

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	Business Support	
SECTION	Business Administration Support Service	
POST TITLE	Customer Relations Investigations Officer	
GRADE AND SALARY RANGE	Range 3	
POST NUMBER	9882	
NUMBER OF VACANT POSTS OF THIS TYPE	One	
LOCATION	GW	
DATE POST BECAME VACANT	January 2015	
MANAGER POST REPORTS TO	Rose Cook	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER PERMANENT RECRUITMENT	Y	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO APPLY TO AN EXTERNAL AGENCY	N	
*IS THIS REQUEST TO COVER TEMPORARY RECRUITMENT FROM AGENCY POOL	N	
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE SPECIFY DATES FROM AND TO:	N/A	
IF TEMPORARY PLEASE GIVE NAME OF EMPLOYEE COVERING VACANCY (if applicable)	N/A	
WHICH PHASE OF BETTER FOR LESS DOES THIS POST RELATE TO?		
Phase 1		
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: Rose Cook		

(* 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 – e.g. 20 care workers 2 posts vacant.
- Impact on the service if this post is not filled, with particular reference to services to the public.

1. The Customer Relations Investigations Officer, has resigned and leaves on 19 January 2015.

Within BASS, there are two other Customer Relations Investigations Officers (Post No. 9882) who do a similar role. Each CRIO post has responsibilities to ensure corporate complaints, Freedom of Information requests, Subject Access Requests, and Social Care complaints (Children and Adults) are responded to within the relevant timeframes. There are no other corresponding vacancies.

On a day-to-day basis, each of the CRIO's leads on a specialist area : Fols and SARs; Social Care corporate Stage 2 complaints and liaison with the LGO.

2. Impact on the service if we do not fill this post:

The implications for not filling this post would be that there would be no CRIO dedicated to handling stage two and Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) complaints. The workload across the three CRIO posts is very hectic and the two remaining post holders are not able to absorb the workload.

The range of processes undertaken within the Customer Relations Team, includes the administration of:

- Freedom of Information requests
- Subject Access Requests
- Social Care complaints (Children and Adults)
- Corporate complaints (stage one, stage two and LGO)

This role involves frequent, daily direct contact with dissatisfied customers who have already been through stage one of the complaints process. The range of customers this role comes in contact with includes vulnerable people, sometimes those who are homeless, elderly or disabled. This role provides support direct to customers and is a direct front-line service.

The CRIO will maintain regular contact with any customer who escalates their complaint to stage two, and works with services to ensure customers receive a timely response, as outlined in the Council's Complaints Procedure. If this post is not filled, customers will not be able to communicate directly with a CRIO, who is seen to be an independent investigator, about their complaint and the organisation is likely to experience more dissatisfied customers who don't feel "listened to".

The CRIO ensures that a timely response is sent that fully addresses all the issues raised in the complaint. The CRIO provides support and guidance to services on how best to approach the response and any remedies that may be appropriate. If the post is not filled, customers are less likely to receive a satisfactory response and resolution, so there is a higher risk of dissatisfied customers and it is more likely complainants will proceed to the next stage of the complaints process. Managing these requests well can stem escalation to the LGO, MPs and councillors.

The CRIO acts as the point of contact for the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) who will make contact with Medway Council if they have received a complaint about the authority. The CRIO ensures regular contact is made with the LGO during any investigation, and will also ensure that the LGO have all the necessary information that they require. Without this role, there is a higher risk that the organisation could be found at fault. Such decisions are published in the public arena and pose a risk to the organisation's reputation.

The CRIO is in a position to identify where the organisation may be able to improve its services

for customers. If this post is not filled, customers are less likely to see service improvements as a result of their complaints.

Background:

1. This post within the Business Administration Support Service sits in the Customer Relations Team that consists of: a Customer Relations Team Leader, a part-time Social Worker to assist with Social Care complaints, three CRIOS and two Customer Relations Compliance and Monitoring Officers.
2. There were previously three Customer Relations Compliance and Monitoring Officers to support each of the CRIOS. A post was removed as part of a budget-saving restructure in April 2014 so the CRIOS now have less support.
3. The CRIO is responsible for producing performance information for the Council on a monthly and annual basis.

Budget Issues

Please indicate:

1. The savings if this post remained vacant until 31 March 2015 are £3984.58
2. There is no other way of providing this service. It came about and was evaluated as part of Medway Council's phase 1 transformation programme and is essential to the Council's customer relations and complaints service, and directly to customers.

Please specify the funding source for this post:

Existing budget

Comments from Portfolio Holder

Signed:
Portfolio Holder

Dated:

Signed:
Councillor Alan Jarrett

Dated:

Signed:
Director

Dated: