

Consultants and Agency Worker Data – Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 2020/2021

To: Audit and Accounts Committee

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From: Janet Atkin, Assistant Director, HR Services

Electoral division(s): All

Purpose: To present information on the use of consultants in Quarter 2 (July to September 2020) and Quarter 3 (August to December 2020).

Recommendation: The Audit and Accounts Committee is asked to note the current data on the use of consultants and agency workers.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Information covering the Council's usage of consultants is presented to Audit and Accounts Committee on a six monthly basis. This report outlines information on the use of consultants in Quarter 2 (July to September 2020) and Quarter 3 (August to December 2020).

2.0 Reporting on Consultants

- 2.1 OPUS Cambridgeshire provide information on consultants that have been engaged through them. The Finance team have provided details of consultants paid via invoice and coded to the consultancy code (D4100).

3.0 Quarter 2 (July to September 2020) Consultant Summary

- 3.1 There were three consultants engaged via OPUS in quarter 2. One of these engagements has now ended. This compares to six consultants engaged via OPUS in Quarter 1. Details of each of the consultant placements that have been engaged via OPUS are given in the table below.

Consultants engaged via OPUS Q2			
Area	Output engaged to deliver	Spend in Q2	Ongoing/ended
LGSS IT	Network Firewall Consultant	5,002	Ended
P&E	Joint Professional Services Procurement	3,713	Ongoing
P&E	Development Management Officer (Planning)	14,495	Ongoing

- 3.3 Information on the spending coded to the consultancy code (D4100) is given in appendix A. In Q2 payments were made by invoice to 25 suppliers providing consultancy services. This is not in itself a significant number considering the size of the Council, its diverse nature of services and the shared working agendas that exist.

4.0 Quarter 3 (August to December 2020) Consultant Summary

- 4.1 There were two consultants engaged via OPUS in Q3, of these placements one has now ended. Details are given in the table below.

Consultants engaged via OPUS Q3			
Area	Output engaged to deliver	Spend in Q3	Ongoing/ended
P&E	Joint Professional Services Procurement	2,640	Ended
P&E	Development Management Officer (Planning)	14,861	Ongoing

- 4.2 Information on the spending coded to the consultancy code (D4100) in Q3 is given in Appendix B. Payments by invoice to 24 suppliers providing consultancy services. As stated above this number is reasonable considering the Council's size, its diverse range of services and the current working agendas.

5.0 Agency worker data in Quarter 2 and Quarter 3

The Audit and Accounts Committee also asked for information on the agency spend on a quarterly basis. Information on the amount spent on agency workers in quarter 2 and quarter 3 is given in the tables below.

Period	Total spend on agency workers	Comparison to this quarter in the previous financial year
Q2 of 2020/2021	£1.366m	Spending on agency workers in Q2 of 2019/20 was £2.232m. There has been a reduction of 0.866m this year.
Q3 of 2020/2021	£1.598m	Spending on agency workers in Q3 of 2019/20 was £1.951m. There has been a reduction of 0.353m this year.

- 5.1 The highest level of agency worker use is within services providing social care, particularly children's social care. This is in line with the position in other local authorities. The majority of the quarterly spending is on individuals engaged to undertake qualified social care roles covering front line positions. Proactive work is ongoing to decrease the need for agency social workers.
- 5.2 Spending on agency workers should be considered in the context of our overall workforce costs. Spending on agency workers in Q2 represents 4.19% of workforce spending. Spending on agency workers in Q3 represents 3.76% of workforce spending. Spending on agency workers in each quarter has reduced when compared to the same quarters of the previous financial years.