

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Personnel Committee

14th May 2018

Report of the Head of Streetcare

M. Roberts

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Employment of Graduates

Purpose of Report

1. To seek approval to create four new three-year graduate posts and recruit accordingly as part of succession planning and ensuring service continuity for the future.

Executive Summary

2. Further to succession planning there is a need to take action at two levels, apprenticeship level and graduate level, and this report relates to the latter. The report seeks approval to recruit four graduates in Streetcare Services, on an initial three year fixed contract, three based at the Quays and one at Tregelles Court.

Background

3. With budget reductions, a general ending to structured professional training programmes, natural retirements, voluntary redundancies, and an associated general staff downsizing over some ten years now, there has not only been limited opportunities for progression within the organisation but there has also been very limited recruitment at graduate level.
4. One consequence is that the age profile of the organisation shows we now have an ageing workforce and succession planning indicates action needs to be taken to help ensure the Council has a sufficient talent pool of staff available going forward. Some 46% of staff are now over 50 years old in Streetcare overall, 57% in Lighting & Buildings Services. Whatever model of service

delivery exists in the future, whether the Council acts in enabler and/or provider roles the Council is going to need high quality candidates to fill principal officer, project management, manager and other senior posts. Even where service provision is procured externally, there will need to be expert client officers to protect the Council's position and ensure value for money. It is furthermore known from previous internal recruitment exercises that very few of those existing staff with the qualifications or capability to step up to senior levels of responsibility wish to do so.

5. The position in Neath Port Talbot is by no means unique in Local Government across Wales. In this context it would seem folly to place reliance solely on external recruitment going forward as expert and experienced staff will be in short supply and Local Government is becoming a less attractive place to work in terms of pay and pensions for the highly skilled, particularly in relation to the technical disciplines. If we are going to invest in staff for the future we need to do it now, whilst there are highly skilled and experienced staff still around to pass on their knowledge and skills.
6. The current cohort of graduates will be graduating in May/June, joining other graduates already in the market for employment, which would be an ideal time to place an advert for recruitment. The Council needs to attract graduates of the correct calibre with good degrees in subjects of interest and relevance. If approved it is proposed, at least initially, the four graduates will be hosted in the following areas: Building Services; Street Lighting; Waste and Highways.
7. A Job Description and Person Specification for the proposed posts has been produced as given in Appendix A. The role has been subject to Job Evaluation and assessed as Grade 6 i.e. with a starting salary of £21,693. This is in line with graduate jobs elsewhere which are typically in the range £20K-£25K. It is proposed the posts would initially be offered on a 3 year temporary contract.
8. It is acknowledged that funding for proactive measures in relation to succession planning is always going to be problematic in the context of austerity, and set out below alongside the financial implications is how it is proposed cost will be met. There is an element of financial risk but the question is whether the council can

afford to take no action and leave future resourcing solely to the vagaries of the market.

9. If the proposal to recruit graduates in Streetcare is approved, the Council will then have three strands towards ensuring capacity at more senior level, i.e. continuing to develop those existing staff who wish to progress in their careers, in-house training and development of graduates, and external recruitment.

Financial Impact

10. Please see attached financial appraisal form in Appendix B.
11. Following a series of very cold winters the winter maintenance budget was reviewed about five years ago, and notwithstanding general financial reductions the winter maintenance budget was increased by £100K a year. A succession of relatively mild winters has followed and the Winter Maintenance Reserve, to which underspends in the annual budget are transferred, has grown year on year and is now back at former levels.
12. It is proposed to meet the cost of three temporary graduate posts from the winter maintenance budget. In mild years there will be adequate money in the winter maintenance budget however should expenditure due to severe weather over the three years be of such an extent that both the annual revenue budget and reserve budget are expended then ultimately there could be a need to call on the corporate contingency to meet severe weather costs. Given the reserve currently stands at over £750,000 this is however considered unlikely. It is proposed to meet the cost of the fourth post from the Building Services Trading Account

Equality Impact Assessment

13. There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

Workforce Impact

14. This proposal with help ensure there is a sufficient pool of suitably experience and qualified staff available in the future to ensure service continuity.

Legal Impact

15. There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

Risk Management

16. This proposal will reduce the risk of there being insufficient staff of appropriate qualifications and capabilities to meet succession planning needs.

Consultation

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

Recommendation(s)

18. It is recommended that approval be given to create four Grade 6 Graduate Municipal Services Officer posts in Streetcare Services and to recruit graduates accordingly, initially on three-year temporary contracts.

Reason for Proposed Decision(s)

19. To fulfil succession planning needs.

Implementation of Decision

20. The decision is proposed for immediate implementation.

Appendices

21. Appendix A – Job Description
Appendix B – Financial Appraisal

List of Background Papers

22. None

Officer Contact

23. Mr Mike Roberts, Head of Streetcare. Tel: 01639 686966 or e-mail:m.roberts@npt.gov.uk

ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

JOB DESCRIPTION

Effective Date:

Post Reference:

1. Description

Post Title: Graduate Municipal Services Officer

Grade: GR 6

Section: Streetscene Services

Location: The Quays

1.1 Position in Organisation

Post title of immediate supervisor: Accountable Service Manager

Number directly supervised by post holder: Up to 6 (if Required)

1.2 Main Purpose of Post

To assist the Service Manager with any and all aspects of service delivery and undertake relevant personal development.

1.3 Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. To assist with policy and strategy.
2. To assist with organising all aspects of services.
3. To assist in compiling and managing contracts.

1.3 Main Duties and Responsibilities

4. To assist with managing operational and other staff.
5. To assist with bids for funding and administration of grants
6. To learn and develop skills with respect to services and project management.
7. To assist external design skills and provide design input if required.
8. To assist in meeting the performance standards and targets of the sections operational business plan and those of the corporate plan.
9. To prepare reports.
10. To deal with complaints, correspondence and requests of services.
11. To process invoices and orders.
12. To assist with service reviews, make presentations and recommendations.
13. To undertake site visits around the County Borough as required.
14. To assist in the development and implementation of specifications, service level agreement, and business plans.
15. To supervise individuals and senior teams as requested by senior manager.
16. To carry out annual reviews with any staff under direct control.
17. To work to any agreed training plans.
18. To take responsibility for service actions.
19. To project manage change as required.
20. To undertake manual work where required as part of awareness or other training.

21. Any other duties commensurate with the grading of the post.

Standards of Performance

- i. Attending all meetings specified by the Accountable Service Manager.
- ii. Satisfactory completion of courses and qualifications.
- iii. Timely completion of tasks and activities set by accountable manager.
- iv. Ensuring that Council and Directorate policies/procedures are adhered to

Authority to Act

- i. Authority to Act:** Within the guidelines provided by Accountable Service Manager
- ii. Act and Report:** To Accountable Service Manager
- iii. Recommend:** Service improvements and effectiveness.
- iv. Delegate:** Tasks to relevant staff, as may be placed under direct control.

This is an outline description of the job as it presently exists. The job description will be examined periodically and updated to ensure that it relates to the job as then being performed or to incorporate whatever changes are proposed by the Authority. Any such changes will be subject to consultation with the post holder. It will be the Authority's aim to reach agreement to reasonable changes, if agreement is not possible, the Authority reserves the right to insist on changes, following consultation.

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Castell Nedd Port Talbot

Environment Directorate

Person Specification

Post: Graduate Municipal Service Officer

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to enable you, as a candidate, to consider whether or not you have the attributes, which are required for appointment to this post. Please note that this document indicates those attributes that are considered to be **essential** to undertake the duties and responsibilities of this post and those that are merely **desirable**. If you do not possess any of the attributes that are **desirable**, this does not mean that you will not be considered for interview or subsequent appointment.

<u>SKILLS/ATTRIBUTES</u>	<u>ESSENTIAL OR DESIRABLE</u>	<u>EVALUATION METHOD</u>
<u>Work Experience</u> Candidates should have some previous experience of carrying out tasks associated with the main duties and responsibilities.	Desirable	Application Form/Interview

<u>SKILLS/ATTRIBUTES</u>	<u>ESSENTIAL OR DESIRABLE</u>	<u>EVALUATION METHOD</u>
<u>Skills/Abilities</u> Good standard of written and verbal communication. Good standard of computer literacy. Ability to work independently as well as part of a team. Ability to communicate effectively through the medium of Welsh.	Essential Essential Essential Desirable	Application Form/Interview Application Form/Interview Application Form/Interview Application Form/Interview
<u>Education and Training</u> To be educated to a Degree level Class II Division II or better in a relevant degree	Essential	Application Form/Interview
<u>Other Requirements</u> Current full driving licence. Satisfactory Medical Clearance Certificate	Essential Essential	Application Form/Interview Pre-employment questionnaire

Please note:

If you have any query in respect of this document, please contact:

FINANCIAL APPRAISAL

SET UP COSTS

<u>Costs</u>	<u>This Year</u> <u>(2018/19)</u> <u>£</u>
Recruitment Costs	0
Accommodation Costs	0
Office Costs	0
Others	0
Total Set Up Costs	Nil
<u>Funding of Set Up Costs</u>	
Revenue Budget	0
Reserves	0
Special Grant	0
Other (Specify)	0
Total Funding of Set Up Costs	Nil

RECURRING COSTS

<u>Costs</u>	<u>This Year</u> <u>£'</u>	<u>Maximum</u> <u>£'</u>
Employee Costs (from Financial Appraisal Statement)		
- Starting Salary inc. On-costs (4 @ Grade 6)	117,496	
- Additional cost at Maximum Salary		138,700
Accommodation Running Costs		
IT Annual Costs		
Other Running Costs (Specify)		
Total Recurring Costs	117,496	138,700
<u>Funding of Recurring Costs</u>		
External Sources		
Specific Grant:		
- staffing costs		
- other		
Funding from External Agencies		
Service Level Agreement		
Other (Specify)		
Internal Sources		
Existing Budget Allocation - Highways	88,122	104,025
- Building Services	29,374	34,675
Additional Guideline Allocation		
Other		
Total Funds Available (see financial section of report)	117,496	138,700

Post will be subject to a three year fixed term contract