



**Report of Environmental Health Manager
Report to Chief Officer Elections & Regulatory**

Date: 21/07/2020

Subject: Request to create a number of additional Environmental Health Officer posts (12 months temporary contracts) to support the Leeds Covid-19 Outbreak Management Plan

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

1. Main issues

- Due to the global Public Health emergency COVID-19 pandemic approval is sought to temporarily increase the capacity of the Environmental Health Service which currently deliver functions around the monitoring and surveillance of infectious diseases in the commercial sector and the wider community, including high risk settings such as food manufacturers, warehouse operations, the retail sector and other non-food manufacturing operations in Leeds.
- This service is required to scale up in order to implement and deliver on prevention and outbreak management the new COVID-19 NHS Test and Trace programme announced by the Government on the 27th May 2020.
- It is proposed to use additional grant funding to create four additional Environmental Health Officer posts to support the Service to undertake this additional work.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (see the [latest version of the Best Council Plan](#))

- The implementation and effective delivery of the Leeds Covid-19 Outbreak Management Plan is central to supporting the Best Council Plan. In particular

priorities of health and wellbeing and the plan's outcome of everyone in Leeds to be and feel safe and enjoy healthy lives.

3. Resource Implications

- The Government has provided £300m to Local Authorities in England for the Test and Trace programme, Leeds has received a £4,141,249 non-recurrent ring-fenced grant. Funding has been approved from this grant to increase the capacity of the existing environmental health service at a cost of approximately £200,000 annually for a period of 1 year.
- It is proposed to create four additional Environmental Health Officer posts (SO2 – PO2) on 12 month temporary contracts. The total cost will be funded in full by the Test and Trace Programme grant allocation.

Recommendations

- a) The Chief Officer Elections and Regulatory approves the creation of additional environmental health officer posts (12 months contracts).

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to create and recruit to additional temporary posts within the Environmental Health Service.

2. Background information

- 2.1 The Government has provided £300m to Local Authorities in England for the Test and Trace programme, Leeds has received a £4,141,249 non-recurrent ring-fenced grant.
- 2.2 The Environmental Health Service currently delivers functions around the monitoring and surveillance of infectious diseases in the commercial sector and the wider community, including high risk settings such as food manufacturers, warehouse operations, the retail sector and other non-food manufacturing operations in Leeds. Functions including arranging testing, sampling, managing cases, contact tracing, giving advice and guidance to cases and businesses and implementing exclusions for positive cases. Environmental Health have designated powers under various Acts, including the Coronavirus Act, to ensure compliance by legal notice including prohibition of practices or closure of premises. The Service is already routinely engaging with communities, organisations and businesses to provide advice and support on Covid-19 health protection and regulatory compliance but will need additional resource to be able respond at scale.
- 2.3 A request to increase capacity has come as a recommendation from the National Test and Trace programme and from discussions at a Leeds Gold command level, supported by the Association of Directors of Public Health. It is working on the principle of enhancing and boosting existing outbreak management systems and services as agreed regionally.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The Environmental Health Service has a strong track record of proactive and preventative approaches to effective outbreak management in the community and workplaces. The service operates in a fragmented and complex health protection system with well-established systems, relationships, local networks and intelligence and is well placed to provide an enhanced service to implement Test and Trace and meet the future demands of responding to the management of COVID-19.
- 3.2 In order to effectively undertake this additional work and to maintain current service provision it is necessary to increase the operational capacity of the team. It is proposed that the additional environmental health provision will comprise of approximately four suitably qualified and/or experienced officers. Additional business support may be required and the cost of this has been included within the funding budget. Management of the additional officers will be undertaken by the existing management structure allowing the funding to be focused on front line operational staff. These posts will work alongside Public Health England, the Leeds Community Health Infection Prevention Service and LCC health protection team and will primarily be responsible for providing workplaces and community settings with the latest advice and guidance in remaining Covid Secure. This will include advice on risk assessment, proactive, preventative measures, providing outbreak management response including facilitating testing, advice on self-isolation and deep cleaning as part of a joint response with partners.
- 3.3 The Director of Public Health has approved funding of £200,000 to support the creation of the additional posts.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 The Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles has been briefed on the proposal.
- 4.1.2 Due to the urgent nature of this request it has not been possible to undertake any further consultation.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 No specific issues relating to the proposed temporary posts have been identified.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The implementation and effective delivery of the Leeds Covid-19 Outbreak Management Plan is central to supporting the Best Council Plan.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 The proposal is in line with all Legislation, Guidance and Good Industry Practice in environmental management and meeting the objectives of the City Councils sustainability policies.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.4.1 External grant funding has been secured for the full amount of the costs of the additional posts.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.5.1 The proposal complies with all relevant legislation and Council policy.

4.6 Risk management

4.6.1 The Environmental Health Service will play an important role in the effective delivery of the Leeds Covid-19 Outbreak Management Plan. In particular ensuring that Leeds businesses remain safe for employees and customers and can continue to operate. Without additional officer resource the service may not be able to fulfil this role effectively or have the capacity to manage workplace outbreaks over the coming 12 months.

5. Conclusions

5.1 In order to effectively deliver the Leeds Covid-19 Outbreak Management Plan the Environmental Health Service requires additional officer capacity.

5.2 External grant funding of £200,000 has been approved to fund additional posts for a 12 month period.

6. Recommendations

6.1 The Chief Officer Elections and Regulatory approves the creation of additional environmental health officer posts (12 months contracts).

7. Background documents¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.