

London Borough of Brent
General Purposes Committee – 21st October 2003
Report from the Director of Social Services

For Action

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises the response to the recent recruitment process for this new post and outlines the reasons for applying for a market supplement to this post.**

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee agrees to the payment of a scarcity payment for this post as detailed in Paragraph 3.1.**

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The addition of a market supplement will assist recruitment to this key post. Other local authorities are being surveyed currently to more accurately assess the level of supplement. This is likely to be in excess of £5,000 and this will be met from within the service area budget.**

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Pay differentials between staff holding posts which have been assessed as attracting the same grade under the evaluation scheme used by the Council are potentially open to challenge under the Equal Pay Act.

It is important that where, due to difficulties in recruitment or retention, payments are made to staff which are additional to those related to the grade of the post they hold, these additional payments are and continue to be justified on objective grounds. Such payments should only be made on the basis that the Council has the contractual right to keep them under review in the light of labour market conditions and to end or vary them at its discretion in the light of such a review. The need for transparency and consistency has become more pronounced with recent legislative change that allows employees to issue questionnaires to ascertain how much other employees are paid.

5.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

5.1 No existing employees are affected by this specific proposal.

6.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

6.1 At its meeting on the 21st July 2003, the Executive approved the creation of a new post of Assistant Director (Finance and Resources).

6.2 The General Purposes Committee on the 22nd May 2002 approved a recruitment and retention package that allowed for special payments for posts where recruitment and retention was a particular issue. This post was not specifically covered in that report, however the principle applied is the same. It is on that basis that the recommendation in this report is made to this committee following agreement by the Chief Executive.

6.3 This post was evaluated at Hay 4.

6.4 The post was advertised nationally at the beginning of September. In addition a number of London Boroughs and neighbouring Unitary Authorities were approached directly to encourage likely applicants.

6.5 The advert and calling produced a disappointing number of applicants (18). Of these most were not at all suitable for appointment, with a small number of borderline applicants. It was not possible to create any shortlist from this field.

6.6 This post is critical to the ongoing successful management of the social services budget in excess of £77 million. It is therefore vital that any repeat recruitment exercise is successful. The current salary level is that determined by the Hay evaluation scheme. However this salary has not been sufficiently competitive to make the post sufficiently attractive to suitable candidates.

6.7 The post is currently being covered through an interim management arrangement.

**Jenny Goodall
Director of Social Services
Mahatma Gandhi House
34 Wembley Hill Road
Wembley
Middx, HA9 8AD**

**Tel: 020 8937 4067
Fax: 020 8937 4065
E-mail: jenny.goodall@brent.gov.uk**