

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Employment & Appeals Committee
DATE: 16th February 2022
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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR INFORMATION**

TEMPORARY WORKERS

1 Purpose of Report

This report provides Members of the committee with an update on the Council's use of temporary / agency workers and to respond to questions that have been received since the last report in October 2021.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Committee is requested to note the report.

3 Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

The provision of temporary workers does not directly impact on the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy.

The provision does, however, enable the Council to deliver its services to the community through the provision of specialist skills or replacement labour when and where required.

Five Year Plan Outcomes

The proposals within this report meet the Five-Year Plan objectives as follows:

Outcome 1, 2, 3, 4

The services engage temporary workers in order to deliver these outcomes when permanent workers are not available, or specialist skills are required.

Outcome 5

The supplier of temporary workers engages with local suppliers of temporary labour whilst also working with a wider pool to ensure Slough has access to the best available talent to make Slough an attractive place to operate and work.

4 Other implications

(a) Financial

The agency spend on temporary workers for Quarter 3 (October – December 2021) was £3.6 million. In this quarter the spend had increased by £232,729, from the previous quarter. The increase in spend resulted from a higher number of leavers between October and December 2021 which required engaging more temporary workers. Further details for spend in the directorates and the number of leavers is covered in section 6 below.

(b) Risk Management

The key risk for the council is the inability to deliver services were skills shortage and turnover of staff are creating gaps, which must be filled with the short-term use of agency / temporary workers. As a long-term issue this risk also must be balanced against the over reliance of agency workers and the longer-term use of agency workers where recruitment to permanent roles is unsuccessful.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act implications.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no requirement for an Equalities Impact Assessment as we do not hold equalities data on temporary workers as they are not our employees.

(e) Workforce

There are no implications for permanent staff. Priority is given to any staff member that is displaced to apply for any suitable vacant posts where they have transferrable skills.

5. Background

At the October 2021 EAC meeting members were informed that Slough Borough Council continues to offer roles to staff on a permanent basis. Opportunities for roles are advertised internally first, and where there are skills shortages both internally and externally. Since October 2021 we have advertised 25 posts (both internally & externally), and have successfully appointed to 6 posts, 2 posts are pending acceptance, 5 posts have not been appointed to and for 3 posts we received no applications. The remaining roles are still in the recruitment process.

However, due to the current financial position of the council and movement of staff due to organisational change and leavers there will be from time to time a need to engage temporary / agency worker/s. Additionally, this may also include the following reasons:

1. A need for limited duration on a one-off task or project which require specialist skills / experience to undertake projects.
2. To cope with a surge in demand or to meet service delivery deadlines.
3. To cover the absence of permanent staff, for example regarding long term sickness absence or maternity leave, where there has been no internal arrangement that could be made (acting up / secondment).
4. Cover for a permanent vacancy pending a recruitment campaign.
5. Recruitment for permanent staff resulted unsuccessfully due to national shortage of the roles i.e., planners, qualified social workers.

6. Spend on temporary / agency workers

Table 1 below shows spend on temporary / agency workers by department as at December 2021. The breakdown of spend separates workers who are occupying vacant posts (deemed to be inside IR35 status) and those workers that are undertaking project work or who have a specialist skill and are engaged through a limited company status (deemed to be outside of IR35 status). Please note inside and outside IR35 rules were introduced to tackle perceived tax avoidance by consultants and temporary workers.

Table 1 – Agency Spend by Directorate

Directorate	IR35 Status	No of Workers	Spend	Previous Quarter Differences	Trend Increase - ↑ Reduction - ↓ Unchanged - ↔
Adults and Communities	Inside IR35	39	£711,173	£159,153	↑
	Outside IR35	4	£105,903	£41,574	↑
Chief Executive	Inside IR35	1	£22,108	-£7,794	↓
	Outside IR35	1	£24,351	£10,590	↑
Children, Learning and Skills	Inside IR35	5	£45,856	-£89,364	↓
	Outside IR35	1	£40,349	£17,853	↑
Finance and Resources	Inside IR35	55	£1,195,483	£211,295	↑
	Outside IR35	19	£700,309	-£25,774	↓
Housing Revenue Account	Inside IR35	5	£62,035	£30,247	↑
	Outside IR35	1	£24,544	-£3,873	↓
Place and Development	Inside IR35	31	£351,770	-£66,366	↓

	Outside IR35	2	£37,486	£606	↑
Regeneration	Inside IR35	7	£187,839	-£19,338	↓
	Outside IR35	5	£184,944	-£26,081	↓
Grand Total		175	£3,694,149	£232,729	↑

NB This data represents three months' worth of data and is not a snapshot in time.

