

**OFFICER DELEGATION SCHEME
RECORD OF DECISION**

TO BE UPLOADED TO THE INTERNET BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Date: 26/11/2024		Ref No: 2263
Responsible Officer: Andrew Crawford Operations Manager Support at Home		
Type of Decision (please refer to MO Guidance):		
Key	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Key <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Freedom of Information Status: <i>(can the report go in the public domain)</i> Not exempt.		
Title/Subject matter: Bury Employment Support Training – Increase to Establishment - establish 5 x Support Worker Posts (150 hours) (grade 6) to reduce the use of agency.		
Budget/Strategy/Policy/Compliance:		
(i) Is the decision within an Approved Budget?	Yes	
(ii) Is the decision in conflict with the council's policies, strategies or relevant service plans?	No	
(iii) Does the decision amend existing or raise new policy issues?	No	
(iv) Is the decision significant and/or does it meet the £100,000 threshold for recording?	Not applicable	

<p>Equality Impact Assessment [Does this decision change policy, procedure or working practice or negatively impact on a group of people? If yes – complete EIA and summarise issues identified and recommendations – forward EIA to Corporate HR]</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Summary:</p> <p>Approval is sought to create 5 additional Bury Employment Support Training, (BEST) Support Assistant posts (150 hours). 120 hours are currently being covered by Reed agency but due to demand we are proposing a slight increase to 150 hours.</p>	
<p>Wards affected: All wards</p>	
<p>Consultations:.</p>	
<p>Scrutiny & Review Committee Interest: None</p>	
<p>Options considered:</p> <p>Not applicable</p>	

Decision *[with reasons]*

Overview

Bury Employment Support and Training (Bury EST) provides an essential service to the residents of Bury. Bury EST support young people and adults with disabilities to find paid employment and develop independence/life skills.

Support Assistants are instrumental in identifying customers with a Learning Disability/Autism, who are ready to move onto the employment team and begin their journey to paid employment without them we would not have the same number of job outcomes; year on year this number has continued to grow, achieving 24 last financial year. This is a major benefit to our customers who become economically active and the Council as there is less reliance on social care.

At present we rely heavily on casual support staff to support our customers to develop their life skills based at our site in Manchester Road Park and we have done since 2014. Without the use of these casual staff, we would not be able to meet the demands of the service, putting future referrals and further income levels in jeopardy.

The service has continued to grow year on year, and we currently have 12 customers on a waiting list at 1st November 2024. Utilising agency staff to provide cover is not ideal, as there is often a high turnover of leading to gaps in service delivery, additional time is spent training replacement staff and lack of consistence for our customers. There is also an increase in costs as the hourly rate is more than permanent staff contracts.

LET's Behaviours

It is expected that the creation of permanent Support Assistant roles would attract applicants from the Borough of Bury, which align with the LET's behaviours of making a difference to people in the borough of where they live, meeting ambitions of our Bury residents, alongside offering more stability in Bury's economy. Recruitment into these roles will be inclusive and once appointed, successful applicants will be supported to build upon their existing strengths in their position.

Bury EST are a local provider of Supported Employment who have been established since 1993. Bury EST meet the needs and ambitions of local residents, they provide work opportunities and proactively find solutions to the barriers that disabled job seekers face on a daily basis. This has helped to achieve the current 3.9% figures of Bury residents with LD into employment.

Proposal

It is proposed to create 5 x 30 hours – (150 hours) permanent Support Assistant posts (grade 6).

The service currently relies on agency staff to cover 120 hours per week. It is proposed to increase the staffing hours by 30 to 150 hours per week to meet increasing demand for the service.

The 120 hours per week worked by agency has cost £71k to November 24 and is estimated to cost £111k for the full financial year.

The new proposal of 150 hours per week would cost the following: -

5 x 30 Support Assistant Roles (Grade 6) - £24,568 x 5 = £122,840
(this includes on costs)

The additional cost to the budget would be £122,840 – £111,420 = **£11,420**

The shortfall of £11,420 detailed above, would be covered by an increase in revenue. Having an additional 30 hours would allow us to reduce our waiting list, increase customer numbers which would generate additional income as detailed below: -

- An additional 30 hours of Support Assistant would generate approximately £75,000
This figure is based on a Support Assistant working 6 hours per day, with approximately 6 customers per day, at a cost of £50 each per day which equities to £75,000.

The Support Assistant role currently provides 258 hours of Support per week to our customers which is delivered as follows: -

Current Support Assistant Posts			
Permanent posts	Hours per week	Agency Posts	Hours per week
30hrs x 2	60	30 hrs x 1	30
24hrs x 1	24	24 hrs x 1	24
18hrs x 3	54	18 hrs x 3	54
		12 hrs x 1	12
Total Hours	138		120
Grand Total	258		

The proposed new establishment list will be as follows: -

Proposed Support Assistant Posts	
Permanent posts	Hours per week
30hrs x 2	60
24hrs x 1	24
18hrs x 3	54
30hrs x 5	150

Total Hours	288
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Finance Comments

We are currently fully established but using agency as an extra resource to meet the demands of the service. If we were to add into the establishment 5 Support Assistants grade 6 all working 30 hours, the additional budget required would be £122,840 for the full year, £61k for the remainder of 24/25.

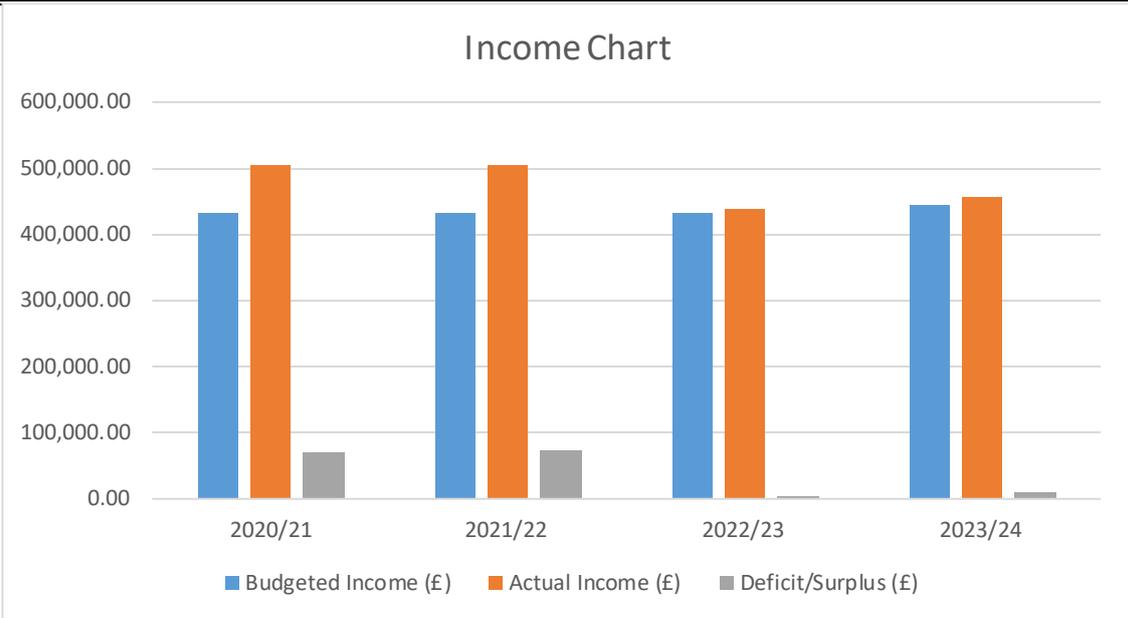
Although the Establishment list will increase by 150 Support assistant hours, there is sufficient funds within the budget to accommodate this as the service has been reliant on agency staff at this level for over the past 5 years.

