

## 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 government Covid-19 Compliance & Enforcement Grant. Additional hours will be 22 hours per week, Cost Centre F205, from the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 until the 26<sup>th</sup> February 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. On 22 September, the Prime Minister announced that £60 million will be made available across the police and local authorities for compliance and enforcement activities. The additional hours funded by the grant will provide sufficient staff resources to ensure appropriate enforcement and support can be directed to businesses; primarily to explain and encourage best practice and national COVID-19 secure guidance.

### **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 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

## **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 807 business enquiries and complaints from the public and has carried out 550 business checks. 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 re-opening of some business sectors will significantly increase service demands.

The Government has acknowledged the effectiveness of business support work such as Covid-secure checks and stewarding activities, and on 22 September the Prime Minister announced that £60 million will be made available across the police and local authorities for compliance and enforcement activities. Charnwood Borough Council was awarded £72,582 and this funding will provide an additional 22 hours per week officer time to assist with essential Covid-19 business support work.

The cost of providing this post from 23/11/20 to 26/02/21 (14 weeks) will be approximately £14,800, which will be funded by the Local Authority Compliance and Enforcement Activity Grant.

## **Comments from HR**

HR Adviser: Anna Cairns (17/11/20)

The normal recruitment process should be followed, as the DD states this is urgent – please liaise with HR Admin where possible to tighten timescales etc.

## **Financial Implications**

A Consultant will be temporarily employed from 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (14 weeks). The charge will be £40 per hour + vat (if registered for vat). This post will be working 22hrs a week.

$£40 \times 20\% \text{ vat} = £48 \times 22\text{hrs} = £1,056 \times 14 \text{ weeks} = £14,784$  (£14,800 rounded)

The total cost will be approximately £14,800 which will be funded by the Local Authority Compliance and Enforcement Activity Grant.

## **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

**Key Decision:** No

**Date included on Forward Plan:** N/A

**Background Papers:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-local-authority-compliance-and-enforcement-grant/guidance-to-support-local-authority-compliance-and-enforcement-activity-including-covid-19-secure-marshals-or-equivalents>