

CABINET

6 AUGUST 2013

RECRUITMENT FREEZE

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Alan Jarrett, Finance

Report from: Neil Davies, Chief Executive

Author: Tricia Palmer, Assistant Director, Organisational Services

Summary

This report brings forward 5 posts to be considered for approval.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 It is the responsibility of Cabinet to manage income and expenditure to remain within the budget approved by Council.

2. Background

2.1 At Cabinet on 7 January 2003 Members agreed a process by which directors could request approval to fill posts that are not on the list of exempted posts agreed by Cabinet on 10 December 2002. This process was introduced at a time of high concern about overspending as one measure to assist budgetary control. Members have indicated they wish to retain this direct detailed control of recruitment decisions while budgets remain difficult to manage.

2.2 The posts requiring approval to fill are being presented to this Cabinet with the following information: -

- Details of the post including directorate and section, post title, grade and location.
- Length of time post has been vacant.
- Impact on service if the post is not filled with particular reference to services to the public.
- Numbers of posts of this type within the function.
- Realisable savings including any proposals to provide the service in alternative ways, which could also lead to savings.
- Comments from the relevant portfolio holder.

3. Details of the post requiring approval

- 3.1 The following posts are coming forward for approval the details of which are shown at Appendix 1: -

Children & Adults

SEN Case Officer – Tribunals

Business Support Department

Electoral Services Assistant
Political Assistant to the Labour Group

Regeneration, Community and Culture

Neighbourhood Improvement Coordinator
Project Support Assistant – IMPRESS

- 3.2 The forms attached are email copies and the Assistant Director, Organisational Services, holds the signed copy. The Job profile and structure chart is also held in HR Services.

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 In order to assess the potential impact of posts upon the council's ability to achieve its strategic objectives, the attached forms include details of the likely impact on the service should the posts not be filled.

5. Financial and legal implications

- 5.1 The recruitment freeze was instigated to support the realisation of savings against the background of a forecast of a significant overspending. It remains important to ensure that where possible the drive to pursue savings continues. It is important that no cover is taken on to fill any posts which have not been identified as exceptions or been given Cabinet approval to be filled.
- 5.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report at this stage.
- 5.3 The posts will be filled in accordance with the Council's recruitment policies.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 The Cabinet is asked to agree to unfreeze the posts as set out in Appendix 1 to enable officers to commence the recruitment process.

7. Suggested reason for decision

- 7.1 The posts presented to Cabinet will support the efficient running of the Council.

Lead officer contact

Tricia Palmer, Assistant Director Organisational Services, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham Telephone: (01634) 332853 Email: tricia.palmer@medway.gov.uk.

Background papers:

Cabinet report 10 December 2002

<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MId=1834&Ver=4>

7 January 2003

<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MId=1835&Ver=4>

CABINET APPROVAL FOR RECRUITMENT TO VACANCIES

Please complete this form, with all required signatures, and return to the Organisational Change Team, HR Services, 3rd Floor, Gun Wharf. You will also need to send an electronic word version to resourcing@medway.gov.uk, so that the approval form can be inserted into the cabinet report. This form is not required for those posts covered by the exemptions list shown below.

DIRECTORATE	Children and Adults – Learning & Care		
SECTION	Special Educational Needs		
POST TITLE	SEN Case Officer – Tribunals		
GRADE AND SALARY RANGE	C1 (£16,830 - £22,221)		
POST NUMBER	1135		
LOCATION	Gun Wharf		
DATE POST BECAME VACANT			
MANAGER POST REPORTS TO	SEN Assessment Manager		
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER PERMANENT RECRUITMENT	Yes		
*IS THIS REQUEST TO APPLY TO AN EXTERNAL AGENCY	No		
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER TEMPORARY RECRUITMENT FROM AGENCY POOL	No		
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE SPECIFY DATES FROM AND TO:			
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE GIVE NAME OF EMPLOYEE COVERING VACANCY (if applicable)			
WHICH PHASE OF BETTER FOR LESS DOES THIS POST RELATE TO?			
ARE THERE IMPLICATIONS FOR NOT FILLING THE POST PRIOR TO THE RELEVANT PHASE OF BETTER FOR LESS – IF SO PLEASE INDICATE BELOW			
NAME OF RECRUITING MANAGER: Genny Cherriman			

(* please delete as appropriate)

Impact on Service – please include:-

- Information on the structure within this function indicating numbers of posts of the same type and how many corresponding vacancies – eg 20 care workers 2 posts vacant.
- Impact on the service if this post is not filled, with particular reference to services to the public.

An SEN C1 Officer post will become vacant as at 25 June 2013 as a result of the departure of one of the SEN Officers currently in post.

This post is essential for the continued efficient running of the SEN Team particularly at a time of impending change (as a result of new legislation due in March 2014), and also with regard to new funding arrangements, continued service delivery to children, parents and school, and to ensure that the good working practices that have resulted in a low level of appeals to the First Tier Tribunal.

SEN Officers work to ensure that additional expenditure is limited where appropriate: their work with parents at Annual and Transitional reviews, multi agency meetings and with parents serves to offer explanation and reassurance. It is crucial to ensure that there is unnecessary additional expenditure where appropriate school placement can be made in Medway maintained and Academy provision.

Since April 2010, and in line with the Lamb Inquiry in to Parental Confidence in SEN, all SEN Officers are now frequently meeting and liaising with parents and schools with regard to SEN children. This more personal involvement is beneficial to all parties, but has increased the workload for all SEN Officers.

Impact on the service without this post:

The work of SEN would suffer as other officers will be unable to manage the case load of 200 pupils in addition to their own.

Regular contact and work with the special school on this caseload would not be possible.

Service to parents and children would be affected.

Additional expenditure could possibly not be kept down if other SEN Officers are overloaded.

There would be difficulty in meeting statutory targets without affecting the work of other officers.

Budget Issues

Please indicate:

3. the realisable savings if this post remained vacant until the 31st March 2014.
4. If any savings could be achieved by alternative ways of providing the service.

None: This post is currently detailed in the SEN budget.

There are no alternative ways of providing this service.

Please specify the funding source for this post:

SEN budget

Comments from Portfolio Holder

Signed:
Portfolio Holder

Dated:

Signed:
Councillor Alan Jarrett

Dated:

Signed:
Director

Dated:

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DIRECTORATE	Business Support	
SECTION	Electoral Services	
POST TITLE	Electoral Services Assistant	
GRADE AND SALARY RANGE	D1 (£12,787 - £16,440)	
POST NUMBER	0088	
LOCATION	Gun Wharf	
DATE POST BECAME VACANT	10 July 2013	
MANAGER POST REPORTS TO	Electoral Services Manager	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER PERMANENT RECRUITMENT	No	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO APPLY TO AN EXTERNAL AGENCY	No	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER TEMPORARY RECRUITMENT FROM AGENCY POOL	Yes	
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE SPECIFY DATES FROM AND TO:	9 August 2013 – 30 June 2014	
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE GIVE NAME OF EMPLOYEE COVERING VACANCY (if applicable)		
WHICH PHASE OF BETTER FOR LESS DOES THIS POST RELATE TO? Delayed 3b.		
<p>ARE THERE IMPLICATIONS FOR NOT FILLING THE POST PRIOR TO THE RELEVANT PHASE OF BETTER FOR LESS – IF SO PLEASE INDICATE BELOW</p> <p>No revised date is yet known but Electoral Services team have a busy work plan for the next 2 years; the team has an extensive preparation plan for the introduction of IER that cannot be completed without this post being filled; on 10 July we will receive data from Dept for Works and Pensions that has been matched against the electoral register and scored (Confirmation Dry Run in preparation for Individual Electoral Registration (IER) to be implemented in 2014). The team will need to do extensive work undertaking matching of local data sources to improve the numbers of matched electors to minimise the impact of canvassing in 2014 under IER conditions when volumes of work could increase almost three-fold. Preparations for, and conduct of, the annual canvass start in July and will continue until February 2014; elections for the European Parliament will take place in May or June 2014 and preparations will need to start in December 2013. Routine work on rolling registration and maintenance of postal vote records will need to continue through much of this period and volumes are increasing. The team are also legally obliged to complete a review of polling districts and polling places before May 2014.</p>		
NAME OF RECRUITING MANAGER: Jane Ringham		

(* please delete as appropriate)

Impact on Service – please include:-

1. Information on the structure within this function indicating numbers of posts of the same type and how many corresponding vacancies – eg 20 care workers 2 posts vacant.

2. Impact on the service if this post is not filled, with particular reference to services to the public.

The Electoral Services team comprises 4 full-time posts: Head of Elections and Member services for whom electoral registration duties represent about 50% of their work, Electoral services Manager, Senior Electoral Services Assistant and the Electoral Services Assistant. Two part-time posts of Electoral Services Assistant have been held vacant for a number of years to contribute towards required savings.

The work plan for the team has been set out above. With such a small team, the loss of one post has a significant impact on the ability of the remaining team to cover all the work required.

If preparations for the introduction of IER are not completed to the dates and standards required by the Cabinet Office, there are risks to the reputation of the Council and the possibility of delays to the implementation of IER across the country as the Secretary of State has to be satisfied that each local authority is suitably prepared before finally agreeing for IER to be implemented. IER is aimed at addressing, amongst other things, public perception of the potential of fraudulent electoral registration activity.

If the preparations for and conduct of the annual canvass are not completed, insufficient canvassers will be recruited to ensure a personal canvass is completed particularly in low-response areas, resulting in a lower response rate. This will not only mean fewer electors registered to vote (or achieving credit checks) but could result in a higher number of electors unmatched against the DWP data in 2014 and the need for a more comprehensive personal canvass than otherwise might be required.

If applications to register through the monthly additions process are not processed according to the monthly statutory dates, electors will find their registrations delayed, affecting credit checks amongst other things.

A polling district and polling place review is required by law to be held every 5 years. The purpose of the review is to review the arrangements of polling districts and polling stations, with a view to improving the facilities for voters. It is important these arrangements are finalised well in advance of the European Parliamentary elections in May 2014.

The Electoral Commission produced a report on establishing electoral services teams and their benchmark for Medway is a team of 4.75 in addition to a manager. The Elections Team is currently staffed at a level of 3 full-time members of staff and a manager. If the ESA post is not filled, the team will be reduced to 2 plus a manager.

Budget Issues

Please indicate:

3. the realisable savings if this post remained vacant until the 31st March 2014.
4. If any savings could be achieved by alternative ways of providing the service.

If this post remained vacant or was not covered by temporary cover, savings of approximately £13,500 might be achieved.

Please specify the funding source for this post: revenue budget provision

Comments from Portfolio Holder

Signed:
Portfolio Holder

Dated:

Signed:
Councillor Alan Jarrett

Dated:

Signed:
Director

Dated:

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DIRECTORATE	BUSINESS SUPPORT	
SECTION	MEMBER SERVICES	
POST TITLE	POLITICAL ASSISTANT TO LABOUR GROUP	
GRADE AND SALARY RANGE	SCP 32 – 36 £29,783 - £ 33,121 (pro-rata) 18.5 hours	
POST NUMBER	4031	
LOCATION	GUN WHARF	
DATE POST BECAME VACANT	21 August 2013	
MANAGER POST REPORTS TO	HEAD OF ELECTIONS & MEMBER SERVICES & LEADER OF LABOUR GROUP	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER PERMANENT RECRUITMENT	Y/N	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO APPLY TO AN EXTERNAL AGENCY	Y/N	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER TEMPORARY RECRUITMENT FROM AGENCY POOL	Y/N	
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE SPECIFY DATES FROM AND TO:	NA	
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE GIVE NAME OF EMPLOYEE COVERING VACANCY (if applicable)	NA	
WHICH PHASE OF BETTER FOR LESS DOES THIS POST RELATE TO? NONE		
ARE THERE IMPLICATIONS FOR NOT FILLING THE POST PRIOR TO THE RELEVANT PHASE OF BETTER FOR LESS – IF SO PLEASE INDICATE BELOW N/A		
NAME OF RECRUITING MANAGER: JANE RINGHAM		

(* please delete as appropriate)

Impact on Service – please include:-

- Information on the structure within this function indicating numbers of posts of the same type and how many corresponding vacancies – eg 20 care workers 2 posts vacant.
- Impact on the service if this post is not filled, with particular reference to services to the public.

The two largest Political groups on the Council have been allocated a Political Assistant in accordance with section 9 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Post holders are engaged on a fixed-term contract for the 4 year period of the Administration. The current post holder of the Labour Political Assistant post is leaving with the effect from 21 August 2013. Under the Act, a group qualifies for a political assistant post if (a) the membership of that group comprises at least one-tenth of the membership of the authority; and (b)

the number of the other groups which are larger than that group does not exceed two. The impact on the service if this post is not filled is that the Labour Group would not receive the research and other support they require individually and collectively to enable them to discharge their functions as Members of the Council.

Budget Issues

Please indicate:

1. the realisable savings if this post remained vacant until the 31st March 2014.
2. If any savings could be achieved by alternative ways of providing the service.

Savings in the order of £9744 would be realised if the post is not filled until after 31 March 2014. assuming that a new appointee would have been appointed at the lowest point in the salary range.

Due to the statutory framework for the allocation of these posts and the political nature of their role, it is not feasible for alternative ways of providing the service.

Please specify the funding source for this post: specific revenue allocation in salaries budget attached to 4C222.

Comments from Portfolio Holder

Signed:
Portfolio Holder

Dated:

Signed:
Councillor Alan Jarrett

Dated:

Signed:
Director

Dated:

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DIRECTORATE	RCC		
SECTION	Economic Development & Social Regeneration		
POST TITLE	Neighbourhood Improvement Co-ordinator		
GRADE AND SALARY RANGE	PO2 SP38 £31,754 PA		
POST NUMBER	9616		
LOCATION	Gun Wharf		
DATE POST BECAME VACANT	Not applicable – Contract Extension requested until end September 2014		
MANAGER POST REPORTS TO	Clem Smith		
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER PERMANENT RECRUITMENT	No		
*IS THIS REQUEST TO APPLY TO AN EXTERNAL AGENCY	No		
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER TEMPORARY RECRUITMENT FROM AGENCY POOL	No		
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE SPECIFY DATES FROM AND TO:	N/A		
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE GIVE NAME OF EMPLOYEE COVERING VACANCY (if applicable)			
WHICH PHASE OF BETTER FOR LESS DOES THIS POST RELATE TO?			
N/A			
ARE THERE IMPLICATIONS FOR NOT FILLING THE POST PRIOR TO THE RELEVANT PHASE OF BETTER FOR LESS – IF SO PLEASE INDICATE BELOW			
NOT APPLICABLE			
NAME OF RECRUITING MANAGER: CLEM SMITH			

(* please delete as appropriate)

Impact on Service – please include:-

1. Information on the structure within this function indicating numbers of posts of the same type and how many corresponding vacancies – eg 20 care workers 2 posts vacant.
2. Impact on the service if this post is not filled, with particular reference to services to the public.

This is a request for a contract extension for the Neighbourhood Improvement Co-ordinator until the end of September 2014. This post is fully funded by the EU Interreg IVA project INSPIRER. We are able to request this contract extension in view of the fact that the Interreg IVA programme secretariat has approved an extension of the INSPIRER project until the end of September 2014.

This means that we have secured the funding via the project to pay for the costs associated with the Neighbourhood Improvement Co-ordinator until the above time.

The INSPIRER project has three key overall aims:

1. Design and deliver a programme of physical neighbourhood improvements:
 - I) Community Clean up;
 - II) Community Gardens
 - III) Community parks;
 - IV) Housing renovation
2. Improve uptake of waste recycling and composting services
3. Deliver a programme of “eat well, waste less” community workshops to promote healthy eating and waste recycling uptake amongst thousands of residents in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The extension of the postholders contract will enable ongoing delivery of this successful and popular programme of social regeneration, which is delivering tangible quality of life benefits for residents in parts of Chatham and Gillingham.