Extra Roles Required

Role	Grade	FTE	Salary	NI	Pension	Total
Support Assistant	6	4.05	96,863	7,090	18,887	122,840

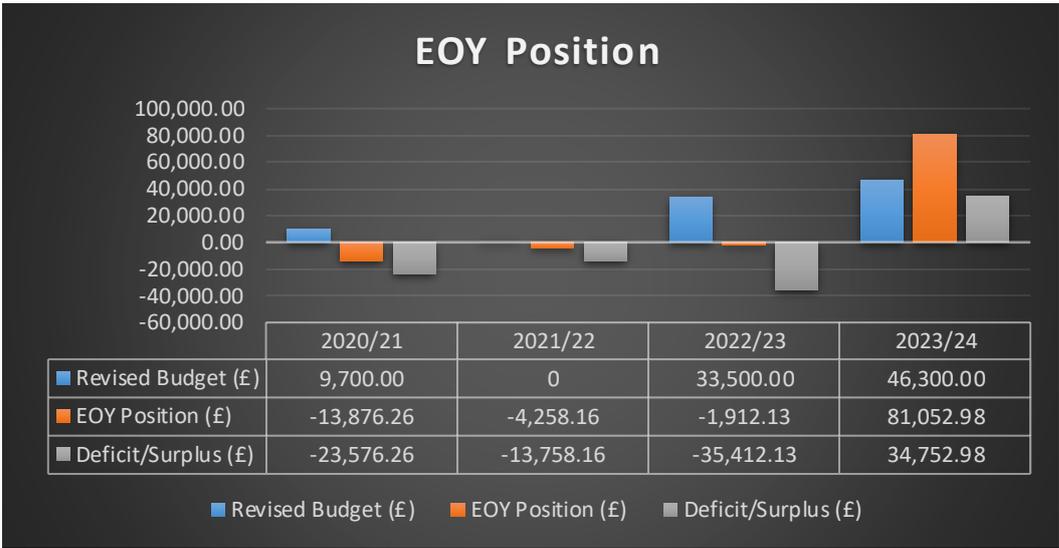
As a self-financing service, the income generated covers the staffing costs, i.e. every new customer comes with their own funding to cover staffing and overhead costs, and as a result there are no extra costs to the service for every new customer that starts. However, having a high number of casual staff creates its own risks, but if these staff were permanent, these risks would be eliminated, creating more stability in the service.

As you can see in the Income Chart below income has increased over the last four years.



The decrease in income from 21/22 to 22/23 is due to the pandemic.

In the EOY Chart below you can see we have finished in a surplus position year on year, 2023/24 finished in deficit due to a one-off compensation claim that we had to pay –



The proposed changes will enable the service to meet existing customer demands. The income budgeted for 24/25 is **£-445,300** but to September 24 we have received **£-405,691** given we are only halfway through the year and have clients waiting to come on board I feel we can safely say that we will bring in more than what has been budgeted. Estimations suggest that we are looking at this financial year bringing in income of approximately £480,000.

HR Comments

It is proposed to advertise the new permanent posts internally and external giving the agency staff an opportunity to apply if they wish.

Recommendation		
The recommendation is to approve the replacement of REED agency staff with the establishment of 5 additional BEST Support Assistant posts and increase the hours from 120 to 150 per week.		
Decision made by:	Signature:	Date:
Executive Director – Health and Adult Care		27 December 2024
Section 151 Officer		22 January 2025
Director of People and Inclusion		28 January 2025
Members Consulted [see note 1 below]		
Cabinet Member		6 February 2025
Lead Member - HR		28 January 2025
Opposition Spokesperson		

Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where, in accordance with the requirements of the Officer Delegation Scheme, a Chief Officer consults with the appropriate Cabinet Member they must sign the form so as to confirm that they have been consulted and that they agree with the proposed action. The signature of the Opposition Spokesperson should be obtained if required, to confirm that he/she has been consulted. Please refer to the MO Guidance. 2. This form must not be used for urgent decisions. 3. Where there is any doubt, Corporate Directors should err on the side of caution and seek advice from the Council’s Monitoring Officer.