



London LA-Led International Recruitment Workshop

17.10.22



Agenda Outline



Welcome & Panel Introductions, Merlin Joseph, LIA Strategic Lead

LA Leads:

- Croydon Council: Making the recruitment process work effectively
- Ealing Council: Getting the support right in the first year
- Sutton Council: Bringing international recruitment inhouse and achieving retention (10 minutes)
- Harrow Council: Cultural integration, positive impact and becoming part of the community

Real Life Story:

- Experiences of an international recruit – *Teresa Hills, Head of Service, Merton Council*

'Deep dive discussions':

- Topic 1: Recruitment processes & supporting transition
- Topic 2: Cultural integration and retention

Key takeaways & close

**2022 Croydon Councils
Children's Services
International Recruitment Campaign**

Planning stage...

- Procurement activity
- How many do we need?
- Where will they be allocated?
- When is a good time for them to start, is there support available?
- Where will they come from?

What we did...



1
Approached Tripod International for their recruitment services

2
We discussed our process and requirements, how many we are recruiting, when we want them to start, our recruitment process

3
Tripod sent over CV's to be shortlisted

4
We requested a two-minute video on a given topic from each candidate to be sent to us to support their application

5
We shortlisted candidates and asked Tripod to send those candidates a written assessment for them to complete

6
Tripod confirmed candidates completed the assessments, we sent them details of our interview panels availability and tripod to arrange interviews

7
Interviews conducted, successful candidates were identified

8
Tripod made offers to selected candidates and started background checks, Croydon started Sponsorship process

9
Croydon set up induction process and looked at buddying new recruits with previous cohort

Where we are now...



What worked well and what didn't...

Pro's

- Tripod have extensive experience doing this and know the process
- Quick and efficient
- Smooth process for candidates
- One point to contact for queries
- Easily adaptable process

Con's

- Can be too assertive when trying to submit additional CV's
- Tripods priorities are different to councils priorities, making Tripod seem pushy
- Some irrelevant requests from candidates through Tripod, these should have been recognised before making the request

Our learning's

To inform the agency of maximum number of CV's we would like to review
Request 2 min video from applicants to support their application
Ensure there is backup option for when technology fails and interrupts video calls
Once you start the process you must move quickly so you don't lose candidates

Thank you

Priya Kerai

Recruitment Manager

Children's Services

International Social Workers – Ealing's Journey

Sharon Brown, Senior HR Business Partner
Caroline Horsley, Recruitment & Retention Co-Ordinator

- 17 October 2022

Our approach

- Appoint Tripod to recruit 30 Internal Children's Social Worker's
- Selected to focus on candidates from South Africa, Zimbabwe and India
- Used internal dedicated resources to support the project
- Assessment & Interviews via Team's supported by Tripod
- Bespoke induction process
- Allocated a dedicated Lead Practitioner and Buddy

Our approach

Costs

Cost per International Social Worker (one off)	
Employer Visa Surcharge	£3,000
Visa Application Fee	£199
Recruitment Fee to Tripod – this does not incl 1% fee to Adecco	£5,956
Relocation Package (Tax Free)	£8,000
TOTAL	£17,155

The relocation package is partly repayable if workers do not remain with Ealing for the full three years.

Projected Savings

Cost/Saving per ISW	2021 modelling	2022 modelling
Year 1	£7,600 <u>cost</u>	£1,400 <u>Cost</u>
Year 2 onwards	£15,200 <u>saving per year</u>	£21,500 <u>saving per year</u>

Agency worker average rates increased in 2022 due to inflation and so savings per ISW are increased. This relies on retaining the ISW for at least 2 years. Also factored into projected savings: agency staff handover period while ISWs settle in

What worked well/benefits

- Communication between Tripod and Ealing was good
- Tripod's management of the initial interaction with the candidates
- Saved the Council time on doing all of prechecking e.g. referencing, ID documentation etc
- Managing the sponsorship process
- Cost savings vs agency costs predictions looking positive
- Positive feedback from Director of Children's & Families and managers

Quote: 'very strong social worker who has developed very strong bonds with the team and earned a good reputation with other professionals and managers'

Lessons learnt

- Stick to the original plan!
- Be more robust with our selection process
- Have a dedicated interview panel
- Track probation
- Don't underestimate the support both the ISW's & Managers will require
- Manage expectations

Time for any question?

Recruitment of International Social Workers

Ali Kelly - Resourcing and Talent Business
Partner

Monday 17th October 2022



Our journey to date

- International recruitment started in 2014
- Recruited initially via agencies on both a campaign and adhoc basis before running process ourselves in-house from 2017
- Recruited primarily to frontline child protection Social Worker roles
- Since 2014 we've hired 31 Social Workers, 20 of whom are still with us (65%)
- Of those that have left, 9 out of the 11 had a tenure of over 2 years with the Council (82%)
- Career progression has been impressive with 10 of the 31 (32%) securing promotions (9 to Team Manager level and 1 to Assistant Team Manager level)



Key metrics

- Nationality of social workers recruited:
 - Zimbabwean - 52%
 - American - 26%
 - Australian, Jamaican and New Zealander - 6% each
 - Canadian - 3%
- Gender: 74% female / 26% male
- Age range:
 - 35-44 - 62%
 - 25-34 - 28%
 - 45-54 - 7%
 - 65+ - 3%
- Recruitment approach: 58% direct / 42% through agency - expected saving of approx £124k by conducting recruitment directly rather than through an agency (based on 18% placement fee)
- Associated approximate savings of approx minimum of £375k per year if was using temporary agency staff
- Small cohorts - generally recruit 3 per year, this year 9 due to limited international recruitment during 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19

What worked well

- Retention (65%) rate, promotion (32%) rate and associated savings of approx minimum of £375k per year if was using temporary agency staff
- Working with recruitment agencies initially to understand the full end-to-end process and adopt some of their approaches
- Relocation allowance of up to £8000 plus an annual flight home, in addition to recruitment and retention payments
- Personal touch and excellent engagement from the hiring service:
 - Whatsapp Groups and social events for new recruits
 - Being personally collected from the airport by Service Manager
 - Accommodation with existing staff in service
 - Buddying system
 - Tailored induction
- Informal feedback was collected from existing international recruits to help inform and improve the process for all involved
- Support offered to aid bringing family members over once settled
- Utilising networks of existing international recruits to target advertising



What we've learnt

- Small numbers work well for us
- Regular meetings to discuss progress and manage expectations between service and HR are needed
- Engagement from the service and personal touch is key - regular communication with candidates before they arrive and continue this when they start work to ensure they settle in
- Higher dropout rate when using agencies than through managing ourselves directly
- The annual flight home as part of our relocation policy is a great retention tool
- Positive experience with most recent hires from Zimbabwe, recruits have transitioned and settled in well.
- Contrast in cost of living has however been evident - without relocation allowance wouldn't be possible



A message from our Director of Children's Services

'Tapping into the talent of our diverse communities within the workforce has been key. Our social workers know other social workers, so being proud and inclusive of our staff enables that feel good factor to spread. Empowering our frontline staff to take the lead in this initiative who are able to evidence first hand their own career progression in a supportive environment, to potential candidates, has been the magic ingredient.'



Jonathan Williams



A message from one of our international recruits

I am really appreciative of the support, I have received since joining Sutton in June 2016 and Sutton has been home away from "home" in some sense. I have grown professionally and personally since joining Sutton and I am proud to have achieved what I have so far.

I have risen through the ranks from being a social worker when I joined, to a senior social worker in both safeguarding and the children's looked-after teams. For the latter, I applied and joined the safeguarding team on secondment for a position as an assistant team manager, in which I was confirmed substantive within two weeks, I then became a team manager in the same locality team and I know that with the confidence I have thus far I am able to execute the functions of the role of service manager if the opportunity arises.



Continued...

What I like or love about Sutton is that we grow our own leaders, and I have seen that in action as I am a testament to the commitment that senior managers have to ensure that staff are supported and enabled to achieve and progress their careers and are able to make confident decisions as they go along.

I am also mindful of the way senior managers are approachable and the mentoring programmes that are available across the adults and children services which I have also capitalised on.

As I qualified outside the UK, it has never been a barrier but it's interesting to see how leaders take a genuine interest in the skills, knowledge and experience that I bring to the table and over the years I have managed to be instrumental in the international recruitment of social workers. Just last week we managed to interview and offered roles to 4 more social workers who will be joining us soon. In doing this, I believe these are the small steps I can take to contribute to the organisational development and staff retention plans for Sutton and in so doing it has also given me much-needed skills in advancing my career as there is always some learning to be obtained when one embarks on such an ambitious project of this magnitude.

Patrick Matope - Team Manager, Localities



Thank you for listening

Any questions?

Ali Kelly - Resourcing and Talent Business Partner

alexandra.kelly@kingston.gov.uk



International Social Worker Recruitment Harrow Children and Young People Services

Neil Harris, Hema Chandran, Hariprasad Karle, Ann George

Why International Recruitment?

- 63,400 Children and Young People aged 0-19
- 83.3% of all CYP are from global majority backgrounds
- The largest group of CYP (28.1%) identify as from Indian background
- 2 of the 5 most common languages in Harrow are Gujarati and Tamil

Harrow Children and Young People Social Work Workforce

- 138 social workers and practice leaders
- 76.5% social workers identify as being from a global majority background
- 47.2% practice leaders identify as being from global majority
- Backgrounds
- Annual international recruitment project since 2016 focussed on recruiting from India
- 96% retention success rate

International Recruitment Pathway

- Partner with established social work consultancy
- Bespoke adverts across Indian media outlets
- Screening Interviews including English language testing
- Training on legal framework, cultural / practice differences
- Social Work England registration
- Harrow CYPS interview recruitment pathway
- Visa sponsorship / planning for arrival

Starting work in Harrow

- Arrival – meet, accommodation, bank account
- Bespoke Induction
- Buddy in social work POD
- Training / Development
- Protected caseload similar to AYSE.
- IT TAKES TIME.....IT IS NOT EASY

Social Workers Perspective

- Handholding and constant support during the recruitment, relocation process, including visa application, identify with the accommodation.
- Harrow has extensive experience supporting overseas SW, smooth transition process and induction process (6 weeks), buddy system.
- Managers and Senior Managers are fully aware of needs of the overseas SW.
- Retention bonus every three years, Opportunity to move to different or suitable teams, Career progression- Timely appraisal, SWs moved to managerial levels.
- Easy transfer of SW skills acquired in India –
- Inclusive practice – Harrow is multicultural
- Platforms for SW to raise discriminations
- SW support groups for new overseas recruits

Challenges

- Work pressure
- Culture shock – Experience of racial discrimination from service users
- Being isolated from the family – Unable to travel to India, taking longer leaves can be stressful and overwhelming
- Impact of pandemic – Working from home, access to 1:1 support
- Financial difficulties during settling down
- Learning work culture and process takes time



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