Dear Ian

We discussed at PCF yesterday concerns which have been raised with you about individual posts presently covered by agency staff which have not been included on the list of posts available for newly qualified officers to pitch for in the present exercise to place the first cohort of newly qualified staff. There are around 350 posts in the present list with around 250 staff pitching for them and it is the case that some posts presently covered by agency staff are not included.

I don’t know the circumstances of the individual post(s) which have generated the concern but we have taken the following approach:

* Deputy Directors Probation have looked at all of their currently vacant posts and prioritised for filling at this stage, those which are the most business critical now
* in doing so they have not included posts where an assessment has been made that there may potentially be restructuring or other displacements which might place a doubt over the particular post.

As I explained yesterday, this has been done pragmatically and I would not want anybody to read anything into why some posts are on the list and some are not. As follow on exercises for cohorts 2 and 3 take place we expect other vacant posts to be included and decisions on which are to be filled and when will be taken in light of growing clarity about workloads and the impact of changes arising from E3 (on which as you will appreciate we still have work to do with yourselves before we are collectively clear about what this will mean for individual posts). To repeat too what I said yesterday, it is absolutely my intention that we will reduce numbers of agency staff as a result of the placements being worked on now and then further with cohorts 2 and 3. My end-state intention is that our staffing profile should not rely on agency other than at the margins – something I know you support.

I clarified too yesterday that the present PQF staff have PSO contracts and if not placed as a PO, they will have the option of employment at PSO level. Those not placed in this round will be able to apply for posts in the future rounds. They should not though bank on a particular post becoming available as normal staff deployment arrangements may result in these being filled in other ways or because of other changes such as E3, it is possible that some posts presently graded at PO level may move or change location/scope. As I hope I managed to convey yesterday, we are seeking to manage what is a complex scenario fairly and openly, whilst obviously also meeting operational priorities.



Colin Allars

Director Probation