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SERVICE REVIEW REPORT

REPORT TO: Head of Council Resources

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services)

DATE: 21 March 2016

SUBJECT: Recruitment of Permanent Supply Teachers

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek Head of Council Resources' approval under delegated powers for the establishment changes detailed in the body of the report as a consequence of changing service needs within the Strategy and Operations Unit of the Resources and People Services Department.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To agree the changes to the staffing structure as outlined in the report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The nation-wide shortage of available teachers has had an impact in East Lothian, evidenced by the reduced numbers applying for both temporary and permanent primary teaching positions. At any one time there could be 200 or more primary class teacher vacancies being advertised across all Scottish authorities and of these, West, Mid and East Lothian, Edinburgh and Borders account for approximately a quarter of the total posts advertised. Competition to attract suitable class teacher applicants between East Lothian and neighbouring authorities has been challenging over the past year, with teaching vacancies being advertised to a reduced market. This has led to applicants being in a position where they can pick and choose posts they apply for and as job choice tends to primarily be based on geographical proximity to where someone lives, East Lothian invariably loses out to Edinburgh vacancies and its closest neighbour, Midlothian.
- 3.2 With permanent and temporary class teacher posts being advertised to a reduced pool of available applicants, the knock-on effect on numbers of applications for supply teaching roles has been significant. For example, there were just 4 primary supply teachers added to the East Lothian supply list and available to work between August and December 2015.
- 3.3 Between August 2015 and January 2016, 42 class teacher positions were advertised and on average these positions took 8 weeks to fill. With supply cover being unavailable, the majority of these vacancies have been covered by promoted post holders or existing school based staff.

For example in 3 primary schools, the Support for Learning teachers provided cover in classes full time since September due to a failure to recruit to class teacher vacancies. Nursery teachers have also been taken from nursery to cover in primary classes. Head Teachers and other promoted post holders have covered classes for lengthy periods of time, taking them away from management duties.

- 3.4 The sum of these issues combined is that schools are experiencing significant recruitment delays in filling vacancies and lengthy periods without supply cover during the vacancy period. The classes with teacher absence need to be covered and therefore existing school based staff, most commonly promoted post holders, are providing this cover in classes.
- 3.5 The aim is, therefore, to consider ways of attracting more primary teaching applicants to apply for teaching posts and supply in East Lothian. Various options have been considered as follows:
- 3.6 Permanent supply teacher roles may be more attractive to applicants than regular supply and would allow for more flexibility in providing supply cover for schools.
- 3.7 Permanent supply teachers would be appointed on a full or part time basis and allocated to schools according to authority wide cover requirements. Line management and work allocation would be from within the Staffing Team in Education allowing for authority wide view of recruitment and class cover requirements. Permanent supply teachers' work would be closely monitored and recorded to ensure their time was fully and effectively utilised.
- 3.8 Permanent supply teachers will be offered the opportunity to be considered for a permanent position in one school after 1 year and this will be automatic after 2 years (as per the current policy) – should the permanent supply teacher wish to change to a permanent position in one school. This is intended as an option to attract and retain applicants.
- 3.9 Permanent supply teachers would have base schools for the purpose of CLPL and travel expenses.
- 3.10 The supply teacher job outline or person specification would be amended to reflect that permanent supply teachers will be employed as permanent employees and therefore not subject to the limited duties of short term supply teachers and will be line managed by Principal Officer Staffing and allocated a base school. Work will be allocated to permanent supply teachers by the Staffing Team.
- 3.11 In addition to introducing permanent supply teaching positions, another means of addressing reduced applications for teaching posts is to look at the long term creation of a 'pool' of available teachers by advertising temporary positions as permanent and part-time positions as full time. Advertising positions in this way may make the posts more attractive to applicants and increase applications for those positions at present difficult to fill. Applicants for these positions would be available to work in other schools once their contract in the advertised school position ends

and so, although a longer term solution to reduce teacher applications, this approach builds up a 'pool' of available teachers to help cover at times when applications are low. The management of these positions will be through the Principal Officer Staffing and will ensure the forward planning of identifying suitable alternative positions for the staff being appointed to these positions.

There are no temporary posts being created.

- 3.12 This proposal has been passed through LNCT under the terms of the Protocol for the Conduct of Service Reviews and given agreement by the relevant Trade Union representatives.
- 3.13 Current primary supply teachers will be offered the opportunity to apply for permanent supply as part of a recruitment and selection process. Casual supply opportunities will still be available to interested candidates.
- 3.14 Since July 2016 a continuous advert for primary supply teachers has been running on My Job Scotland. Just 4 applicants have joined and remained on the register in this time.
- 3.15 The permanent supply teachers will be managed by the Principal Officer, Staffing. This allows for central co-ordination of the work for permanent supply teachers and consistent management support of the permanent supply teachers. The permanent supply teachers would also be allocated a base school and this would be for the purposes of CLPL and travel expenses only.
- 3.16 The proposal is to advertise permanent primary supply teacher positions as soon as possible with the aim of employing a maximum of 6 permanent supply teachers at any one time. Should any permanent supply teachers resign, the need for the post would be reviewed and if required, replaced like for like to meet demand.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no policy changes required.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND – PROTECTION OF VULNERBALE GROUPS SHCEME

- 6.1 This post is considered as regulated work with vulnerable Children, as specified in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There is no requirement to regrade a post for this proposal.
- 7.2 Permanent supply cover will only be allocated to schools where there are vacancies (ie over 2 days) or long term absences, therefore salary costs will be covered by the school absence and staffing budgets. Permanent supply teachers will be paid at their appointed salary scale point for all work carried out.
- 7.3 It is intended to create and retain up to 6 permanent supply positions at any one time. The costs are as follows:
- 1 main grade teacher salary at £35,409 + on costs of £10,976.79 (ie 31%) = £46,385.79 per permanent supply teacher
- Total for 6 permanent supply teachers = £278,314.74
- 7.4 The need to provide cover in schools is evidenced by the number of primary school requests made to the contact centre at the end of 2015. In October 2015, 51 requests for supply cover were submitted by the primary schools and of these, 5 were filled by supply teachers. In November, 81 requests for supply cover were submitted by primary schools and of these, 6 were filled by supply teachers. The evidence also shows that in the past year there have been no periods of time without the requirement for supply cover in primary schools and therefore it is anticipated that permanent supply teachers would be fully employed in covering teaching posts.
- 7.5 Personnel - HR and the EIS have been consulted on this proposal and there are no recruitment or contractual issues or Union concerns.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None

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