

**OFFICER DELEGATION SCHEME
RECORD OF DECISION**

Date: 15 November 2023	Ref No: 996
Responsible Officer: Ben Thomson, Head of Public Protection	
<p>Title/Subject matter: To seek approval for the Licensing Service to appoint a specialist contractor to undertake inspection on behalf of the Licensing Authority under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals)(England) Regulations 2018</p> <p>To seek approval for the utilisation of in-year savings from the current vacant Licensing Advisor 0.6FTE post and Licensing Advisor 1FTE post each month to cover the cost of any statutory inspection costs which will be reported on vacancy factor tracker whilst the new to post officer undertakes the legally required training.</p>	
Budget/Strategy/Policy/Compliance:	
(i) Is the decision within an Approved Budget?	Yes
(ii) Is the decision in conflict with the council's policies, strategies or relevant service plans?	No
(iii) Does the decision amend existing or raise new policy issues?	No
(iv) Is the decision a non-key decision (below £100,000, outside the MO definitions)	Yes
Is publication still required? (see guidance)	Yes

Summary:

Due to the sudden and unexpected passing of the Council's Enforcement Officer for Animal Health and Welfare in September 2023, the Public Protection Service Licensing Team have received a number of licence applications under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals)(England) Regulations 2018 that require inspection.

Statutory limitations require any related inspections must be undertaken and completed by an individual that has attained the BTEC Level 3 Certificate – Animal Inspectors (SRF). This qualification enables them to carry out inspections under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018.

The Licensing Service is seeking permission to appoint Ms Elizabeth Bradshaw who works on a freelance basis whose daily rate is £350.00 per day which is a flat rate and includes all expenses, inspection and corresponding administrative paperwork related to the statutory inspection(s). Ms Elizabeth Bradshaw has undertaken this work for other Councils in the North West and was recommended by the NW Animal Health and Welfare Panel.

The Licensing Team contacted the Councils current approved recruitment consultancy REED who were unable to fulfil the highly specialised nature and pre-requisite qualification requirement for this work therefore permission is sought to appoint Ms E Bradshaw.

Mitigation

The vacant post (created from the sudden passing of the post holder) has now been filled (internally) within the Licensing team. The new officer commenced on 1 October 2023 and immediately commenced the above mentioned BTEC Level 3 Certificate – Animal Inspectors run by the Institute of Licensing. The course consists of a two-month teacher led sessions with a 10 month practical training element. The engagement of Ms Bradshaw's services will help to facilitate the training of the new officer who will attend on all inspections to gain knowledge and skills required for the course.

Financially the licensing team have identified savings through staffing changes and recent and most recently animal health and welfare officer which has realised vacancy factor savings each month. It is proposed that some of these savings will be used to offset the unavoidable costs whilst the new Animal Health and Welfare Officer undertakes the necessary statutory required training. Furthermore, the licensing function is a



chargeable service which will further mitigate some of the additional and statutory necessary spend.

Options considered: N/A

Decision:

To approve the appointment/engagement of Ms E Bradshaw, a specialist contractor to undertake inspection on behalf of the Licensing Authority under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals)(England) Regulations 2018 whilst the new Animal Health & Welfare Officer undertakes the statutory required training.

To approve the use of in-year savings from the current vacant Licensing Advisor 0.6FTE post and Licensing Advisor 1FTE post each month to cover the cost of any statutory inspection costs which will be reported on vacancy factor tracker whilst the new to post officer undertakes the legally required training.

Decision made by:	Signature:	Date:
Executive Director of Operations		06/12/23
Assistant Director		04/12/23
Members Consulted (if applicable) [see note 1 below]		
Cabinet Member		
Lead Member		
Opposition Spokesperson		

Notes

1. Where, in accordance with the requirements of the Officer Delegation Scheme, a Chief Officer consults with the appropriate Cabinet Member they must sign the form so as to confirm that they have been consulted and that they agree with the proposed action. The signature of the Opposition Spokesperson should be obtained if required, to confirm that he/she has been consulted. Please refer to the MO Guidance.
2. **This form must not be used for urgent decisions.**
3. Where there is any doubt, Corporate Directors should err on the side of caution and seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer.