

<b>Committee(s):</b> Establishment Committee	<b>Date</b> 28/05/2020
<b>Subject:</b>  Covid-19 Response Redeployment	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Chrissie Morgan, Director of Human Resources	<b>For Discussion</b>
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### Summary

The report provides information about the redeployment of staff externally for the effective management of the pan-London Covid-19 emergency response and internally to ensure that core functions remained operational. The report also provides examples of how staff from functions that were suspended or revised due to the lockdown, were utilised.

### Recommendation(s)

The Establishment Committee is asked to discuss this report

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The City of London Corporation's statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to contribute to emergency situations, meant that staff were urgently redeployed to the Covid-19 London Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG), from early March this year.
2. Approximately 20 employees have so far been redeployed to the SCG on and off on either a full or part time basis. The salaries for these staff are being funded by the SCG.
3. As mutual aid and partnership working with multi-agencies to provide essential services, 9 City of London Corporation employees were redeployed to the London Mortality Planning group on a full-time basis, 7 of which are expected to be required until 15 June 2020.
4. These staff normally work in departments including the Barbican Centre, Tower Bridge, Open Spaces, Markets and Consumer Protection, Mansion House and Town Clerk's.

5. Across London, redeployment of staff to the Mortality Planning Group were from Camden 18, Southwark 1, Croydon 1, Barking & Dagenham 1, Sutton 2 and the GLA 1.
6. As a consequence of City of London Corporation's non-critical functions having to be revised or closed down in compliance with the social distancing measures, there has been a significant reduction in, or complete cessation of, work for areas such as culture, events and education. Other areas of work that cannot be delivered remotely e.g. some Opens Spaces work have also been impacted with groups of under-utilised staff.
7. Departments have sought to mitigate this impact by deploying some of their own under-utilised staff to other areas of work to cover sickness/shielding setting research projects, and encouraging development of skills through completing e-learning programmes.
8. A call for an internal bank of volunteers to fill in gaps in critical areas, in the event of staff shortages arising due to increased demand, sickness or other reasons, resulted in 112 staff putting themselves forward, 27 of which were available full time and the remainder part time.
9. These staff volunteers spanned grades A to H, with the majority at grades B & C (27 each) and a Teacher. Apart from the 9 redeployed to the London Mortality Group, 11 have been redeployed to fill in gaps in departments including IT, Markets, City Bridge Trust and Open Spaces.

## **Current Position**

10. Some staff who were redeployed to the SCG have now returned to their substantive roles now that those activities are being phased back.
11. Staff coming to the end of their redeployment to the London Mortality Group have a built in 1 week "decompression leave" in before their return, to allow them to properly rest and relax after the very stressful work they have been involved in. These staff have also been offered "decompression" sessions to help them off-load, reflect and refocus through a coaching process.
12. On return to their substantive roles, HR Business Partners will support line managers of these staff to ensure that any potential post-traumatic issues are quickly picked up and addressed through our Occupational Health Service.
13. With the City of London Corporation's move to the recovery phase, some staff who have been under-utilised since lockdown begun are now returning to the workplace e.g. Central Criminal Court cleaners
14. The independent schools have undertaken redeployment exercises for example CLFS undertook a skills audit of all staff not utilised to identify other talents, skills and experience they might have, such as technicians and coaches. Key areas of

the business such as maintenance, marketing and community development are areas SLT looked to redeploy to as they needed additional support. The schools are providing a full timetable and teachers are working full time from home.

15. The phased return of pupils to school means managing a mixed economy of learning from home and learning at school. This means that staff currently under utilised can now support this next phase. We will need to review any remaining staff unable to be redeployed and options are continually being assessed. Additional staffing information is for discussion on the confidential part of this agenda.
16. The Guildhall School of Music and drama is providing teaching for this term online, so staff are working from home and they do not report any staff not being redeployed and utilised.
17. The Barbican reports that the vast majority of staff are working from home and deployed on other areas of work if unable to continue their substantive role. The main group of staff unable to work from home are the technical teams in music, theatre and Art gallery. However, the Barbican advises it will need to start bringing these technical teams in as the centre looks to re-open at some point. In any event, the technical teams have a period over the summer where they do their annual maintenance work and the Barbican would look to bring them in to complete this over this summer. Additional staffing information is for discussion on the confidential part of this agenda.
18. Open Spaces have utilised and redeployed staff, particularly to help in their parks and open spaces to act as marshals to try to facilitate social distancing of the public using the spaces. One has been redeployed to Camden to assist with mutual aid. Again, we need to keep the numbers under review where staff have not been utilised. We also have a number of staff unable to work from home but are vulnerable and shielding so would not be able to attend work in any event. Additional staffing information is for discussion on the confidential part of this agenda.
19. We are continuing to work with departments to match internal volunteers' skills against any arising needs to ensure that the City of London Corporation can continue to offer as close to business as usual as possible within current limitations.

## **Conclusion**

20. The City of London Corporation has been commended by partner organisations for our contribution of staff resources to support the national covid-19 response. Efforts continue to be made internally to utilise as many staff as possible who are currently not working due to workplaces being closed however this has been challenging for those in roles that cannot be done remotely.

Nonetheless, managers are being encouraged to be creative in coming up with some work activities for these staff to at the very least maintain their morale and wellbeing. We will need to review any remaining staff unable to be redeployed and options are continually being assessed and further staffing matters are on the confidential part of this agenda.

## **Appendices**

None

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