

## Decision under Delegated Powers

### Officer Requesting Decision

Kerry Bowley – Health and Safety and Business Engagement Manager

### Officer Making the Decision

Alan Twells – Head of Regulatory Services

### Current Pest Control Team Structure

Senior Pest Control Officer - 37 Hours (1FTE)

Pest Control Officer - 74 hours (2FTE) (52 hours currently vacant)

### Recommendation

To approve the reduction in hours for the posts of Pest Control Officer (L222) at a salary grade D (cost centre F210) from a total of 74 hours to 44.4 per week, with immediate effect. This 29.6 hours (0.8 FTE) reduction in hours will contribute to £27,500 (including on-costs) annual savings to support the savings targets of the Council's medium term financial strategy.

We will look to recruit to the vacant 22.4 hours for the post of Pest Control Officer(L222). This post will report to Health and Safety and Business Engagement Manger.

### Reason

The pest control team is currently operating at 1.6FTE due to staff vacancies and as a result are only carrying out rodent treatments within domestic premises and not external rat service requests, or any insecticidal treatments.

Following a pest control service review it was approved by SLT and by Cabinet as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy to reduce the pest control officer staffing levels to a level that would still allow the Council to offer a pest control service for the treatment of rats and mice as a priority to the residents of Charnwood.

This reduction in staffing levels will contribute to a saving of £27,500 annual savings to support the savings targets of the Council's medium term financial strategy.

This reduction in staffing levels will still allow the Service to recruit a 22.4 hour L222 Pest Control officer post due to the current vacant hours; this increase in hours will allow the pest control team to offer once again a full service for rats and mice at domestic premises, including rat external treatments.

## **Authority for Decision**

*To agree changes to the establishment within budget and without major operational disruption or interruption of services or involving a change from direct or indirect provision or vice versa or other policy implications. This has been sub delegated to Strategic Directors and Head of Service (refer to Delegated Decision 2021).*

## **Decision and Date**

## **Background**

Since June 2020, the pest control service have been operating at only 1.6FTE instead of 3FTE due to vacancies. This had a significant effect on the pest control service and has resulted in the pest control team only being able to offer rodent treatment internally, and not external rat treatments. They have also had to stop offering any services for insecticide treatments.

The pest control service itself is not a statutory function, but there is a requirement under the Damage by Pests Act 1949 that the local authority takes such steps as may be necessary to secure so far as practicable that their district is kept free from rats and mice. An in-house pest control service assists the council and it's residents to achieve this and limits the impact on other teams who may need to undertake works or enforcement action if they did not carry out these treatments.

A pest control service review was carried out and SLT considered the options proposed with Cabinet Members and agreed a reduction of 0.8 FTE hours of the L222 Pest Control Officer post. This will then allow the recruitment of a 22.4 hours (0.61 FTE) L222 Pest Control Officer post and as a result the pest control service will be able to offer a full service for rats and mice to the residents of Charnwood. Insecticide treatments will only be carried out if there is a significant reduction in the number of rodent service requests being received that allow the pest control team to do this. This potential reduction in income from not carrying out insecticide treatments will be replaced by the new charge for rodents.

The reduction in hours will provide an annual savings of £27,500 (including on-costs) which will contribute to the council overall savings.

These savings were considered as a larger package which will also involve the introduction of charges for rodent treatments which will be detailed in a separate delegated decision.

The average number of rodent service requests and visits have been calculated over the previous two years and the potential visit slots we would have available with the reduction in staffing levels assessed. It is anticipated that the number of rodent service requests will reduce following the introduction of a charge to a number that can be achieved by the reduction in staffing levels. Service response times will need to be reviewed as there may be times of the year that the demand for rodent treatments are higher than the number of visit slots available. Priority will always be given to rodent internal and there may a temporary hold on accepting new rat external service requests to allow us to achieve this.

### Comments from HR

HR Advisor: Shaminul Choudhury (12/03/21)

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Summary of Comments from HR: Kerry has discussed reduction of the vacant hours with the existing team and they are all aware of the reasons for this. As no one is being made redundant and current employees T&C's are remaining the same there is no need to consult as per organisational change policy.

HR seen recommendations (both draft and final, if amended): Y

### Financial Implications

Due to the Service Review there will be a 0.8fte ongoing saving of £27,500 (inc on-costs).

This will leave Cost Centre F210 with a total of 2.2fte posts.

Of these 2.2fte posts, 0.6fte L222 post (Scale D) is currently vacant. This will cost £20,900 (inc on-costs). This has been accounted for within the 2021-22 Salary master.

### Risk Management

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Risk Management Actions Planned
The number of service requests received exceeds the number of	3	2	Moderate (6)	Due to the introduction of charges the number of service requests are likely to drop to a

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Risk Management Actions Planned
visit slots /available.				level that is achievable by the reduced staffing level, although there may be times when new rats external service requests are not accepted for short periods of time to prioritise rodents internally. Service response times may need to be reviewed at peak times or as a result of annual leave. This will be reviewed regularly.
Insecticide treatments may no longer be offered and there will be loss of income as a result.	3	2	Moderate (6 - 9)	If this is a service that we cannot offer then there are private pest control contractors that offer this service. Any loss of income will be replaced with the new income from the rodent service requests.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: None

Does the report contain exempt information? No