

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: WEDNESDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2010
title: REVIEW OF RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING
submitted by: PERSONNEL OFFICER
principal author: LIZ RAWSON

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Members of the review of recruitment advertising undertaken for the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Council Ambitions – High calibre staff are key to the management and efficiency of the Authority. Successful recruitment of high calibre staff contributes directly to efficiency of service delivery. Effective recruitment directly affects existing staff and efficiency of service not only by the appointment of high quality candidates but also through filling vacancies as quickly as possible.
- Community Objectives – The Council's commitment to providing services, which are accessible to all, extends to the offering of employment opportunities to everyone in the community. This is achieved through effective implementation of the Authority's Equal Opportunities Policy and Recruitment and Selection Policy and procedures. As is evident in Appendices 1, 2 and 3, most adverts are featured in the local press, which makes local people aware of employment opportunities. Our main publications used are Clitheroe Advertiser, Lancashire Evening Telegraph and Longridge Evening News. As a major employer in the area, the corporate image and 'branding' used in our recruitment adverts helps us to attract high calibre candidates from the community which we serve. By attracting candidates from the local community, we are helping to build a thriving and sustainable economy and therefore contribute to achieving the Council's corporate priorities. We are also giving opportunities for people to live within close proximity to work and to therefore assist with the work/life balance and reduce the amount of travel time and cost involved in attending work.
- Corporate Priorities – The consistent corporate image presented in our recruitment and selection policies and procedures is applied to all vacancies at the Authority. The transparency of these policies and procedures offers all members of the community the opportunity to join us as an employee, provided they meet the skills and qualities required for the post. This helps to ensure that the workforce is representative of the wider community. Regular policy reviews ensure that the policies comply with legislation and best practice.
- Other Considerations – None.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Authority has been using Tribal Resourcing as their recruitment advertising provider since 30 April 2007. This is a national recruitment advertising agency. Until recently we dealt with the Manchester office. However, earlier this year our account was transferred to the London office. We have a new Account Manager (Alex Laycock) and a new Account Support Assistant (Paul Stainer).

2.2 The tender agreement entered into on 30 April 2007 was set up as part of the EleP (East Lancs e-Partnership) arrangement. This partnership no longer exists and has been superseded by the new wider Lancashire Joint Working Arrangement (The Lancashire Hub). However the original EleP consisted of Burnley Borough Council, Pendle Borough Council, Ribble Valley Borough Council, Rossendale Borough Council and Hyndburn Borough Council. It is important to note that Hyndburn decided to opt out of the recruitment advertising tender.

2.3 The tender awarded to Tribal Resourcing was for the recruitment advertising business of Burnley Borough Council, Pendle Borough Council, Ribble Valley Borough Council and Rossendale Borough Council. The original tender was for a period of 2 years with the option to extend for up to a further 2 years. The tender included recruitment advertising and other advertising services ie public notices etc. There is a legally binding contract specification document which details the service levels agreed. However, in summary Tribal Resourcing produce the following:

- Drafting of the copy for advertisements from Job Descriptions, Person Specifications and a briefing sheet which is usually discussed with them over the telephone.
- Producing artwork for the advertisements.
- Tailor made advertisements to suit responsibilities/scale of the post.
- Advice on placement/timing of advertisement in a standard format which can also be used to advertise the vacancy elsewhere ie Job Centre/Local Government website/e-mails etc.
- Booking advertising space in the press.

2.4 Appendix 1 shows the recruitment spreadsheet, which is a summary of the advertising activity from 1 April 2008 through to 31 March 2009. Appendix 2 shows the same information from 1 April 2009 through to 31 March 2010 and Appendix 3 shows the information from 1 April 2010 to date.

2.5 The recruitment spreadsheets attached in Appendices 1-3 show a breakdown of the date when the advertisement was placed, the job title, the publications used and the total cost. In addition, further Appendices are attached to show costs incurred and the discounted rates we have obtained through Tribal Resourcing. Appendix 4 shows annual recruitment advertising from 30 April 2008 to 31 March 2009. Appendices 5 and 6 show the same information but for 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010 and 1 April 2010 to date respectively.

2.6 The table below shows the comparison of advertising spend over recent years:

	2008/09	2009/10	20010/11 to date
Total spend	£18,635.37	£9,060.23	£4,981.50
No of Vacancies Advertised	26	13	5
Average cost per vacancy	£716.75	£696.94	£996.30

3 ISSUES

3.1 Whilst we have not always had a good response to advertisements, it is felt that this has usually been as a reflection of national skill shortages and salary levels attainable as a result of these shortages, not necessarily as a result of the wrong

choice of media. In the vast majority of cases, we are able to make a good appointment from the candidates who have applied for the post.

