

# WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

21 April 2022

## Councillor Mike Hallam: Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Appointment of Agency workers</b>
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### Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

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### List of Appendices

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Council's Pay Policy Statement is produced in accordance with the requirements of Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.2 The constitution confirms delegated responsibility to the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) or their nominee for the appointment and dismissal of officers below Chief Officer, including Deputy Chief Officer (Tier 3 Assistant Director).
- 1.3 Even though there is a delegation, where any appointment, including an interim agency appointment, proposes a remuneration package that could exceed £100,000, approval needs to be sought from Full Council.
- 1.4 This report seeks approval for a proposed remuneration package in excess of £100,000 for an agency worker.

## **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1 There are areas of the council where it is difficult to recruit to roles either because there is shortage of suitably qualified candidates in the market or because there are specialist skills required for a temporary period and a permanent role is not required. Agency workers are an essential resource which enables the council to continue to deliver key statutory responsibilities where it is not possible or appropriate to recruit permanent staff.
- 2.2 The Council has a number of agency workers, and it is not always possible to identify an appointment which members of staff will exceed the requirements for Council approval. This limit is set out in the Pay Policy as £100k. At the current time there are two members of staff are likely to cost the Council more than £100k during the course of their contract.
- 2.3 There are a number of specific agency roles which are likely to exceed the £100k and these are:

### **2.3.1 Development Manager – Place Directorate**

The role of development manager based in the Northampton area has been a significant role in taking this restructure forward and is a temporary measure until the permanent recruitment is secured. The Planning Service is currently going through a period of change following LGR with a significant backlog and issues relating to recruitment of staff in particular at a senior level. The process of restructuring is being formulated and due to go out for consultation in the coming months, as part of this it has been necessary to ensure that we have had managerial capacity in resolving the current issues, developing the evidence base for any new structure as well as designing the process and protocols that will enable an improved service into the future.

### **2.3.2 DTI and ASC Digital Projects Lead – People Directorate**

Adult Social Care sought additional technical support from an agency member of staff who had been initially recruited by the Digital, Technology and Innovation Service due to lack of knowledge, skills and capacity challenges within Adult Social Care. The member of staff has subsequently taken the lead on a number of key ASC digital transformation projects including the Cygnum system between North and West Northants Council and the Better Care Finance system as part of the national social care reform programme. This resource was funded by social care reform monies. Most recently the individual has been working on the ASC People Planner system as well as the implementation of the national Adult Social Care Digital Transformation Programme. This resource is funded from transformation monies (3 days per week) and the national digital transformation programme (2 days per week).

- 2.4 In each case the agency worker concerned is employed at a rate that may exceed the £100k payment. The payment of agency workers is paid to the agency and is not necessarily the payment to the worker. The payment of agency is the total cost. Staff pay is generally lower than agency pay because it includes pay for annual leave and pensions. An agency member of staff will receive no pay for any day they do not work including sickness and absence. They are not entitled to an employer contribution to pensions costs and have to meet these costs from the amount paid.

### **3. Recommendations**

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3.1 It is recommended that the Council approve the proposed remuneration.

### **4. Reason for Recommendations**

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The recommended remuneration is in accordance with market demands. The Council uses an agency through Opus to ensure value for money and where an appointment is made outside that a procurement process is required to ensure value for money.

### **5. Report Background**

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5.1 It is a statutory requirement under the Localism Act 2011 for the Authority to approve and publish a Pay Policy Statement.

5.2 The Localism Act aims to increase transparency in local government. This includes a requirement that local authority pay policy is openly approved by democratically elected councillors.

5.3 This extends to a requirement to publish the salaries of senior officials, to support the aim of helping local residents better understand how public money is spent in their area.

5.4 The Policy Statement requires approval by Full Council for any remuneration package over £100,000. This is in accordance with the statutory guidance.

### **6. Issues and Choices**

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6.1 The option available to council is to end the existing contracts with these agency staff. This is not recommended because these individuals are carrying out essential roles.

### **7. Implications**

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#### **7.1 Resources and Financial**

7.1.1 There is provision within the service budget to meet the cost of these roles and there are no additional funding requirements.

#### **7.2 Legal**

The requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and associated guidance are set out in paragraph 5 of the report.

#### **7.3 Risk**

There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

#### **7.4 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

This report has not been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## 7.5 **Climate Impact**

7.5.1 There is no climate impact to consider in relation to the recommendation.

## 7.6 **Community Impact**

**There is no specific community impact in relation to this report.**

## 7.7 **Communications**

Publication of the Pay Policy Statement underpins the Council's key communications and engagement principles of transparency, openness and accountability.

## **8. Background Papers**

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8.1 None