

Recommendation 8

We recommend that the Chief Officer – Human Resources reports back to us within three months on the potential for addressing the barriers to recruitment where staff face losing accrued employment benefit

The barriers to recruitment related to a loss of benefits in terms of leave, sick pay and redundancy protection. The issues outlined in the report and options to address these are outlined below.

A) Adding Voluntary bodies and NHS employers to the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government, etc.) (Modification)

(Amendment) Order 1999 – This Order means organisations must take into account continuous service of other listed bodies. The current listed bodies are in the main functions delivered or historically aligned to Local Government and do not include the voluntary sector or NHS. Representations can be made by the council to Government but there are no guarantees they would be included or the organisations would be interested. In particular the Local Government Employers have indicated a number of occasions where the DCLG have declined requests and suggest widening of employment continuity would be viewed as transferring risk into the local government sector. Although further lobbying could be undertaken we would recommend the issue is addressed at a local level, via the other options.

B) Financial Incentives – LCC is bound within our obligation as an equal pay employer but this still provides us some flexibility to help services to attract high quality experienced staff. On occasion it is accepted practice for Directors/Chief Officers to agree to appoint an individual above the minimum of the salary band e.g. when an experienced applicant faces a pay cut to join the council. Where there is evidence that a post is hard to fill it is suggested that pay and benefits could be considered as a whole package. e.g. a loss of annual leave could be recompensed by placing the individual higher within the pay band rather than at the starting point. However, they would not be able to make an offer above the posts salary band. Other options being used to recruit to other hard to fill posts across the council include recruitment campaigns and where evidenced and appropriate market rate supplements and retention pay. In the context of our overall aims for fostering and adoption outcomes this type of investment could be explored with Local and/or Corporate HR.

C) Selling the Benefits of LCC and the Service– Working for Leeds City Council has many added benefits. Just a few include our final salary pension scheme, commitment to work life balance (evidenced in flexible working patterns of current staff within the adoption service), employee assistance programme and discounted public transport. Future recruitment can sell these benefits up front through improved marketing, the recruitment website and advertising. The current Recruitment Service are actively working in this area to promote the council as ‘an employer of choice’. Equally we can also consider steps that make the service attractive to social care professionals. Service managers and HR could jointly work to develop our services reputation as a great place to work e.g. in terms of excellent management, career development, employee engagement and satisfaction.

D) Recruitment Campaigns – In the future we would recommend managers within the service work closely with the internal Recruitment Service to develop recruitment campaigns to meet their specific needs. Currently approaches are very orthodox and do not distinguish ourselves. Investing in this links with the points made in point C.