- 3.2 It is pleasing to note that whilst a number of vacancies has increased, the advertising expenditure has been kept in check and we can clearly see the discounts we have obtained through entering into a legally binding contract as part of the EleP Group. Whilst there continues to be staff movement, recruitment advertising spend has decreased. Prices of adverts continue to increase but our use of newspaper media is declining.
- 3.3 We continue to make as much use as possible of free media for advertising ie Job Centre, noticeboards, our own e-mail distribution list to neighbouring authorities, Local Government jobs website, Connexions (young persons careers website), Training 2000, universities etc.
- 3.4 We continue to see an increased number of online applications being received – it may be that a candidate has seen the advertisement in the press but chooses to use our website to make an online application. Candidates are familiar with the 2 week display times so that we have a number of interested candidates who check our website on a 2-weekly basis or have access to the vacancy area on our website and have got stored application forms on line.
- 3.5 We continue to closely monitor recruitment costs to look to achieve further savings where possible. In some cases, we have looked to reduce the size of advert, or to reduce the text in the advert and simply signpost interested candidates to our website for further information or to our recruitment answerphone line to request an application pack.
- 3.6 The contract with Tribal Resourcing runs until April 2011. Although we had some initial problems when the contract was first set up, we have been extremely satisfied with the level of service provided by Tribal Resourcing for the last 3 years. It is believed that Tribal are now fully aware of our requirements and have an understanding of our “business”. However, we have yet to make a full assessment of the implications of the transfer of our business to the London office as very few adverts have been placed since 1 April 2010.
- 3.7 We have quarterly review meetings with Tribal and they are willing and flexible to adapt to our working practices wherever possible. An example of this is our request that all communication be e-mailed in triplicate to our Personnel Section. This ensures that no information is missed and no deadlines are missed – as a result of 3 of the 4 members of the Personnel Section being on a part-time working pattern.
- 3.8 Our next meeting with Tribal is due in September 2010.
- 3.9 The average spend on recruitment advertising (per advert) looks to have increased significantly this year. This is not a true reflection as 2 of the 5 adverts placed were in the Lancashire Evening Telegraph which is our most expensive media. However, we anticipate a similar spend level in 2010/11 as in 2009/10 which is a reflection of the current economic climate, our own internal restructure plans and our closer monitoring of vacancies as they arise.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – If recruitment advertising is not effective there would be a detrimental effect on service delivery as existing staff will have to cover vacant posts. This requirement is likely to affect staff morale, which will further affect the quality of service delivery. Ribble Valley Borough Council closely monitors its establishment list and, departments are not usually run with any spare capacity. Therefore it becomes imperative for us to replace staff leaving the authority as quickly and as effectively as possible in most departments. Whilst all recruitment advertising is funded from existing budgets, it is important that spend does not increase without justification. This spend can also be off-set against salary not paid when posts are vacant.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – Although there are no specific legal implications, there is potential for an employment tribunal claim if recruitment advertisements are factually incorrect or contain inappropriate language or restrictions which may be viewed as discriminatory. We need to be aware of all discrimination legislation eg age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, etc.
- Political – None.
- Reputation – The Council's image may be adversely affected if advertisements lacked impact and did not attract high quality candidates. Failure to attract high calibre candidates could lead to service delivery becoming less efficient which would in turn adversely affect our reputation.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Receive the report.

PERSONNEL OFFICER

BACKGROUND PAPERS

APPENDIX 1

RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING SPREADSHEET – 1 APRIL 2008 – 31 MARCH 2009

APPENDIX 2

RECRUITMENT SPREADSHEET – 1 APRIL 2009 – 31 MARCH 2010

APPENDIX 3

RECRUITMENT SPREADSHEET – 1 APRIL 2010 TO DATE

APPENDIX 4

TOTAL SPEND WITH TRIBAL RESOURCING – 1 APRIL 2008 – 31 MARCH 2009

APPENDIX 5

TOTAL SPEND WITH TRIBAL RESOURCING 1 APRIL 2009 – 31 MARCH 2010

APPENDIX 6

TOTAL SPEND WITH TRIBAL RESOURCING – 1 APRIL 2010 TO DATE

For further information please ask for Liz Rawson, extension 4409.