



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL**

### **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

**29<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2021**

### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – SHEENAGH REES**

**Matter for information**

**Wards Affected: All wards**

#### **Monitoring Report on Agency Usage and Spend**

##### **Purpose of Report**

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

##### **Executive Summary**

This report provides Members with information on the usage of agency workers for the previous financial year and for the period April 1<sup>st</sup> - August 31<sup>st</sup> of this year.

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

## 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 contract will run until October 30<sup>th</sup> 2022 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 is not a staffing company and is entirely supplier-neutral.

## Agency Spend

The information has been provided by Matrix.

### 1.1 Agency Spend by Directorate

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 for in the periods shown.

#### Spend from April 1<sup>ST</sup> 2020 – March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021 by Directorate:

| <b>DIRECTORATE</b>                | <b>SPEND</b>    |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| ENVIRONMENT & REGENERATION        | £876,347        |
| SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH & HOUSING | £91,351         |
| FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES      | £10,802         |
| CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S                 | £5,760          |
| <b>TOTAL SPEND</b>                | <b>£984,260</b> |

### Environment & Regeneration

The highest spend on agency workers is within the Environment & Regeneration Directorate which accounts for £876,347 of the total

spend across the council of £984,260. This represents 88% of agency worker spend.

Waste and Recycling services account for the highest spend where agency workers are used to cover the roles of refuse collectors/loaders and refuse/recycling drivers.

The rest of the spend in the Directorate has mainly been used on agency workers across the following services and job roles:

Environmental Health (Environmental Health Officer)  
Trading Standards ( Trading Standards Officer)  
South Wales Trunk Road Agency (Principal Engineer and Senior Electrical Engineer)  
South Wales Trunk Road Agency (Administrative support)  
South Wales Trunk Agency (Driving Skilled Operative)  
Highways and Drainage (Driving Skilled Operative)

### **Social Services, Health & Housing**

The second highest spend of £91,351 falls within Social Services, Health and Housing and represents 9% of total agency spend.

Agency workers contributing to this spend have mainly been used across the following services and job roles:

Community Occupational Team (Occupational Therapist)  
Social Workers across various teams  
Housing Renewals, Adaptations and Homelessness (Support and Resettlement Assistant)

NB During the pandemic, agency workers needed by SSHH were supplied via Prospero Health & Social Care Recruitment Agency in addition to those supplied via Matrix.

Consequently, an additional £67,000 was used on agency workers from Prospero of which £30,000 has been reclaimed from the Welsh Government to cover these covid-related figures.

### **Chief Executive's and Finance & Corporate Services**

The main usage in these two Directorates has been in administrative roles, along with Customer Services/CCTV and accounts for a total spend of £16,562.

### **Spend from April 1<sup>st</sup> - August 31<sup>st</sup> 2021 by Directorate:**

| <b>DIRECTORATE</b>                  | <b>SPEND</b>    |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| ENVIRONMENT & REGENERATION          | £311, 519       |
| SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND HOUSING | £77,867         |
| FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES        | £7,721          |
| <b>TOTAL SPEND</b>                  | <b>£397,107</b> |

### **Environment & Regeneration**

The highest usage of agency workers for this period is within the Environment & Regeneration Directorate spending £311,519 out of a total spend across the council of £397,107. This represents 78% of total agency spend.

Waste and Recycling show the highest spend using agency workers in the roles of refuse collectors/loaders and refuse/recycling drivers.

Agency workers have also been used in Environmental Health in the job role of Environmental Health Officer and in South Wales Trunk Road Agency in Engineering, Administrative and Skilled Driving Operative roles.

## **Social Services, Health & Housing**

The second highest usage is in Social Services, Health and Housing with a spend of £77,867 out of the total. This represents 20% of total agency spend.

The highest spend has been used in various qualified social worker roles and accounts for £50,342 of the £77,867 spend.

Housing Renewals, Adaptations and Homelessness also account for the agency worker spend used for the role of Support and Resettlement Assistant.

## **Finance & Corporate Services**

The main agency usage in this Directorate has been in administrative roles.

### **1.2 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 1<sup>ST</sup> 2020 – March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021 by Job Category/Role:**

Total spend for this period - £984,260

| <b>JOB CATEGORY</b>     | <b>JOB ROLE</b>   | <b>SPEND</b> |
|-------------------------|---|--------------|
| Operational and Support | Refuse collectors/loaders<br>Refuse/Recycling Drivers<br>Driving Skilled Operatives | £678,189     |
| Technical               | Trading Standards Officer<br>Principal Engineer<br>Senior Electrical Engineer       | £113,096     |

|              |   |         |
|--------------|---|---------|
| Professional | Environmental Health Officer<br>Domestic Abuse Worker<br>Support & Resettlement Assistant | £95,732 |
|--------------|---|---------|

**Spend from April 1<sup>ST</sup> 2021 – August 31<sup>st</sup> 2021 by Job Category/Role:**

Total spend for this period - £397,107

| <b>JOB CATEGORY</b>     | <b>JOB ROLE</b>   | <b>SPEND</b> |
|-------------------------|---|--------------|
| Operational and Support | Refuse collectors/loaders<br>Refuse/Recycling Drivers<br>Driving Skilled Operatives | £263,953     |
| Social Care (Qualified) | Social Workers (Adult Services and Children & Young People Services)                | £50,342      |
| Technical               | Principal Engineer<br>Senior Electrical Engineer                                    | £47,329      |

### Summary

Figures from previous years show that total expenditure on agency workers has steadily decreased across the Council from £1,516,699.09 in 2015/16 to £1,261,839.07 in 2016/17 and to £1,129,100.37 in 2017/18. This report shows expenditure continues to decrease.

In reference to an Internal Audit report produced 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021, it was reported that there were no issues found in the use of agency workers. Agency workers are used only when absolutely necessary to ensure continuity of service delivery and are used only as a short-term solution when there are unforeseen workforce shortages. Normal

recruitment processes are followed when vacancies arise and agency workers are not used as an alternative to filling vacant posts within services.

Any agency costs are monitored against budgets on a monthly basis as part of the budget monitoring exercise. If there are any concerns these are then discussed with the relevant Accountable Manager responsible for the service.

### **Financial Impacts**

The cost of agency workers is met by individual services engaging the agency workers.

### **Integrated impact assessment**

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

### **Valleys Communities Impacts**

No implications

### **Workforce Impacts**

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report

### **Legal Impacts**

Agency Worker Regulations give Agency workers are entitled to certain employment rights and equal treatment if the hirer uses the worker for 12 consecutive weeks in a given job.

### **Risk Management Impacts**

The delivery of front line services to the community could be disrupted if Agency workers are not used.

### **Consultation**

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

**Recommendations**

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

**FOR INFORMATION****Officer contact**

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