

**Report to:** Corporate Issues Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** Monday, 9th October 2006

**Report of:** Assistant Chief Executive

**Report No:**

**Contact Officer:** Chris O'Malley/Lesley Clarkson

**Tele No:** 1221/1217

**Report Title:** **Strategic Employment Monitoring Basis of Employment – 1st April 2005 - 31st March 2006**

---

**Non Confidential**

**Significant  
Variations and  
Highlighted Matters:**

- a) Reduction in the number of employee's on fixed term contracts of less than one year's duration from 469 to 358.
- b) Increase in the number of people working on a casual basis from 719 to 1082 (including supply teachers).
- c) Introduction of the Corporate Contract for the supply of Agency Workers is being implemented and reducing costs.
- d) Significant number of employees who work in excess of their contractual hours, a significant proportion of which is not at enhanced rates.

**Recommendations:**

Elected Members are asked to:

- a) Note and comment on the contents of the report.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This is one of a series of annual reports the purpose of which is to provide the Corporate Issues Scrutiny Committee with Strategic Monitoring Information regarding various aspects of employment practice within the Council.
- 1.2 It is intended that the information obtained should help guide the future development of the Council's Corporate Employment Policy Framework.
- 1.3 The subject of this report is Basis of Employment within the Council and covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006.

Information is provided in respect of:

- The number of posts in the Council, including the full/part-time split
- The number of Job Share posts
- The number of people on non permanent contracts and agency staff
- Overtime information
- Staff turnover
- Essential Car Users and car park space allocation

A summary of the above information provided by Departments is shown at Appendix 1.

- 1.4 This is the first time strategic employment monitoring data has been provided since managerial realignment and whilst every effort has been made to ensure the data reflects the new Council structure there may be some minor discrepancies.
- 1.5 This is also the first time that it has been possible to use information from Oracle to compile the scrutiny reports. However as payroll has only been live since October 2005 some of the financial data relating to overtime costs can only be provided for 6 months making annual comparisons difficult. Oracle will be used in future to provide strategic monitoring information relating to this area.

## **2. COMMENTS**

### **Establishment**

- 2.1 The overall number of employees in the Council at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006, (Excluding teachers) was reported as 7138 comprising 54.5% full-time (3888 posts) and 45.5% part-time employees (3251 posts) compared to 52% full time and 48% part time in the previous reporting period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005.

### **Job Share Posts**

- 2.2 The total number of job share posts as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 was reported as 31 compared to 38 posts in the previous reporting period. The incidence of job share varies between Departments. However the increase in flexible working practices and the availability of part time positions now means that it is far easier to offer flexible working without specifically allocating a job share status.

### **Non Permanent Contracted Staff**

- 2.3 Elected Members will recall that since the introduction of the Fixed Term Employee's (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 staff are now employed on Fixed Term contracts, as opposed to temporary contracts.
- 2.4 The data in Appendix 1, under this category shows that 358 employees were employed on Fixed Term contracts of less than one year's duration. This compares to 469 employees in the same category for the reporting period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005.

- 2.5 During this reporting period there were 343 staff employed on Fixed Term contracts of more than one year's duration compared to 350 in the previous reporting period. These staff are being managed in accordance with the Corporate Guidelines on Employing Staff on Fixed Term Contracts.
- 2.6 Closer monitoring of the use of Fixed Term contracts by the HR Centre of Excellence has resulted in a significant reduction in the number being used. Some work still needs to be done in this area to ensure that people with more than 12 months service and a succession of contracts do not build up sufficient service to gain permanent employment status. This is currently being reviewed by the Employee Relations and Employment Services Team.

### **Casual Workers**

- 2.6 The Council had 1082 people working on a casual basis as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006. The comparative figure as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005 was 779. Both figures include supply teachers.
- 2.7 The increase in the numbers of casual workers can be attributed in part to the changes in service provision and more flexible working practices adopted by the council particularly in areas such as home care, building cleaning and school meal provision.

### **Agency Workers**

- 2.8 Since January 2006 the Council has entered into an agreement with Adecco as the sole supplier of agency staff. This has enabled a greater control on the charges and mark up rates applied in the use of temporary workers and will result in a significant saving for the council. It has taken time for the contract to be embedded into the culture of the organisation but there has been a steady increase in the use of the agency since its introduction.
- 2.9 From April 2006 Adecco began supplying health and social care staff on a second tier arrangement basis. This has meant that most of the existing organisations that already supplied staff and are familiar with our working practices and organisational culture could continue to supply workers to the council. However changes in the mark up rates for these staff should begin to show a saving for the Council.
- 2.10 Close monitoring of the contract will be required to ensure that the Council obtains the full benefits anticipated from the introduction of this contract. Adecco supply the financial and ethnicity monitoring information on the use of agency workers within the Council. It is hoped to build on this for the future so that these costs can be broken down to individual spends by Department.
- 2.11 Bolton Council is currently working closely with other members of Association of Greater Manchester Authorities to develop this area of the business in order to generate more efficiencies for the future. It is anticipated that this will be based upon a collaborative approach to the procurement of agency staff via a single managing agent who will source staff from various providers on a competitive basis linked to quality and cost.

### **Secondments**

- 2.12 Elected Members will recall that in September 2004 a Secondment Policy was approved by the Elected Member for Human Resources and Diversity. The policy provides a framework for managing secondments in order to:
- Contribute to organisational flexibility by facilitating the use of expertise which could not otherwise be available in the short term to undertake particular projects or

roles;

- Promote the development of employees by giving them the opportunity to widen their experience.

2.12 For the reporting period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 there were 77 secondments of less than 12 months duration and 11 of more than 12 months duration, compared to 6 secondments of less than 12 months duration and 67 of more than 12 months duration in the previous reporting period.

### **Overtime**

2.13 The use of overtime is a mechanism, which provides Departments with a degree of flexibility to deal with fluctuations in workload and staff shortages. These include seasonal changes in work requirements, cover for leave and sickness together with the need to respond quickly to emergency situations. There are two categories of overtime worked i.e. overtime worked in excess of an employees contracted hours and planned overtime which attracts a premium rate for officers on grades SO1 and above.

2.14 The number of employees who worked hours in excess of those of their contract was 3196 for the 6 months October to March 2006. The number of employees working planned overtime totalled 90 during the same period. Much of this is attributed to part time employees working additional hours.

2.15 The actual cost of employees working in excess of their contractual hours for the six months reported was £1,093,346. The cost of planned overtime for the same period was £24,924. The total overtime costs for this period amounted to £1,118,340.

### **Essential User and Car Park Space Allocation**

2.17 The Council had 1367 employees who were designated as Essential Car Users as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006.

2.18 543 car park spaces were allocated to staff during this reporting period.

2.19 Corporate Guidelines on the criteria for, and allocation of, Essential User Car Allowances and Car Park spaces are currently being developed to ensure a consistent approach across the Council. These Guidelines will be the subject of a report to the Human Resources Policy Development Group in due course.

## **3. Recommendations**

3.1 Elected Members are asked to:

- a) Note the contents of the report