

Decision under Delegated Powers

Officer Requesting Decision (if necessary)

Customer Service Delivery Manager

Officer Making the Decision

Director of Customer Experience

Recommendation

That the hours attached to Senior Customer Service Advisor (SCSA) posts F658 / M349 be temporarily increased by an additional 74 hours per week (2 FTE) from 1st October 2022 until 31st March 2023.

Reason

To create opportunities for suitably experienced Customer Service Advisors (CSA's) to act-up as SCSA's to facilitate priority delivery and completion of the intensive upskilling training programme required for all CSA's across the restructured Customer Service team by 31st March 2023.

Authority for Decision

Authority to agree changes to the establishment, within budget and without major service or policy implications, affecting no more than five posts (irrespective of their post number) in any single case, is delegated to the Head of Paid Service (Item 6 on page 8-4 of the Constitution). This has been further delegated to Heads of Services in certain circumstances (DD28 11/12), which this decision falls within.

Decision and Date

K Barnshaw 13.9.22

Background

On 1st April 2022 the former Customer Service Centre (face-to-face) and Contact Centre (telephony) teams were restructured into a single generic Customer Service team, with the intention of transitioning and upskilling all Advisors to be able to deliver the council's core services irrespective of the customer contact channel chosen, within 12 months of implementation.

High staff turnover in the period immediately following the restructure has delayed the rollout of this upskilling programme, and while this situation has now been significantly addressed it has shortened the window of opportunity available, and the training programme now needs to progress urgently and at pace.

To deliver this programme on time, while simultaneously maintaining the business-as-usual floorwalking and immediate support to all CSA's (both those in the office and those working remotely) and Team Leaders, will require an additional 2 FTE (74 hours per week) SCSA resource over and above the current establishment. This will be funded from the existing V023 staff budget.

Due to the nature of the SCSA role, the detailed support required, and the urgent timeframe for this to be delivered in, there is a need for those acting-up to already have a significant working knowledge of the CBC operational practices, processes and systems used by the Customer Services team and be able to 'hit the ground running'. Because of this the acting-up opportunities will only be advertised internally, with a selection process undertaken if there are more expressions of interest than opportunities available.

Appointment of 2 FTE CSA's to the temporary SCSA acting-up roles will in turn create 2 FTE temporary CSA 'vacancies' that will require backfilling for the duration of this programme in order to maintain CSA resource levels and the required level of customer service. These will be advertised for backfill by either fixed-term contract or interim / agency staff, and are within the current establishment and existing budget.

Comments from HR

HR Advisor: S Choudhury (12/09/22)

Summary of Comments from HR: Management have advised that due to the urgent nature of the requirement to train CSA's they need to appoint people with working knowledge of the service and so will look to offer acting up opportunities. Management have confirmed once the acting up positions are filled the respective vacant CSA posts will be backfilled on a fixed term basis by going out to recruitment.

Once DD is signed off management will need to complete contract variation e-forms so relevant paperwork can be issued to employees acting up.

Financial Implications

Management have advised that due to the urgent nature of the requirement to train CSA's they need to appoint people who already have a significant working knowledge of the CBC operational practices. These CSA's are currently paid at a Grade D, lowest spinal point being scp15. Due to the recent re-structure in this area, all CSA's have been down graded to a Grade C with the majority of these post on a 3-year pay protection.

It is worth noting that if this request is extended, the calculations will need to be re-visited.

For the purposes of this request for acting up, the maximum difference between a Grade D scp15 to a Grade E scp18 (bottom of the spinal) will be calculated:

- 2fte 'acting-up' for 6 months to Grade E scp18 = £2,100

Grade D scp15 = £23,953 x 41% on-costs = £33,773.73 x 2fte = £67,547.46 / 12mnths * 6mnths = £33,773.73
Grade E scp 18 = £25,419 x 41% on-costs = £35,840.79 x 2fte = £71,681.58 / 12mnths * 6mnths = £35,840.79
Difference = £2,067.06 (£2,100 rounded).

Appointment of 2fte CSA's to the temporary SCSA acting-up roles will in turn create 2fte temporary CSA vacancies at a Grade C scp8 (bottom of the scale) that will require backfilling.

- 2fte 'Backfill' for 6 months to Grade C scp8 = £29,400

Grade C scp8 = £20,852 x 41% on-costs = £29,401.32 x 2fte = 58,802.64 / 12mnths * 6mnths = £29,401.32 (£29,400 rounded)

Total request = £31,500 which will be fully funded from V023 salary underspends arising from the H1 vacancies from staff turnover.

A budget virement will not be needed as it is within V023.

Risk Management

No specific risks are associated with this report.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: None