial implications

Quarterly monitoring of expenditure on agency workers will continue throughout the contract. The cost of agency workers for the current reporting period from the Pertemps system is £1,255,088 which equates to 3.4% [Q3 = 2.82%] of the overall wage bill for this quarter (excluding schools).

Pertemps operate a live management accounts system which places the cost of agency workers in the period the work took place rather than the period of time in which the Council was billed for or paid the related invoices. The system shows the volume of agency activity/usage in a particular quarter irrespective of when invoices are paid. Therefore this information will be different from that which has gone through the Council's financial systems during Q4.

Pertemps system only incorporates timesheets authorised by managers and therefore the costs for a particular quarter will have a small tendency to increase throughout the year as more timesheets are authorised. We actively work with the master vendor to keep outstanding timesheets to a minimum.

Spend outside of the Pertemps contract, relates to the invoices paid during the relevant period. This expenditure relates to both temporary workers supplied by other agencies and to interim workers who operate under a PSC (Personal Service Company) with whom we contract directly.

8.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

9 Other implications

9.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / LAA (or Coventry SCS)?

The Agency Worker Contract arrangement provides good value for money in relation to the procurement of agency workers. It also provides firmer controls on the use of agency workers and has in place sound management reporting to see where spend is taking place to target recruitment, maximise resources, and reduce spend on agency workers.

9.2 How is risk being managed?

There may be a risk to the Council where managers go outside of the Pertemps and contract directly with workers with the advent of changes to IR35 arrangements. There has been numerous communications across the Council to inform managers of changes and there will continue to be as the changes that have been made bed in.

9.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

Through the rigorous monitoring of the use of agency workers and alternative strategies for resourcing short-term work requirements, the dependency on agency workers should be reduced. The Council's Policy on the use of agency workers states that Agency Workers should only be used when:

- Proper recruitment processes have failed to secure an appointment and staff cover has become crucial to the delivery of services;
- Short-term temporary cover is required until proper recruitment processes have been completed and an appointment is made;
- Unplanned absences require immediate cover to ensure continuity of services;
- Unplanned, short-term or peak workloads occur.

Human Resources are proactively supporting managers to reduce agency spend.

9.4 Equalities / EIA

The master vendor has made considerable efforts to ensure that the equalities monitoring form is completed. The graphs in appendix 3 show the main equalities data at corporate level for the agency workers who were on assignment with us in the month of March 2018.

No equality impact assessment has been carried out as the recommendations do not constitute a change in service or policy.

9.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

9.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s):**Name and job title:**

Philip Johnson, HR Advisor – Employment Policy & Practice

Directorate:

People Directorate

Tel and email contact:

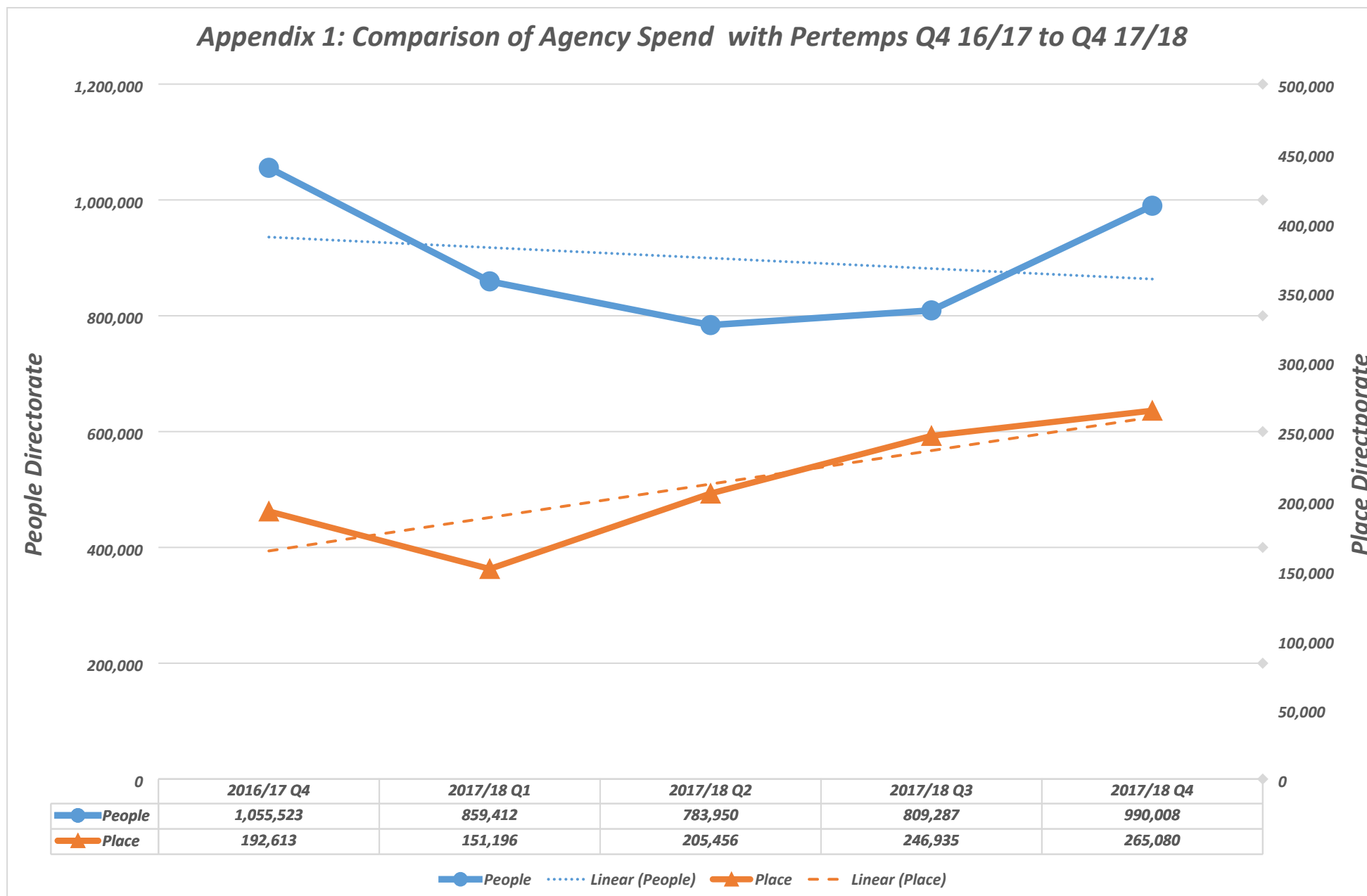
Telephone 024 7683 3261 philip.johnson@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

