



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

2ND SEPTEMBER 2024

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – SHEENAGH REES

Matter for information

Wards Affected: All wards

Agency Usage Monitoring Report

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on agency worker usage and spend across the Council (excluding schools).

2. Executive Summary

This report provides Members with information on the usage of agency workers for the previous financial year 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.

The information shows the highest usage of agency workers by service and by job role.

3. Background

An official agreement was made on 30th January, 2020 between the Council and Matrix SCM Ltd (Matrix) for the Provision of a Managed Service for the Supply of Agency Staff. Matrix took over the management of the supply of agency workers in April 2020 and the current contract will run until October 30th 2026 with the option to extend for 12 months.

Matrix engage with a number of suppliers on the Council's behalf to supply agency workers at the best rate possible. Matrix provide the Council with a "vendor neutral managed service", which means that they are an unbiased, neutral provider of workforce providing the best candidates from every agency.

Regular monitoring of agency usage has taken place over a number of years, with the aim of reducing expenditure. In 2015 / 16, at the height of expenditure in relation to agency workers, the council spent £1,516,699 (NB this figure is based on 15/16 prices so would be higher today), excluding schools. We have seen a steady decline in agency expenditure since monitoring began, and we introduced the Vendor Neutral Managed Service.

4. Agency Spend

The information presented has been provided by Matrix.

The tables below show the breakdown of agency spend by Directorate and information on the services and types of jobs that agency workers have been used during the last financial year, 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.

4.1 Overall Agency Spend

Spend from April 1ST 2023 – March 31st 2024 by Directorate:

DIRECTORATE	SPEND	% SPEND
ENVIRONMENT & REGENERATION	£599,279.05	69
SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH & COMMUNITIES	£272,896.81	31
TOTAL SPEND	£872,175.86	

The data from Matrix shows that only two Directorates have used agency workers over the previous financial year - Environment & Regeneration and Social Services, Health & Communities.

4.2 Agency Spend by Directorate

Environment & Regeneration

The Environment & Regeneration Directorate have the highest spend on agency workers which accounts for £599,279.05 of the total spend across the council of £872,175.86. This represents 69% of agency worker spend.

The table below shows how the spend in the Directorate is divided amongst the service areas:

Service Area	Spend	% Spend
Waste Operations	£594,213.23	99%
Environmental Health	£5,065.82	1%

Waste Services account for the majority of the spend and utilise agency workers to cover the roles of waste collectors/loaders, with

a small spend on waste drivers. Agency workers have been used to cover long-term sickness absences in the service and to cover vacancies pending the completion of recruitment exercises.

The remainder of the spend in the Directorate was used in Planning and Public Protection in Environmental Health Services to cover a vacancy in an administrative role on a short-term basis pending a review of this job role.

Social Services, Health & Housing

The spend on agency workers in this Directorate is £272,896.81 which represents 31% of the overall Council spend.

The table below shows how the spend in the Directorate is divided amongst the service areas:

Service Area	Spend	% Spend
Children and Young People Services	£153,881.57	56%
Adult Services (Social Services)	£78,757.41	29%
Adult Services (Housing & Communities)	£40,257.83	15%

Children and Young People Services account for the highest spend in the Directorate where agency workers were used to cover qualified Social Worker roles.

Similarly, the second highest spend was in Adult Services in Social Services where, again, agency workers were used to cover qualified Social Worker roles.

Agency workers were used to cover long-term sickness absences and vacancies whilst the recruitment process was being undertaken.

Housing and Communities used agency workers in the roles of Housing Options Officer, Support Resettlement Officer and Support Resettlement Assistant, covering employees given secondment opportunities, to work on a one-off project and to cover a vacancy whilst the recruitment process was being undertaken.

4.2 Agency Spend by Job Category/Job Role

The following information shows the highest spend by job category and which job roles fall into these categories.

**Spend from April 1ST 2023 – March 31st 2024
by Job Category/Role:**

Total spend for this period - £872,175.86

JOB CATEGORY	JOB ROLE	SPEND
Operational and Support	Waste collection roles	£594,213.23
Social Care (Qualified)	Qualified Social Worker roles	£232,638.98
Professional	Housing Options Officer Support & Resettlement Officer Support & Resettlement Assistant	£40,257.83
Admin/Clerical	Business Support Officer	£5,065.82

The Operational and Support job category shows the highest of overall spend where agency workers are used for job roles in Waste Operations.

Social Care (qualified) job category shows the second highest overall spend where agency workers are used to cover Social Worker roles.

4.3 Comparison of Agency Spend with previous years

PERIOD	TOTAL AGENCY SPEND	
April 2023 – March 2024	£872,175	Environment £599,279 Highest spend of above Waste Operations – refuse and recycling loaders Social Services - £232,638 Highest spend of above qualified social workers
April 2022 – March 2023	£899,745	Environment £603,444 Highest spend of above Waste & Recycling Services – loaders and drivers Social Services £296,301 Highest spend of above qualified social workers
April 2020 – March 2021	£984,260	Environment £876,347 Highest spend Waste & Recycling Services Social Services £91,351 Highest spend Social Workers, OT, Support & Resettlement Assistant

5. Summary

Analysis of the data shows that for each financial year, the highest spend is in the Environment and Regeneration Directorate in Waste Operations and the second highest spend in Social Services for qualified social

worker roles (in both Adult Social Services and Children and Young People Services).

Figures from previous years show that total expenditure on agency workers has continued to steadily decreased across the Council from £984,260 in 2020/21 to £899,745 in 2022/23 and £872,175 in 2023/24.

6. Financial Impacts

The cost of agency workers is met by the individual services engaging the agency workers. The Council contracted with Matrix in 2020 as they were the most cost effective supplier available under the Crown Commercial Services Framework.

7. Integrated impact assessment

There is no requirement to undertaken an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring / information purposes.

8. Valleys Communities Impacts

No impacts

9. Workforce Impacts

No impacts associated with this report.

10. Legal Impacts

Agency Worker Regulations 2010 provide Agency workers with certain employment rights and equal treatment. Some of these rights commence on Day 1 and, other rights are triggered when an employer uses the worker for 12 consecutive weeks in a given job. Services ensure that agency workers are treated in accordance with the Regulations.

11. Risk Management Impacts

Services only engage agency workers when the delivery of front-line services to our communities could be disrupted.

12. Crime and Disorder Impacts

No impacts

13. Counter Terrorism Impacts

No impacts

14. Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

15. Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note the information on agency usage and spend information.

FOR INFORMATION

16. List of Background Papers

None

Officer contact

Sheenagh Rees, Head of People & Organisational Development,
Email: s.rees5@npt.gov.uk