The total spend on all agency workers (whether inside or outside IR35) during Quarter 3 period was £3,694,149. This is a 7% increase of the previous quarter.

The main reason for this increase is due to the increase in the number of permanent staff that left the employment of SBC, and Table 2 below shows the leaver reasons and the type of posts that were vacated. Please note that agency workers secured for these posts were at a higher cost such as Social Workers and OT's.

Table 2 – Summary of Leavers reasons and types of posts between October 2021 – December 2021

No of Leavers	Reasons for leaving	Further details of reason
68	Voluntary resignations	Career progression (28) Change in career (22) Change in personal circumstances (10) Moving away (2) Family / Health (1) Personal health (5)
4	Dismissed	Dismissal following formal procedures
6	Retirement	4 x Normal age retirement, 2 x Early retirement
5	Fixed Term Contract ended	Expiry of FTC
83	Total	

Types of Post

Directorate	Types of post	Reason for leaving
People Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Early Years Practitioners SEND Associate Director Educational Psychologist 	All due to Voluntary resignation
Corporate Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Services Assistant Complaints & FOI Facilities Officer 	All due to Voluntary resignation
People Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Workers Occupational Therapist Day Services Public Health 	Due to Voluntary Resignation and Early Retirement / End of FTC
Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DSO Grounds Neighbourhood Recharges Housing Housing needs 	Due to Voluntary Resignation, End of FTC and Dismissal

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning policy • Planning & Strategy • Libraries & Culture Customer Assistant 	
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7. Monthly Live placements temporary / agency workers

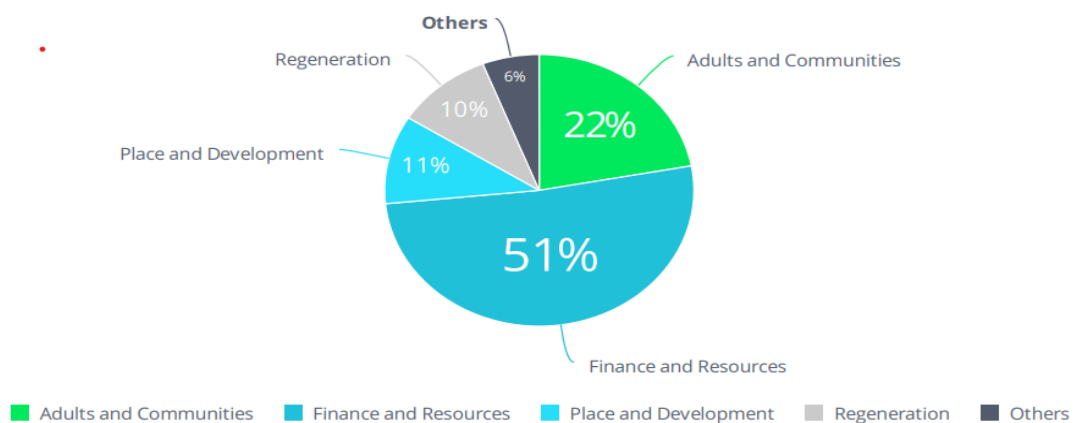
Table 3 below illustrates the number of monthly 'live' placements of temporary / agency workers within the organisation during the months between July to December 2021.

Table 3– Live Placements by Month

Month End	Live placements at end of month	The percentage below represents the portion of agency worker vs our total workforce	Increase - ↑ Reduction - ↓ Unchanged - ↔
July 21	261	21%	↓
August 21	212	17%	↓
September 21	203	16%	↓
October 21	203	22%	↔
November 21	225	19%	↑
December 21	237	20%	↑

(Based on a total council workforce which is currently 1165 WTE)

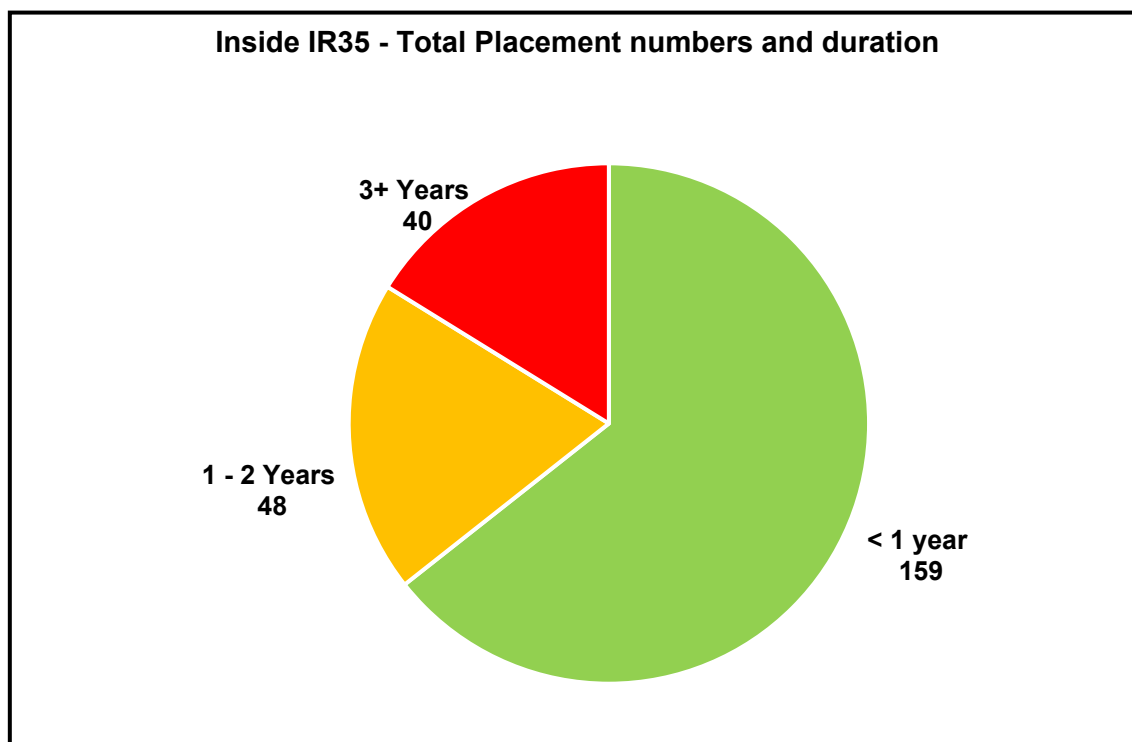
Chart 1 below shows where the highest percentage of use of temporary / agency workers has been in which is Finance and Resources, followed by Adult Social Care.



8. Duration of Placements

Chart 2 below shows the total number of placements (247) and duration of agency workers (inside of IR35) that have been engaged with the council over the last quarter. This shows workers that have been with the Council between three months and four years.

Chart 2 – Total placements and length of placement



55 workers that are outside IR35 and have not been included in the data above. These workers have been engaged on specialist projects or have specialist skills..

Table 5 – Categories of roles & length of placement

Sum of Number of Placements – Inside IR35	Column Labels			
Categories of Roles	< 1 year	1 - 2 Years	3+ Years	Grand Total
Admin & Clerical	14	2	4	20
Education including Early Years	35			35
Executive	43	6	5	54
Facilities & Environmental Services	1			1
Financial	2			2
Housing	9	3		12
Housing, Benefits & Planning		5	10	15
IT	5	4		9
Management		2	1	3
Manual Labour	13	13		26
Planning		1		1
Revenues / Benefits	5	2		7
Social & Healthcare Non-Qualified	17	5	6	28

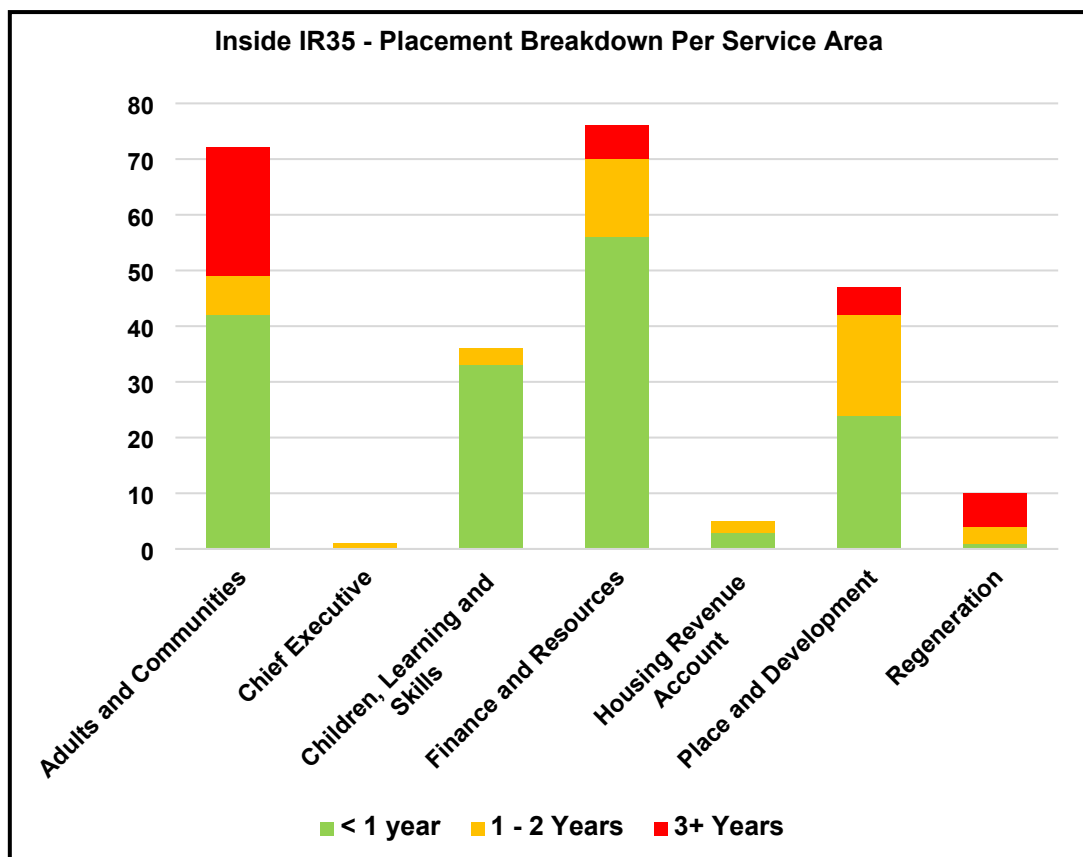
Social & Healthcare Qualified	15	5	14	34
Grand Total	159	48	40	247

The table above shows there are 40 placements which has an agency / temporary worker in excess of 3 years. The majority of these placements are covering hard to recruit to posts such as Social & Healthcare professions, Housing Benefits & Planning.

Appendix 1 also highlights roles of all agency/temporary workers we have engaged, which includes the hard to fill roles.

Chart 3 below shows the length of placements by Directorate, this identifies Finance and Resources as having the highest number of placements. The Council has engaged a large number of finance specialists to support the recovery work in relation to the S114 notice and the directions. Overall Adults and Communities have had most placements in the category of 3 years and above. Again, these placements here are covering hard to recruit to posts in the Social & Healthcare profession.

Chart 3 - Breakdown per Service Area and length of placement



9. **Key Performance Indicators – Matrix Contract**

The contract has established Key Performance Indicators which are monitored through monthly meetings. In Appendix 2 'KPI Summary of performance' shows the agreed KPIs and information which is a snapshot of the performance of the contract in December 2021. The data shows that the KPI's have all been met, with one exception. In Early Years the required number of placements have not been filled due to the difficulty in recruiting to this area. There is a shortage of qualified early years practitioners, which also adds to not being able to recruit suitable staff as well as agency workers. However, from the last quarter there was an improvement to obtaining some early years practitioners (65% to 85%).

The monthly monitoring meetings also focus on reducing agency fees and exploring how further savings can be made.

10. **Matrix efficiency saving project**

Work continues within each directorate to encourage agency workers to move into permanent vacant positions where posts have received approval to engage workers into. Further workers are encouraged to move to Client Direct Limited's (CDL) to reduce agency fees. To date, 37 workers remain on CDL, this represents no change from the previous quarter.

We have now developed a process with Matrix whereby no agency worker is renewed or engaged without a business case having been approved at the Expenditure Control Panels. This provides a level of scrutiny and challenge as to why the temporary worker is required, and what alternative solutions were considered to reduce the spend.

The HR Business Partnering team continue to work with each of the directorate managers on reviewing their current usage of agency workers and challenge the need to continue with agency workers for business needs.

12. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Summary of specific types of roles of all agency/temporary workers
Appendix 2 - Performance KPI

11. **Background Papers**

None

Appendix 1 – Summary of specific types of roles of all agency/temporary workers (brackets represent no of agency)

Job Title	Job Category	Services	Directorate
Support Worker (Level 2)	Social & Healthcare Non-Qualified	Adult Social Care Operations	People (Adults)
Qualified Social Worker (Level 7)	Social & Healthcare Qualified	Adult Social Care Operations	People (Adults)
Lateral Flow Programme Manager (1)	Public Health	Public Health	People (Adults)
Group Manager	Social & Healthcare Qualified	Adult Social Care Operations	People (Adults)
CONTACT TRACER COVID-19 (5)	Public Health	Public Health	People (Adults)
Long-term Occupational Therapist Practice Manager (2) OT Standby Level 7 – (7)	Social & Healthcare Qualified	Adult Social Care Operations	People (Adults)
General Support Assistant	Admin & Clerical	Children, Learning and Skills	People (Children)
Early Years Practitioner (11)	Education including Early Years	Children, Learning and Skills	People (Children)
Planning & Strategy (3)	Housing, Benefits & Planning	Building Management	Regeneration
Planning Officer (Level 7) (Housing)	Planning	Planning and Transport	Regeneration
Project Officer/Implementation Officer	Housing (People) Services	Place & Development	Place
Operative (51)	Manual Labour	Direct Service Organisation (DSO)	Place
Housing Revenue; Housing Needs (6)	HRA Housing Development	Management	Place
IT Server Engineer (1)	IT	Digital and Strategic IT	Corporate Operations
IT Project Manager (1)	IT	Digital and Strategic IT	Corporate Operations
IT Infrastructure Engineer (1)	IT	Digital and Strategic IT	Corporate Operations
Desktop Support Analyst (6)	IT	Digital and Strategic IT	Corporate Operations
Digital and Strategic IT Support (5)	IT	Digital and Strategic IT	Corporate Operations
IT Support roles (working on S114)	IT	Digital and Strategic IT	Corporate Operations
Customer and Communications	Revenues / Benefits	Customer – Awaiting funding ESFA	Corporate Operations
Customer and Communications	Revenues / Benefits	Housing, Benefits & Planning	Corporate Operations
Agresso technical Support (8)	Agresso Technical support	People / Finance Services	Corporate Operations
Principal Financial Analyst (6)	Finance	Finance	
Finance Business Partner, Lead; Financial Assessment, Commercial; Financial Assessment (15)	Executive - Covering live vacancies	Finance	Corporate Operations
Consulting Project Manager (Level 9)	Executive	People	Corporate Operations

Appendix 2 – Performance KPI

Measurement	Target Service Level	Frequency of Activity/Monitoring	Dec-21
The Service Provider will fill all Assignments where CVs are not requested to the specified timescales	98.00%	Monthly, based on a rolling quarter	100% achieved in all placements request apart from I Early Years which achieved 85%
Urgency	Timescale		
Within 4 hours	Within 30 minutes		
Within 24 hours	Within 1 hour		
Within 3 working days	Within 4 hours		
Otherwise	Within 48 hours		
Percentage of roles where number of accepted CVs requested is matched by number of CVs supplied by the Service Provider	98.00%	Monthly, based on a rolling quarter	100%
Percentage of assignments where there is supply of a suitable Temporary Worker, accepted by the Hiring Manager,	98.00%	Monthly, based on a rolling quarter	100%
Percentage of appointed Temporary Workers completing the assignment	90.00%	Monthly, based on a rolling quarter	100%
The Service Provider will satisfactorily close all complaints within 28 working days of receipt.	100%	Monthly from start of contract	100%