

# Minutes

## *EXAMINATION OF RECRUITMENT CONTRACT TASK & FINISH GROUP*

**MINUTES OF THE EXAMINATION OF RECRUITMENT CONTRACT TASK & FINISH GROUP HELD ON TUESDAY 26 OCTOBER 2010, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 1, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.40 PM.**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr T Butcher, Mr D Dhillon, Mr P Hardy (Chairman), Mrs W Mallen, Mrs F Roberts MBE and Mr R Scott

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP**

Apologies of absence were received from Mary Baldwin and Noel Brown.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2010 were agreed.

### **4 FEEDBACK FROM INTERVIEWS WITH SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES**

Mrs M Baldwin met with a Finance Customer Support Manager and the following points were highlighted:

- Prior to the introduction of Hays, the service produced its own advert and would advise HR on where the post should be advertised. HR then sent out the applications and the service carried out the shortlisting and interview process.
- The service now identifies the need for a post which is authorised by the Transformation team. Hays then take over the process and also carry out the shortlisting.
- The previous method was time consuming.
- No benefits were identified from the new way of recruiting.
- Issues identified since Hays include:
  - Hays not getting right candidate



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



- Service had some temporary staff which they had previously used but could not be used without going through Hays
- No cost benefits of the contract identified
- The quality of candidates was regarded as worse through Hays - but this could be because the service area had not identified what it needed
- Overall the Officer felt the introduction of the Hays model was a good idea but said it needs fine tuning.

Mrs F Roberts met with a Team Manager, Safeguarding, Children and Young People and the following points were highlighted:

- Prior to Hays the Officer liaised directly with the agencies and relationships were built up.
- Now that Hays have taken over this role the service no longer have direct contact
- There were no issues raised with the previous system
- Issues identified since Hays include:
  - Lack of personal contact with agencies detrimental to service as the agencies knew the service area and were able to identify candidates
  - Trouble obtaining references through Hays
- The Officer was unsure if the cost to service has been reduced as the service has effectively stopped recruiting due to budget constraints. There was however an issue raised regarding the service being charged when temporary workers already in place are made permanent
- The quality of candidate was deemed poorer through Hays
- The system was not regarded as more efficient
- The service has been trying to find ways to work around Hays

Mr P Hardy met with a Team Leader, Adults and Families and the following points were highlighted:

- Their team does not use external temporary staff
- Prior to Hays the system worked well.
- The service since Hays has not been good. Requirements are inputted on the workflow system but the response is slow. There is also no evidence that Hays do any real shortlisting.
- It appears that Hays are paid to do the work but that Officers in service areas still do most of the work themselves.
- It can 2-3 weeks to fill a temporary post. The delay can result in an unnecessary increase in overtime.
- There is now effectively a recruitment freeze and many of the issues have gone away

Mr N Brown met with a Senior Legal Assistant in the Legal Department and the following points were highlighted:

- The previous system was time consuming
- Since implementation the service the department has had a good experience and the service provided has been efficient and friendly and has also freed up Officer time.
- Hays also carried out the CRB check
- Issues identified since the Hays include:
  - Uncertainty about who should approach which candidates and at what point.
- There is an issue with costs as when someone is already temping in a position and then made permanent Hays still receive payment and they have not carried out much work to justify the cost.

- No benefit of the contract was identified. It was highlighted that the positions being sought by that service are quite specialised
- Overall the system was better before as the service had more control over the process.

A Member said that a number of themes were emerging from the feedback and asked if they would be pulled together. The Chairman said that the Task and Finish Group had agreed to look at the quality of service provided and that this process was still ongoing.

## 5 QUESTIONS FOR COUNCILS/PRIVATE INDUSTRIES

Members had received a draft of questions for comparator councils. Members considered the suggested questions to be posed to Councils / private businesses. Members were advised that the aim of the questions is to find out about their recruitment systems, which can then be used for comparison purposes to help inform the review.

Following discussions Members agreed to approach the following Councils:

- Westminster
- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Somerset
- Devon
- Essex
- Portsmouth
- Hertfordshire – it was highlighted that Hertfordshire has a similar recruitment contract but that Manpower are the provider. A visit will be arranged. Mr T Butcher agreed to attend this visit with the Chairman.

It was highlighted that with the exception of Hertfordshire there will be no other visits to the Council offices as contact will be via email and sent to the Head of Human Resources.

Members discussed the suggested questions and agreed to add the following questions to the list;

1. What is your evaluation process?
2. Do you have a talent pool and how effective is it?
3. How do they monitor the level of satisfaction with Recruitment Managers?

It was agreed that the Policy Officer add the additional questions to the list and circulate.

**Action: Policy Officer**

Members then discussed which private organisations they should approach and the following was proposed:

- Lloyds
- Virgin
- Tesco
- BMW

It was suggested that Hays provided a list of private companies and that this could be considered as a reference list. The Group agreed that the list could be agreed outside the meeting between the Chairman and the Policy Officer.

**Action: Policy Officer/Chairman**

The Chairman suggested that a meeting be held with Hays. He said that he would attend along with the HR Manager and asked that another Member of the Group also attend. Mr R Scott agreed to attend this meeting.

## **6 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

### **RESOLVED**

**That the press and public be excluded for the following item which is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)**

## **7 PRESENTATION BY ANN COBBAN, HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

Ann Cobban, Head of Human Resources, Patricia Hook, Senior Procurement Manager, Buckinghamshire County Council, Sue Oswell, HR Manager Recruitment Compliance, Buckinghamshire County Council and Deborah Andrews Senior Project Accountant, Buckinghamshire County Council were welcomed to the meeting.

The Officers discussed the background to the introduction of the Hays contract, why the new system was introduced and outlined some of the pros and cons that have been identified since its introduction.

The Officers were thanked for their attendance.

## **8 INCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

## **9 REVIEW OF KEY POINTS**

Members considered the key points from the meeting and made the following comments:

- Contract Evaluation Criteria
  - What was the criteria or considerations in place when the decision was made which company to provide the contract to.
  - Could the providers deliver the contract?
  - Does one size fit all?
- Functions of the Governance Board
  - Were problems tackled early enough? – could they have been tackled earlier?
  - A disconnect seems to have developed between the provider and the County Council regarding governance of the contract
- Lack of sense of Direction
  - No sense of direction or cohesion in the management of the contract.
- Contract Drafting
  - Is drafting of the contract an issue?
  - Is there a pattern regarding the same bits being 'loose' and the wrong bits 'tight'?
  - People who draft contracts may not necessarily be those who have to use them
- Implementation
  - The project team should have remained on site longer

- There should have been an initial review – was there?
- Are the KPIs too complicated
- Contract Delivery
  - Are we saving money
  - Are high calibre employees being provided
  - Why are managers not providing feedback

A Member enquired if Hays paid the County Council for office space when based in County buildings.

**Action: Policy Officer**

## **10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 23 November 2010, 10.00am, Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury.

**CHAIRMAN**