

Decision Under Delegated Powers

Officer Requesting the Decision

Beverley Green – Environmental Protection Manager

Officer Making the Decision

Alan Twells – Head of Regulatory Services

Recommendation

To approve the provision of additional working hours for Environmental Protection Technical Officer, Post Number L254 by an additional 7 hours per week, to total 111 hrs, from 1st November 2021 to 31st March 2022. This project will be funded via Cost Centre F100 A0101 and will be overseen by the Environmental Protection Manager, Regulatory Services.

Reason

As an ongoing consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated lockdown and workplace restrictions, the amount of reactive environmental protection work has increased significantly. Restrictions in the hospitality and leisure sectors, and the requirement for people to work and stay at home have resulted in a huge rise in domestic nuisance complaints associated with noise, rubbish accumulation, burning waste and antisocial behaviour. From Jan- Oct 2021 the team has dealt with 2167 complaints, compared to 1809 complaints for the same time last year, an increase of 20%.

The provision of additional hours will enable an existing part-time post to be made full time, to provide Environmental Health resources to assist with responding to the increased number of complaints and ensure intervention and investigation of service requests in accordance with service PIs.

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 and Date

Background Information

The Environmental Protection Team, within Regulatory Services, are a front line statutory service that deal with the following key areas of work:

- Noise complaints (domestic and commercial premises)
- Nuisance complaints (bonfires, accumulations, odours, smells, dust, insects, industrial emissions etc)
- Inspection & Control of Permitted industrial processes
- Air Quality monitoring and reporting
- Contaminated land
- Responses to complex planning consultations (submitted to CBC and also to LCC)
- Responses to Licensing applications and attendance at hearings.

The Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in significant additional workload pressures on Regulatory Services, which has experienced a massive increase in demands on the Environmental Protection Team.

Accordingly, the team is struggling to ensure complaints are dealt with according to service requirements. The provision of additional working hours will enable the team to deal with the increase in service requests and enable Performance Indicator targets to be achieved.

The Covid Contain Outbreak Management Fund is being used to facilitate on-going Covid enforcement work via the redeployment of EHOs from Regulatory Services. Part of the associated salary underspends within F205 A0101 will be transferred over to F100 to cover the cost of additional working hours within the Environmental Protection Team.

This project will allow the hours of an existing EP Technical Officer to be increased from part-time to full-time without incurring additional recruitment or training costs and provide experienced cover to deal with the increase in service requests.

Comments from HR

HR Advisor: Shaminul Choudhury (21/10/2021)

Summary of Comments from HR: Once DD is approved management will need to complete contract variation e-form so HR can issue correct paperwork to increase hours on a temporary basis.

Financial Implications

The cost of providing the additional working hours from 1/11/21 to 31/3/22 (5 months) will be approximately £3,300, which will be funded by Cost centre F100 A0101. Part of the associated salary underspends within F205 A0101 will be transferred over to F100 to cover the cost of additional working hours within the Environmental Protection Team.

S01 scp 25 = £29,557 + 40.7% on-costs = £41,587 p.a. (37hrs).

Additional Environmental Protection Technical Officer to work 7 hours per week for 5 months = £3,278 (£3,300 rounded).

Virements required: DB: F205 A0101 / CR: F100 A0101 = £3,300.

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
Failure to react to service requests and meet target performance indicators. Rise in corporate complaints being lodged against the council. Damage to the Council's reputation.	High	High	Plan is in place to complete service request investigations and assessments within agreed service delivery times. To ensure statutory requirement to undertake nuisance investigations are completed and actioned as necessary.

Key Decision: No

Date included on Forward Plan: N/A

Background Papers: None