

THURSDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – GROWTH AND REGENERATION**

**APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFFICER**

**EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None.

**PURPOSE**

**THIS REPORT IS IN RELATION TO THE APPOINTMENT OF A TEMPORARY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFFICER**

This report is to request permission from the Committee to create a temporary Environmental Health Technical Support Officer for 12 months.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee consider the content of this report and agree to appoint a temporary Environmental Health Technical Support Officer for 12 months.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Since March 2020 the Environmental Health team have seen an exponential increase in workload as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. As well as enforcing the various lockdowns/Tier restrictions for different business sectors the team have also been commissioned by Staffordshire County Council to investigate outbreaks of Covid-19 in local workplaces. At the same time the Service has continued to provide critical services including high-risk Food Hygiene inspections/complaints, Taxi and Alcohol Licence applications, noise/odour complaints and planning consultations.

Although the team are provided with assistance with routine functions by the 'Business Support' team, there are many essential technical administration tasks that professional officers are still having to undertake, which is affecting their ability to carry out high risk functions. These tasks include:

- Systems Supervision for the Environmental Health database – Northgate - M3 Submission of statutory returns to the Food Standards Agency, Health & Safety Executive, DEFRA, Gambling Commission etc. which rely on the M3 database;
- Regular data cleansing/audit checks of database records to ensure statutory returns are accurate;
- Creation of processes to support the regular and accurate upload of data to the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS);
- Project management of the upgrade from the M3 database to the new 'Assure' system – which will require numerous changes to database records/processes before support for M3 is turned off later this year;
- Upkeep of statutory registers for licence applications and annual fee administration;
- Development of new processes on the 'Assure' database to streamline licence registers and annual fee administration;
- Project management of the digitisation of the Environmental Health service including a new 'Electronic Document Management' (EDM) system, back-scanning of paper records and integration of these records to the Assure database;
- Project management of the upgrade of the Assure database to integrate with the Tamworth Borough Council website to allow applications and payments to be made online;
- Performance management reports for inspections due/carried out, service request analysis, licensing demand etc. to inform service planning and prioritisation of services;

It is proposed that a temporary Environmental Health Technical Support Officer role be created for a period of 12 months, that is funded from the Covid-19 grant provided by Staffordshire County Council to support the pandemic response and ensure critical services continue. The post will be estimated at £31.7k for financial year 2021/22 including on costs.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The proposed post will be funded entirely by the Covid-19 grant funding provided by Staffordshire County Council.

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS**

If the Environmental Health systems and Northgate database are not adequately supervised and developed, there is a risk that statutory returns to central government will not be submitted, and this could also affect our operation of the national Food Hygiene rating scheme. Robust systems are also required for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements. Failure to have these systems in place could cause a risk of legal action against the Council as well as reputational damage.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

None.

**REPORT AUTHOR**

Gareth Harvey – Head of Environmental Health

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**APPENDICES**

None.

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