

EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB-COMMITTEE
16 JANUARY 2007

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN SCHOOLS
(Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries - Human Resources)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Education Employment Sub Committee is requested to consider the initiatives underway and plans for the future to aid the recruitment and retention of teachers in the Borough.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **The Committee is invited to note the actions being taken to assist with the recruitment and retention of teaching and other school staff in the Borough.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee needs to be aware of the work undertaken to support this priority area in Bracknell forest Borough Council.

4 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 4.1 Any innovative recruitment and retention measures adopted needs to be in accordance with the Borough's legal powers.

Borough Finance Officer

- 4.2 The financial implications of the report are set out in the supporting information.

Access Implications

- 4.3 There are no access implications.

Borough Personnel Manager

- 4.4 Comments incorporated in the supporting information.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Newly Qualified Teacher Recruitment

- 5.1 As in previous years NQTs are invited to apply to Bracknell Forest's Primary Pool. They complete one online application to be considered by all primary

schools for suitable vacancies. This scheme has benefits for both schools and candidates as it reduces administrative burdens, streamlines and accelerates and increases the number of teachers to consider for each post.

- 5.2 In 2006 102 NQTs applied for the pool. 61 were interviewed by a panel of 3 headteachers, and 18 were appointed to positions in Bracknell Forest. There were some teachers in the pool who were still seeking posts after 1st September. Some of these have filled late arising vacancies, taken positions starting on 1st January or covered for teachers on maternity leave.
- 5.3 For 2007 we are also accepting centralised applications from secondary trained NQTs, which will be forwarded to schools so the applicants can be considered for suitable vacancies.
- 5.4 At Recruitment Fairs, the Recruitment Strategy Team collects contact emails and mobile phone numbers of all NQTs who express an interest in teaching in Bracknell Forest. Whenever the team are made aware of a suitable vacancy by schools, details are sent via text message or email to the NQT, who can access full details of the vacancy on the Bracknell Forest website and apply directly should they wish.

Returning to Teaching

- 5.5 Bracknell Forest is running its third Return to Teaching course in the summer of 2007. The 12 week part time course is designed for qualified primary trained teachers wishing to update their skills and knowledge and return to teaching after a break. The course includes 10 days placement in local schools and specialist training covering all areas of the curriculum, based at the Education Centre.
- 5.6 The course is funded by the Training and Development Agency for Schools and attendees will receive a training bursary. The course is open to teachers living in any area; although it is likely most will be local to Bracknell and will consider taking positions in Bracknell Forest schools on completion of the course.
- 5.7 The course requires 15 attendees before the TDA will give funding for it to go ahead. There has been considerable interest in the course, with 50 application packs sent out and whilst only 12 applications have been received to date, it is expected that the required number of attendees will be met.
- 5.8 We are working with Oxford Brookes University to investigate whether it is possible for this course to be accredited, so that the study involved will count towards an MA, should the teachers involved wish to continue to study for this qualification at a later date.

Housing help for teachers

- 5.9 New schemes offering housing help to teachers and other keyworkers were launched in October 2006. The government funded schemes for Bracknell Forest are now managed by Catalyst Housing. There are now a number of different options available to those eligible.

- 5.10 Grants are available to teachers buying their first home, to those whose present home is too small for their needs, or teachers who need to move into the area, and have a property to sell elsewhere.
- 5.11 The Open Market Homebuy scheme gives teachers the option of buying a home of their choice within reasonable travelling distance of their place of work. The scheme takes the form of an equity loan of up to £50,000 (or 25% of the house price if less) which is repayable on the sale of the house, or shortly after keyworker leaves employment.
- 5.12 The New Build scheme offers shared equity properties, where the teachers can buy part of the home and rent the remainder. At present there are not many of these properties located in Bracknell Forest, but Bracknell Forest teachers can use this scheme for properties in neighbouring authorities. There are a number of major housing developments planned for the near future in Bracknell which will result in more properties becoming available locally on this scheme.
- 5.13 There is also an Intermediate Rental Scheme, where teachers can rent usually new properties at below market rates.
- 5.14 The schemes are useful as a retention tool, as they encourage teachers to settle in this area. It is also helpful when recruiting Newly Qualified Teachers as they often ask about housing schemes at recruitment fairs, before deciding which authorities to apply to.
- 5.15 The Bracknell Forest keyworker housing scheme, which offers low rent properties to newly appointed teachers moving into Bracknell Forest continues to be popular, but has limitations.

Online recruitment

- 5.16 All school based vacancies are advertised on the Bracknell Forest website, where applicants can download application packs and complete an online application form. This ensures everyone who is considering applying for a teaching position in Bracknell Forest schools is aware of all available opportunities. The Bracknell Forest jobs pages are part of the larger Jobsgopublic website. This ensures that any teacher searching for a job on the Jobsgopublic website is also aware of the position.
- 5.17 In order to increase the exposure of secondary advertisements and generate more applications, the Recruitment Strategy Team is also placing all secondary advertisements onto the Eteach website. This is a one year trial, centrally funded. If successful, access to this website will be given to the individual schools to add their own advertisements, and the cost will be passed to schools.
- 5.18 Eteach has established itself as a major teacher recruitment website and offers extensive search facilities and a bulletin service. Advertising with Eteach ensures that any teacher searching for a vacancy in a particular key stage/subject and/or geographic area is made aware of vacancies in Bracknell Forest, even if they had not previously considered working in this particular authority. Applicants can download an application form from the Eteach website, or apply online at the Bracknell Forest website.

- 5.19 Early indications suggest that this will be a successful route to increasing the number of applications for vacancies. For example an ICT vacancy had 183 views on the Bracknell Forest/Jobsgopublic website, with 7 applications downloaded, whilst the Eteach advertisement had 299 views and 14 applications downloaded. Four applications were received, two from Eteach, one via the Bracknell Forest website and one as a result of a newspaper advertisement.

Background Papers

Previous meeting agenda and minutes

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