Project INSPIRER is a cross-border partnership project with Boulogne Développement and Habitat du Littoral from Boulogne, France as well as with the City of Kortrijk from Belgium.

Budget Issues

Please indicate:

- 3 the realisable savings if this post remained vacant until the 31st July 2013.
- 4 If any savings could be achieved by alternative ways of providing the service.

The total cost of extending the contract of the Neighbourhood Improvement Co-ordinator for this fifteen month period is £50,466, which will be paid out of EU funding as part of the INSPIRER project.

Please specify the funding source for this post:

This post is externally funded so no impact on Council revenue budget.

Comments from Portfolio Holder

Signed:
Portfolio Holder

Dated:

Signed:
Councillor Alan Jarrett

Dated:

Signed:
Director

Dated:

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DIRECTORATE	Regeneration, Community and Culture	
SECTION	Economic Development & Social Regeneration Service	
POST TITLE	Project Support Assistant - IMPRESS	
GRADE AND SALARY RANGE	D2 Grade £15,039 - £19,126 (Spinal Point 12-21) [THE POST IS FULLY EXTERNALLY FUNDED]	
POST NUMBER	TBC by HR	
LOCATION	Gun Wharf	
DATE POST BECAME VACANT	1 st July 2013	
MANAGER POST REPORTS TO	Rachael Fulford	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER PERMANENT RECRUITMENT	No	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO APPLY TO AN EXTERNAL AGENCY	No	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER TEMPORARY RECRUITMENT FROM AGENCY POOL	YES	
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE SPECIFY DATES FROM AND TO:	1 st July 2013 – 30 th June 2015	
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE GIVE NAME OF EMPLOYEE COVERING VACANCY (if applicable) NAME: Laureline Drubigny Currently employed as a project support assistant on the other EU SUCCES project until end of October so able to be automatically slotted as duties the same on a different project	Yes this is temporary and candidate has been identified.	
NAME OF RECRUITING MANAGER: Rachael Fulford		

(* please delete as appropriate)

Impact on Service – please include:-

1. information on the structure within this function indicating numbers of posts of the same type and how many corresponding vacancies – eg 20 care workers 2 posts vacant.
2. Impact on the service if this post is not filled, with particular reference to services to the public.

This request is to seek approval for the recruitment of a fully externally funded Project Support Assistant role on our EU IMPRESS project to assist with the day-to-day project administration of our major EU funded IMPRESS project within the ED&SR service.

The IMPRESS project focuses on providing post-employment in-work support services to both customers and employers enabling our longer term

unemployed customers to sustain further in employment, whilst providing additional value to local businesses in enabling them to grow by accessing wider council and external support services, alongside meeting their recruitment needs.

The Project Support Assistant role will play a key role to:

- I) Ensure day-to-day liaison and the delivery of cross-border partnership activities with partner organizations from northern France and Belgium (fluent French will be essential).
- II) Ensure that all local actions are delivered on time and according to EU technical and financial regulations.
- III) Organise and prepare thoroughly cross border visits and meetings with French and Belgian (Flemish) partners and ensuring participation and involvement of UK partners.
- IV) Ensure that project information, including financial data is kept correctly.
- V) Monitor financial expenditure and assist in the compilation of project financial claims and progress reports monthly, quarterly.
- VI) Liaise regularly with the external auditor and the Interreg programme secretariat.
- VII) Translate documents and e-mails from our French partners and use the platform moodle system termed HUDDLE to ensure information updated.

The full time position is for a temporary fixed term contract period up to the end of June 2015 covering the lifetime of the project AND will be fully funded by external funding secured from the EU IMPRESS project.

Budget Issues

Please indicate:

- 3 the realisable savings if this post remained vacant until the 31st March 2014.
- 4 If any savings could be achieved by alternative ways of providing the service.

The total cost of this full time Project Support Assistant for a two year period from 1st July 2013 to 30th June 2015 will be £15,039 per year x 2 years = £30,078.

Please specify the funding source for this post:

This will be funded entirely out of the EU IMPRESS project.

Comments from Portfolio Holder

Signed:
Portfolio Holder

Dated:

Signed:
Second Portfolio Holder

Dated:

Signed:
Director

Dated: