

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 working hours via funding from the Covid Contain Fund. Additional hours will be 22 hours per week, Cost Centre X464 T0100 Project Code BG509, from the 30th April 2021 until the 31st July 2021, 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. Additional financial resources have been made available via the Covid Contain Funding for work associated with control of the pandemic. The additional hours will provide sufficient 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 the current Council Constitution the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) has delegated authority 'to agree changes to the establishment, within budget and without major service or policy implications, affecting no more than five posts (irrespective of their post number) in any single case (item 6 on page 8-4 of the Constitution). This has been further sub-delegated by the Chief Executive to Heads of Service in certain circumstances (DD ref 28 11/12). 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 1366 business enquiries and complaints from the public, and the demand on Regulatory Services has continuously increased in-line with the introduction of each new Covid-19 regulation. Post lockdown (2/12/20), it is anticipated that the introduction of new legislation and general re-opening of the hospitality sector associated with the easing of 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 Grant. This funding will provide an additional 22 hours per week officer time to assist with essential Covid-19 business support and enforcement work.

The cost of providing this post from 30/04/21 to 30/07/21 (13 weeks) will be approximately £13,800, which will be funded by the Covid Contain Fund.

22hrs week £1056 (inc VAT) x 13 weeks = £13,728

Comments from HR

HR Adviser: Anna Cairns (16/4/21)

The normal recruitment process should be followed.

Financial Implications

A Consultant will be temporarily employed from 30/04/21 – 31/07/21 (13 weeks). The charge will be £40 per hour + vat (if registered for vat). This post will be working 22hrs a week.

£40 x 20% vat = £48 x 22hrs = £1,056 per week

22hrs per week for 13 weeks = £13,728 (£13,700 rounded)

Charge Code: Cost Centre: X464. Subjective Code: T0100. Project Code BG509

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
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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>