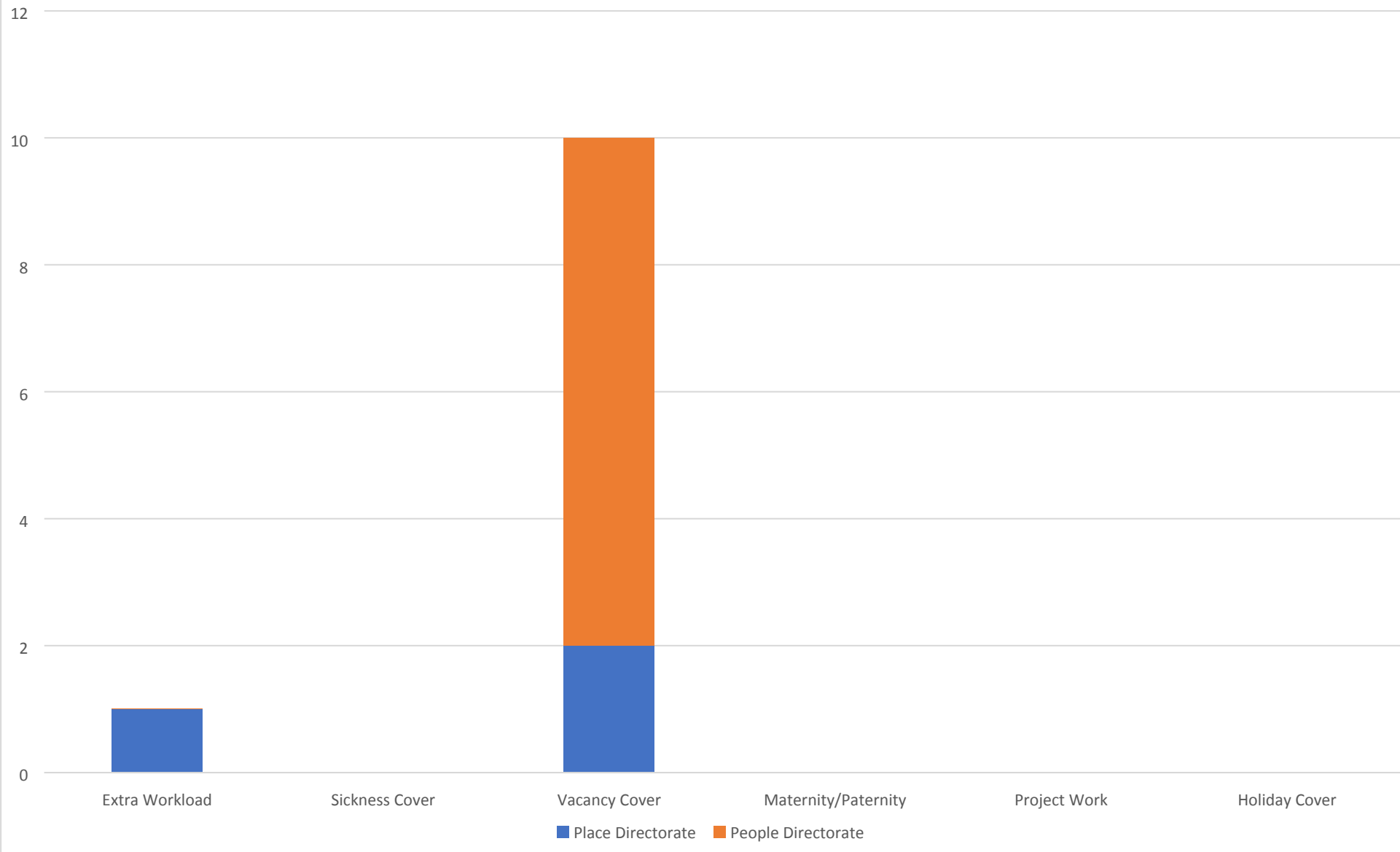
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Member: Councillor J Mutton	Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources			

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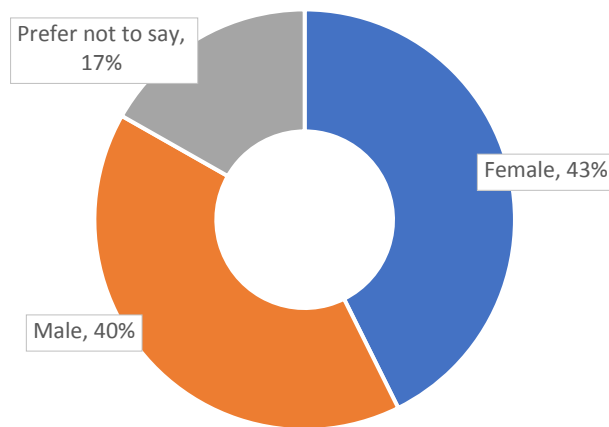


Appendix 2: Reason for Orders Q4 (January to March 2018)

