

Decision Under Delegated Powers

Officer Requesting the Decision

Victoria Spanovic – Food Safety Manager

Officer Making the Decision

Alan Twells – Head of Regulatory Services

Recommendation

To approve the provision of additional Environmental Health Officer (L211) (EHO) working hours via funding from the Covid Contain Fund. Additional hours will be 22 hours per week for an Agency EHO, Cost Centre X464 T0100 Project Code BG509, from the 31st March 2021 until the 2nd July 2021 (14 weeks), reporting to the Food Safety Manager, Regulatory Services.

Reason

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Secretary of State has implemented several regulations made in response to the serious and imminent threat to public health which is posed by the incidence and spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARSCoV-2) in England. These regulations require certain premises to close or to trade under legally enforceable restrictions. An initial £50,000 has been made available via the Covid Contain Outbreak Management Fund for work associated with control of the pandemic. The additional hours will provide additional staff resources to support essential Covid compliance and enforcement interventions and ensure that support can also be directed to businesses. As lockdown restrictions are eased and businesses re-open the demands on the service will increase significantly.

Authority for Decision

Under Section 8 of Constitution the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) has delegated authority to agree changes to the establishment, within budget and without major operational disruption or interruption or services or involving a change from direct to indirect provision or vice versa or other policy implications. This has been further sub-delegated by the Chief Executive to Strategic Directors/Heads of Service in certain circumstances (DD 002 021 refers)). These proposals fall within the limit of the authority of the relevant Head of Service.

Decision

Date

Background Information

The Coronavirus pandemic has brought with it the introduction of a significant amount of regulation affecting businesses across all sectors within the borough. Businesses have been required to either close, restrict their trading hours and change the way customers can access their services. This has caused significant additional workload pressures on Regulatory Services, which has experienced a massive increase in demands on the service. Since the beginning of the lockdown, the service has dealt with 1202 business enquiries and complaints from the public and has carried out 963 business compliance checks. The demand on Regulatory Services has continuously increased in-line with the introduction of each new Covid-19 regulation. As part of the Governments 'COVID-19 RESPONSE - SPRING 2021 (Road Map)', it is anticipated that the introduction of new legislation, guidance and re-opening of some business sectors associated with the easing of lockdown restrictions will significantly increase service demands.

The Government has acknowledged the effectiveness of Local Authority business support, compliance and enforcement work and additional funds have been made available via the Covid Contain Outbreak Management Fund. This funding has been part allocated to compliance and enforcement work and will be part used to provide an additional 22hours per week officer time to assist with essential Covid-19 business support and enforcement work.

The cost of providing this post from 31/03/21 to 02/07/21 (14 weeks) will be approximately £14,800, which will be funded by the Covid Contain Fund.

Approx. £1,056 Consultancy charges a week (working 22hrs a week) x 14 weeks = £14,784.

The fund will also be used to fund other compliance and enforcement activities, including additional overtime for EHOs, High Street Helpers, Ambassadors and admin support.

The activities and spend against this allocation of the fund will be reported to and monitored by the Council's Covid 19 Monitoring Group.

Further allocation of the funding will be subject to additional separate Delegated Decisions.

Comments from HR

HR Adviser: Anna Cairns (26/2/21)

As this appointment is via an Agency, CBC HR Admin will not need to be involved.

Financial Implications

The cost of providing a temporary Consultant from 31/3/21 – 02/7/21 (14 weeks) will be approximately £14,800, which will be funded by the Covid Contain Fund.

The charge will be £40 per hour + vat (if registered for vat). This post will be working 22hrs a week for 14 weeks.

£40 x 20% vat = £48 x 22hrs = £1,056 x 14 weeks = £14,784

Charge Code:

Cost Centre:X464

Subjective Code:T0100

Project Code:BG509

The activities and spend against this allocation of the fund will be reported to and monitored by the Council's Covid 19 Monitoring Group.

Risk Management

List risks in table below or state that 'No specific risks have been identified with this report'.

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
Financial cost to the Council	High	Low	The government will ensure that local authorities are funded for the new requirements as quickly as possible, in line with the New Burdens doctrine
COVID 19 infection rates and local lockdown	Med	High	Plan is in place to undertake Compliance and Enforcement checks supported by this additional admin to try and ensure controls remain in place.

Key Decision: No

Date included on Forward Plan: N/A

Background Papers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021>