

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held
at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 7 December 2023

Present:

Members: Councillor E Ruane (Chair)
Councillor J Blundell
Councillor J Innes
Councillor R Lakha
Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor J McNicholas

Other Members: Councillor R Brown (Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources)

Employees

Human Resources: S Newing (Chief People Officer)

Law and Governance: E. Jones, C Sinclair, A West

Apologies: Councillor P Male and K Maton

Public Business

13. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

14. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

15. Agency Spend and Usage 2020-2023

The Board considered a briefing note and presentation which set out agency spend and reasons for use over the past three financial years 2020/21 to 2022/23, specifically for the specified directorates.

In summary, turnover for the City Council in the current year was currently at 13.90%, with 719 leavers and 748 starters. An improved position on last year.

The report included spend data for temporary agency usage via the Master Vendor contract and spend collated via Finance services using financial product codes relating to agency projects and consultancy under the 'Professional Services' umbrella. Coventry City Council's Master Vendor Contract to supply

agency workers was previously with Reed Agency - procured for three years commencing June 2019. This contract expired June 2021, and following a procurement exercise, Hays Agency commenced their contract agreement in June 2022.

The Briefing note contained data on agency spend Master Vendor/Off Contract and complete agency spend for 2020-2023 for:

- Education and Skills
- Transportation and Highways
- Network Management
- Adult Social Care
- Housing and Homelessness
- Customer Care
- Customer Services
- Human Resources
- Property Management and Major Projects
- Public Health
- Finance
- Law and Governance
- Street Scene and Regulatory Services
- Fleet
- Greenspace Services
- Bereavement Services
- Environmental Services
- Planning Services
- Children's Services - with detailed information on initiatives to attract and retain children's social workers.

Appendices to the briefing note set out agency usage spend by Master Vendor contract and direct agency cost – capital and revenue.

The Board questioned the Officer and received responses on several matters relating to the presentation and, following discussion, it was agreed that further information be provided to the Board on the following:

- Agency Usage spends incorporating vacancy costs.
- Average length of interim manager contracts
- Breakdown of the sources contributing to job application interest.
- Examples of jobs that would fall into the top 10 hourly rate category.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board note the details and reasons for using agency workers during the period 2020/23 and the work being undertaken to reduce the need and the cost.

16. Work Programme and Outstanding Issues

The work programme was considered and noted.

There were no outstanding issues.

17. Any other items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.05 pm)