

SUBJECT:	TEMPORARY ANIMAL HEALTH & FEED OFFICER
MEETING:	SINGLE MEMBER DECISION
DATE:	31st AUGUST 2016
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek single member approval for the temporary recruitment of an Animal Health Officer specialising in feed, to ensure the authority meets the duty placed on it by official controls without placing undue strain on the wider service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To use external funding to create a temporary Animal Health Officer post until the 31st March 2018.
- 2.2 To review the appointment and funding in 12 months in order to assess future service needs.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Following publication of the July 2014 Food Standards Agency (FSA) report to the Minister of Health and Social Services, '*Food and Feed Law Enforcement in Wales*', it was agreed that £490,000 be removed from the Local Authority Revenue Support Grant to secure urgent improvements to the delivery of animal feed controls. This funding has been made available to the FSA to direct and support Local Authorities and other partners to co-ordinate the feed interventions programme.
- 3.2 It was agreed that this work would be delivered on a regional basis with all authorities in that region collaborating to ensure a risk based interventions programme is achieved. Monmouthshire County Council is the Lead Authority for the Greater Gwent region and works closely with the Regional Lead Officer who is based in Newport City Council.
- 3.3 During the first year of this new delivery approach the funding was used to buy in additional support and expertise to ensure that the programme of interventions was delivered. Due to a change in circumstances this position has now changed and whilst in the short term the desired outcome was achieved it was not the most efficient or sustainable model.
- 3.4 The existing capacity within the Trading Standards Service is already stretched and with only 1.5 FTE animal health officers this would put undue stress on those officers concerned. Due to its rural nature Monmouthshire has a significant proportion of the Greater Gwent programme and would be in a position to use our expertise to bring in

additional income by undertaking inspections for neighbouring authorities if this additional resource was agreed.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 There is a duty on the authority to ensure that official controls for feed are undertaken and that appropriate enforcement takes place to ensure there is compliance with those controls.
- 4.2 The existing animal health resource is already stretched and it would be difficult to demonstrate that the duty to appoint sufficient animal health inspectors under the Animal Health Act 1981 is met.
- 4.3 This and all other animal health and welfare work plays a fundamental part in ensuring the integrity of the food chain and public health. It protects both consumers and businesses playing a crucial role in delivering a level playing field for all business which is vital for a local economy such as Monmouthshire's.
- 4.4 This additional resource would enable further consideration to be given to future service needs and the potential development of a collaborative approach to animal health and feed duties on a regional basis.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The budget resource for this post will be met through an external funding claim for work that is undertaken. The post is grade G which is in line with existing similar posts including on costs and other associated costs (e.g. travel and equipment). This will equate to £37,861.21 per annum and a total of £56,791.81 for the duration of the post.
- 5.2 This cost will be covered in full by external funding from the Food Standards Agency and is specifically for work that can only be undertaken by qualified, competent officers with a specialist expertise. This funding is on a regional basis and Monmouthshire is the lead authority for Gwent with a 65% allocation. As mentioned in 3.4 will provide additional capacity to undertake work on behalf of other Gwent authorities and further activity that will result in additional income.

6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

- 6.1 There is neutral impact on Equality and there are no discrimination issues. An updated Future Generations Assessment has been produced.

7. CONSULTEES:

Members of Cabinet
Senior Leadership Team
Head of Public Health & Protection
Finance Manager
Trading Standards Colleagues

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

FSA Memorandum of Understanding
FSA Letter to LA Chief Executives

9. AUTHOR:

Gareth Walters – Trading Standards & Animal Health Team Leader

10. CONTACT DETAILS:

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