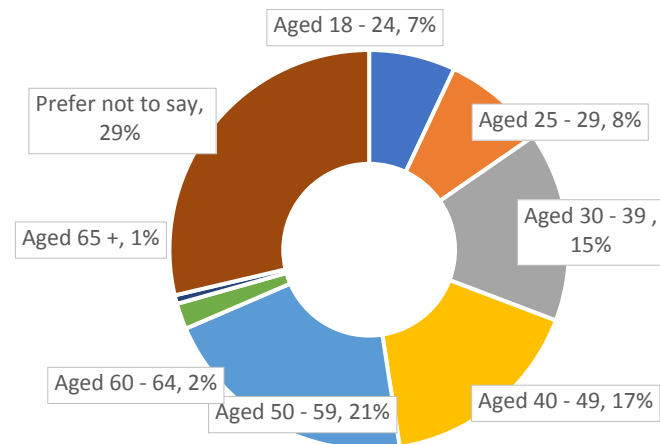


Appendix 3 - Equality Data for Agency Workers via the Pertemps Contract (Q2 2017/18)

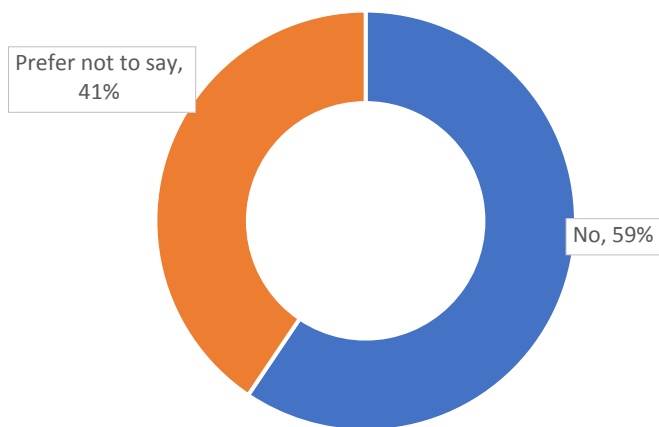
By Gender



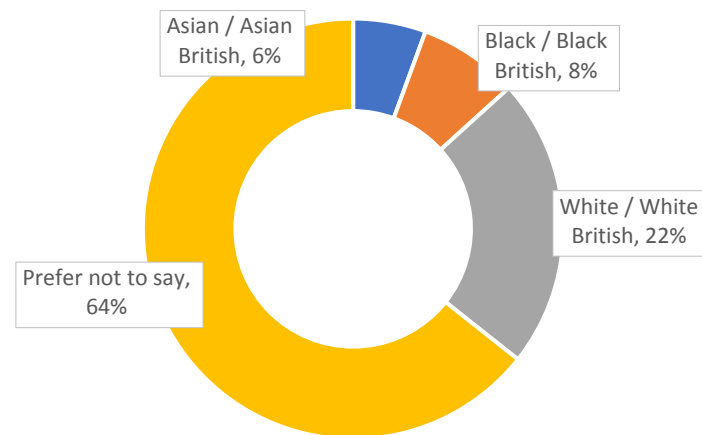
By Age Range



By Disability



Ethnic Origin



Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

19 July, 2018

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor J Mutton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title:

Outstanding Issues Report

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

In May 2004 the City Council adopted an Outstanding Minutes System, linked to the Forward Plan, to ensure that follow up reports can be monitored and reported to Members. The attached appendix sets out a table detailing the issues on which further reports have been requested by the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources so he is aware of them and can monitor progress.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is requested to consider the list of outstanding issues and to ask the Member of the Management Board or appropriate officer to explain the current position on those which should have been discharged at this meeting or an earlier meeting.

List of Appendices included:

Table of Outstanding Issues.

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it, or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

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	Subject	Date for Further Consideration	Responsible Officer	Proposed Amendment to Date for Consideration	Reason for Request to Delay Submission of Report
*1	Agency Workers and Interim Managers – Performance Management Report The Cabinet Member requested a report providing assurances that the process of filling vacancies, where appropriate, is undertaken at the earliest opportunity to ensure continuity of posts and that all future quarterly reports on agency workers include details of the number of agency staff engaged and the reasons for that engagement (Minute 72/17)	July 2018	Executive Director of People David Ashmore/Barbara Barratt		

*There is a report on this on the agenda

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