

Agency Staffing in Social Services

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

APRIL 2005

Reference:	walsall agency staff within SS 02-03 APupdate3 April 05.doc –
Date:	April 2005

Recommendation	Responsibility	Agreed	Action taken
R1 The Director of Social Care and Supported Housing should work with Internal audit and the Council's procurement officer to ensure that contracts for the use of all agency staff are within EU and Council requirements.	D.Harman	Y	New contracts commenced from 4 th October 2004 and are operating successfully.
R2 The Director of Social Care and Supported Housing should satisfy himself that all contractual agreements have been properly formalised by the Council.	D.Harman	Y	As Recommendation 1
R3 The Director of Social Care and Supported Housing should ensure that all managers are fully aware of guidelines on the use of agency staff.	D.Harman	Y	A clearing house process has been established to ensure and all managers are aware that they must only purchase social care agency staff through the clearing house. The contract process includes procedures to enable the council to monitor the performance of individual contractor companies and individual agency staff.
R4 The Director of Social Care and Supported Housing should put in place procedures which enable him to be satisfied that all managers are seen to be adhering to the guidelines.	D.Martin	Y	Procedures were issued prior to commencement of the contract, invoices paid are regularly checked to ensure that only contracted agencies are used and the correct price is charged We are investigating the use of I-proc to ensure control.
R5 The Director of Social Care and Supported Housing should ensure that reasons for high levels of sickness and turnover are investigated.	Managers and Supervisors SMB, General and Service Managers	Y	This is part of the Directorate HR management action plan. We have found that stress is the main reason for high levels of sickness. Since October 04 monthly courses on absence management and stress management have been provided for approximately 100 managers. Strategies are being developed in relation to early intervention for musculoskeletal illness and a

			health and well being strategy	
R6	The Director of Social Care and Supported Housing should establish processes which will begin to reduce sickness and turnover levels.	D. Martin	Y	An assistant Personnel Officer will start in May 2005 will identify 'hot-spots' and support managers to reduce absence and turnover and use of agency staff
R7	The Director of Social Care and Supported Housing should develop central monitoring information to inform Social Services management of detailed reasons, cause and effect for the use of agency staff.	HR Information Management Officer.	Y	As R6
R8	Senior managers should review the reasons for the high spending areas and target action to reduce costs by exploring more cost effective alternatives.	General Managers	Y	As R6 and clearing house will identify high activity areas.
R9	The Director of Social Care and Supported Housing should establish a review of delegations to locality managers to ensure that they are compatible with the need for central contracting and compliance with Council Contract Procedure Rules relating to contracts.	D.Harman	Y	We are exploring use of I-proc to improve controls on delegation and purchasing of this service.
R10	The Director of Social Care and Supported Housing should establish agency contract monitoring procedures. This should ensure that performance monitoring against the contract is reported regularly to Social Services management.	D.Harman	Y	The clearing house produces monitoring information and a growth bid was successful to appoint a contract manager who will ensure robust monitoring.