



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20TH APRIL 2010

SUBJECT: BUDGET STRATEGY – VACANCY MANAGEMENT

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with the up-to-date position on the vacancy management strategy being adopted in accordance with the 2009/10 budget strategy approved by Council in March 2009.
- 1.2 This report highlights the vacancies that have been deleted during the financial year, recognizing that some of these were vacancies being held over from the 2008/9 budget year that were deleted during 2009/10

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Members will be aware that as part of the budget strategy, Directorates were set very challenging vacancy management targets and would be required to delete posts from its structures to stay within budget.
- 2.2 Members have requested information on the numbers of posts deleted, which is provided in the appendix attached.
- 2.3 From previous comments in this Committee and at Council, Members had identified “80” posts to be deleted as a loose target. This has never been formally agreed and was only ever used as an illustrative figure based on the cash target that needed to be achieved.
- 2.4 It is also important for Members to be aware that vacancy management will not only be about deleting posts but also about delaying the filling of posts and restructuring and rationalizing structures. Together, these strategies have been aimed at avoiding the need for compulsory redundancies. This report provides data on those posts that have been deleted.
- 2.5 This strategy has been successful and no compulsory redundancies have been necessary as part of this strategy to date.
- 2.6 I would also wish to remind Members that the housing revenue account is separate to the budget strategy and therefore should be considered separately. For the avoidance of doubt, any vacancy management savings achieved within the housing service is redistributed within the housing revenue account for the benefit of Council house tenants. For completeness of the overall picture and to recognize the total figure within the directorate of the Environment, these have been included in the figures, but are identified separately.
- 2.7 The posts that have been deleted to achieve the 2009/10 budget strategy have been identified and are detailed in Appendix 1.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Vacancy management is identified as an integral part of achieving a balanced budget.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Proposals are consistent with the budget strategy approved by Council.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Trade unions continue to work with us to avoid the need for compulsory redundancies as part of the 2009/10 budget strategy.

Members continue to receive reports for restructuring/rationalisation as it occurs.

- 5.3 Corporate Management Team continues, on a weekly basis, to vet vacancy requests to ensure only those that are essential are advertised.
- 5.4 Members receive from time to time, business cases for voluntary early retirement under the "85 year rule" at the Pensions and Compensation Sub-Committee.
- 5.5 Managers continue to review structures and staffing requirements and seek to minimise the use of external agency staff wherever possible.
- 5.6 Staff who are displaced from posts deleted have and will continue to be offered suitable alternative employment wherever practical and possible. Employees are expected to embrace the opportunity to be redeployed in a positive manner, as a direct alternative to redundancy.
- 5.7 Where the postholder possess specialist skills and knowledge – the redeployment opportunities will become more limited. It is anticipated that as the number of postholders being identified for redeployment grows, it will become more difficult to find opportunities for all.
- 5.8 To date we have proven that this can be successfully achieved with 30 staff having been redeployed across the authority following this approach being implemented.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the information contained within this report.

7. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To respond to a Member's request for information.

8. STATUTORY POWER

- 8.1 Local Government Act 1993

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Appendices:
Appendix 1: Posts Deleted