

Questions from Finance & Resources Scrutiny Review to Heads of Service – TARGETTED SERVICES

Question	Response
1. How would you define the term consultant ?	An relevant experienced professional who is engaged to provide specific advice and support.
2. What distinction do you use to define between consultant, agency and temporary staff?	A consultant would be provide “exceptional” expertise in an area where there was not normally expertise in the structure of the organisation. Agency and temporary staff are replacement for the normal or regular service provided.
3. How many temporary/agency or consultant staff have you employed for: More than 6 months over the last 2 years More than 12 months over the last 2 years	Two
4. Please list all those at 4 above and provide reasons for their employment	1) Consultancy to support with Local Authority with the changes to the Special School Funding Formula 2) Consultant to support with practice in improving attendance.
5. How do you budget for temporary/agency/consultant staff?	1) Agreed through the Schools Forum 2) Within the Education Welfare Service budget
6. How do you evaluate the cost-effectiveness of using such staff rather than employ to these posts?	Both commissions were to add value and were exceptional expertise not available within the service as a whole.
7. What is the impact on staff morale from using consultants or agency staff?	Both consultants were well received positively as being people who brought exceptional knowledge and expertise to the situation. If the circumstances warrant use of agency staff morale is not usually affected as they as used to relive a situation. If agency staff were used as a substitute of not filling regalia vacancies on a timely basis this can adversely affect morale.
8. What other options do you consider or are available?	Options for internal “acting up” are explored where relevant to support staff in their development.
9. How do you determine the skills and abilities of your own staff to assist with providing cover for gaps in service	Through regular performance management and supervision

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provision, where you employ temporary/agency/consultant staff ?	
10. How do you determine the skills and abilities of staff across PCC to assist with providing cover for gaps in service provision, where you employ temporary/agency/consultant staff and are there any barriers to this ?	Determining the skills/ abilities across PCC to cover is not easy as there is not ready access to the information.
11. How much does it cost your service to provide cover for sickness/absence? (excluding the cost of SSP)	Nil
12. What time and money is spent on training and developing your own staff to fill "hard to fill" posts from within existing resources?	We have very good retention and sickness rates which mean this is minimal requirement i.e. we have not got any "hard to fill" posts at present.
13. How many temporary/agency/consultants do you engage who cost more than £5k during the lifetime of their contract ? Please list and advise of reasons for employment	Both consultants referenced above cost more than £5k
14. Have you ever employed as a consultant – a member of staff from PCC who had previously been made redundant or retired ? If so please provide details of contract and reasons	No
15. Please provide a breakdown of consultant and agency staff costs for 2008/09 and 2009/2010 for your service and a summary of how these were funded	Review of Special school Funding £45000 Support for attendance £22,000

Please complete and return the above questions to;

Anthony Quinn, Senior Local Democracy Officer, customer, community & democratic services

Tel: 02392-834002 (ext 4002)

The completed returns will be submitted to the scrutiny panel for your work area who will invite you to attend a formal scrutiny meeting in early September to discuss your response and answer any supplementary questions. All responses will be considered by Scrutiny Management Panel at their meeting on 15 September.