

BRIEFING PAPER

SUBJECT: SOUTHAMPTON TRANSITION EMPLOYMENT PROJECT (STEP)
DATE: 13TH SEPTEMBER 2012
RECIPIENT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THIS IS NOT A DECISION PAPER

SUMMARY:

Cabinet is scheduled to consider the report of the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services on 18th September 2012 which seeks approval to review and implement enhanced redeployment and recruitment policies and processes. The enhanced arrangements will be managed through the Southampton Transition Employment Project (STEP).

The new arrangements will provide a holistic approach to the retention, redeployment and recruitment of staff and the use of agency and temporary staff. The purpose of the review is to implement improved measures for staff who are displaced in the organisation by ensuring that they are given priority when vacancies arise and by providing an enhanced level of training, assistance and other options.

BACKGROUND and BRIEFING DETAILS:

1. The recommendations included in the report are:
 - To approve the high level principles for STEP as outlined in the report, including the extension of the redeployment period from 3 to 4 months and the implementation of a short and long term strategy
 - To approve consultation with staff and unions on the details of the final long term solution following a review of work to be undertaken between October and March 2013
 - To delegate authority to the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources to amend any HR policies and procedures to support the proposals
 - To delegate authority to the Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services to take any such necessary actions to enable this project to proceed and be implemented.
2. The reasons for the report recommendations are:
 - The current recruitment and redeployment arrangements need to be reviewed in order to facilitate the change programme within the organisation and to ensure staff are given as much support as possible when jobs are changed or deleted
 - Staff need clarity of the options which are available to them and assistance and training to ensure that their attributes and qualities are best used by the organisation
 - Recruitment procedures need to be reviewed so that they are flexible and efficient to ensure that costs are minimised and that services are maintained.
3. Objectives of the proposed changes:

There are a number of over arching principles to which the Authority wants to adhere.

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These are, that the solution must:

- Be both financially and operationally sustainable
- Maximise flexibility in the use of budgets and staff
- Maximize the effectiveness of the redeployment process to get the right people in the right jobs
- Build a positive working environment through a collaborative approach with the workforce and the unions
- Encourage existing talent to stay with the council by building career pathways
- Treat people well by maximising their chances of redeployment
- Be enforced and adhered to by managers.

The way that change is brought in to the organisation is important. The Authority wants change delivered quickly but in a practical way that is supported by managers. In order to achieve this, it is proposed that the longer term vision for the management of staff recruitment and redeployment is supported by a shorter term pilot to assist staff already, or who are likely to be, displaced.

4. **Review Strategy**

A short term strategy will address the immediate issue of staff currently on the redeployment register and will also allow for a bedding in period whereby policy and procedural changes, costs and savings can be assessed prior to a wider roll out of new policies and processes.

The following paragraphs detail the features of the proposal.

5. **Short Term Plan (October 2012 to March 2013)**

The actions which will be carried out in this period include:

- The length of time staff are on the redeployment register (as a consequence of budget decisions) to be extended from 3 to 4 months, to allow additional time for training and support. This period would then be their notice period.
- Consideration and assessment of an additional 'compromise agreement' payment for staff not wishing to be redeployed
- Improved assessment of staff on the redeployment register to facilitate improved matching to a wider range of permanent and temporary posts
- Development of a personal training programme where staff are taken through personal assessment and training options and integration with other relevant agencies such as Job Centre Plus, outside agencies and other Council departments
- Development of an improved intranet and written information on options for staff and guidance for managers which integrates with the training programme
- A review of the use and control of the temporary pool, to ensure it is being used in the most efficient way and to the benefit of existing staff and services
- A review of the use of casual, temporary and agency staff
- Development of 'personal assessment' software
- Development of detailed policies to support the changes
- Production of a further report to Council to agree the long term strategy.

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6. Long Term Vision (from April 2013)

The long term strategy will also likely encompass the following additional features

- A central Employment Agency (EA) which will manage all staff recruitment and redeployment
- The Employment Agency will ensure that
 - Staff resource is managed and monitored as a single entity
 - Displaced staff are properly assessed as to their skills and abilities, with an emphasis on the abilities of staff as well as their past experiences to ensure staff are given every opportunity to be matched to vacant jobs
 - The use of temporary staff is both reduced from current levels and minimised thereafter and that temporary posts are used to help staff who need to be redeployed
 - The use of agency and casual staff is minimised to reduce costs and posts filled wherever possible using staff on the redeployment register
- Processes are managed automatically using new systems. A new intranet micro site will support the process and 'personal assessment' software will help manage the assessment of staff capabilities skills and job matching
- Staff who are placed on the redeployment register will be guided, assisted and mentored through
 - Detailed assessment of strengths and skills and assigned a personal careers advisor
 - structured training plans and 'hand held' through a series of training options including working for other areas within the Authority
 - Introductions to external agencies and internal managers who can direct redeployed staff to permanent jobs
- Allow staff with a permanent post to voluntarily place themselves on the redeployment register to move to new areas of work

Additional incentives will be considered to create 'churn'; that is movement of staff within and out of the Authority.

RESOURCE/POLICY/FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital/Revenue:

7. The proposals in the report will require a revenue budget of £210,000 in 2012/13 to cover the following items, provision for which is held in the Organisational Development Reserve:

2012/13

Set up costs intranet Micro site	£ 10,000
Increased redeployment period	£100,000
Employee assessment and job matching, systems and resources	£ 50,000
Staff support and management costs	£ 50,000
Total	£ 210,000

