

CDC Development Management – Resources and Recruitment Update

Background

In the summer of 2021 business cases were submitted to the three partner Councils requesting additional funding to address capacity, retention and resilience issues by:

- Creating two additional Senior Planner posts (per site),
- Implementing Career Grades at various levels, and
- Introducing Shared Service working arrangements/contracts where appropriate.

Outcomes

CDC has five more officers in post (January 2022) compared to when the new recruitment process commenced (1st September 2021). As well as additional posts being created at all three sites:

- There are 8 CDC Planners on Career Grades, which should aid retention. Two of these are Principal Officers, which significantly improves capacity around mentoring, performance management etc. Senior Career Grades span a salary range of circa £19k to £38k and Principal Career Grades span circa £34k to £45k.,
- Including those 8 CDC Planners, there are now 25 Planners (across the Partnership) that have new contracts that provide flexibility to allocate Officers to different DM functions and sites. This accounts for more than 50% of Planner posts across the Partnership,
- HR are working with the Service to increase the length of Notice Periods. This will give us a longer period over which to react to any future resignations,
- A new post of 'Validation Lead' has been introduced and appointed to, to manage the newly formed Shared Validation Team. The creation of this team provides the Service with resilience needed to maintain the improved Validation performance; but also relieves DM Manager/Principal Officers of management responsibility for these areas,
- Resident Services has created (and appointed to) a new 'Performance Support Lead' post. Although this is a Resident Service Group-wide post, the initial focus is around improving performance and process management in DM and Revenues and Benefits.

Current Position

CDC DM Service currently has four vacancies:

- 2 x Senior Planners, and
- 2 x Technicians.

There is now the option of offering all four posts as Career Grades to give ourselves further flexibility.

The Service has experienced problems recruiting but this is a National issue and not just in Planning. While the process started (in September 2021) with nine vacancies and there are currently four vacancies, this does not reflect the effort that has gone into recruitment. During 2021 there were 21 appointments made in CDC's Planning Team (including internal promotions). This figure may appear alarming, suggesting that we had extensive resignations within the Service. However, the recruitment approach taken was to promote our valued internal candidates first (before making external appointments). This resulted in further internal opportunities that (in some cases) were again taken by existing (internal) Team Members.

Next Steps

As the job market continues to be difficult, the Service (with Recruitment Team and HR colleagues) are taking some different approaches to filling the four remaining vacancies:

- The DM Manager has just sourced some temporary resource, so that our performance improvement isn't delayed,
- The Business Manager has requested a list of all Planners that have left the Service within the last three years. Now that there is a more attractive employment package and career path salaries. So, some 'head hunting' activity will be taking place,
- The Business Manager is working with Cirencester College and has three potential work placements that we will develop,
- The Portfolio Holder will be making a short social media video clip, with some recent recruits, to highlight the positive working environment,
- A similar 'positive working environment' message has been delivered to potential candidates internally,
- The 'Refer a Friend' payment that we offer existing staff has now been doubled to £200, and
- The Service will continue to offer the £4,000 (one off) Expenses Payment that was included as part of the package within the recent recruitment drives.