

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted - none

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: REGULATORY

1. DECISION TAKEN

To enter into a contract extension for a temporary member of staff to extend their current contract period due to recruitment and retention issues in order to deliver key projects.

2. DECISION TAKER

Ian Fullstone – Service Director Regulatory

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

12 September 2024

4. REASON FOR DECISION

- 4.1 To ensure that the Council has sufficient staffing to deliver the Town centre Strategy as required by the adopted Local Plan and in meeting the requirements of the Council's Delivery Plan regarding the recovery of the town centres. This requires extending the current contract period for the Town Centre Regeneration officer. The use of temporary staff is being extended due to conflicting priorities with regard other projects within the Infrastructure and Projects Team.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 As can be seen below this role is required to deliver key services or projects due to an inability to recruit, as such, these are the alternative options.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

- 6.1 The previous Executive Member and Deputy for Planning and Transport were regularly briefed re the staffing issues within the Regulatory Directorate, conflicting priorities and the use of temporary staff. The Leader has been briefed regarding this further extension in the absence of a Planning & Transport Exec Member.

7. FORWARD PLAN

- 7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Reference is made to previous Record of Decision Report made under Delegated Authority dated 22 January 2024 setting out the various recruitment and retention difficulties faced by the directorate resulting in a number of temporary staff being employed to deliver both the statutory services as well as key projects, including the

delivery of the town centre Strategy. This delegated decision record includes extending the current contract for the Town centre Regeneration officer.

8.2 The **Town Centre Regeneration Officer** post has been out to recruitment twice in 2023 and has not been successful. In order to progress the town centre strategy work required by the Local Plan an agency member of staff through the Oyster Partnership was recruited. The agency member of staff previously assisted the Council at its Local Plan examination, so employment was sought of this individual through a single tender. Whilst the post has now been filled through a recruitment process it is only on a short-term contract (ends December 2024). Given the Strategic Infrastructure and Projects Manager and her team is and has been fully committed and engaged in other key projects it has been agreed by single tender to further extend the contract until the end of November 2024. These other key projects include:

- The replacement of parking machines with alternative methods of payment across all the Council operated car parks, and
- the Installation of EV charges across a number of the Council's car parks. Contractors have been appointed for both projects and the implementation programme for delivery of each project is under discussion with roll out expected to commence in the autumn running through to early 2025.
- Engagement in masterplan work for key sites in the town centres is also ongoing.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Under section 14.6.4 (a) (ii) of the Council's Constitution, Service Directors have the authority to enter into contracts to carry out works and/or for the supply of goods and services in respect of their service areas and within approved budgets.

9.2 Section 14.6.11 (a) (i) of the Constitution also specifically gives the Service Director: Regulatory, the authority to manage, direct and control all resources allocated to the Directorate in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.

9.3 The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014* (No. 2095) require officers undertaking non-executive decisions to record (amongst other things) an award of a contract that materially affects the Council's position in a written delegated decision. At North Herts this is any award of a contract or financial decision, that is or is likely to be above £50,000.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Expenditure to date from Aug 23 to Aug 24 is £133,300. Projected spend to 30th November is £165,000. Costs have been funded from a combination of salary budget underspends from vacant posts across the directorate, and income from the Growth Area Fund Earmarked Reserve.

10.2 The Group Accountant has confirmed that there are sufficient funds to continue with the proposed extension of contract.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

11.1. The Council has a number of key projects that need to be delivered within the Regulatory Directorate. Without the use of temporary staff to assist with the preparation of the town centre strategy this and other key projects would not met.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 There are no direct equality implications arising from this decision.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. Social value was not incorporated into the original single tender with Oyster Partnership as officers were not aware of any local specialist suppliers who could meet the requirements of this contract.
- 13.2. Incorporating social value requirements at this juncture could significantly increase both the complexity and cost of the project. Given that the procurement was lawfully initiated under the previous conditions, it was considered not practical or financially prudent to amend the current process to incorporate any social value obligations.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report and its recommendations.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 Recruitment of both permanent and temporary staff is time consuming for managers, therefore any inability to recruit increases the time demand upon these officers. Extending the current contract for a consultant to undertake this work will enable officers within the Strategic Infrastructure and Projects Team to concentrate their efforts on delivering the other key projects.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 Record of decision made under delegated authority dated 22 January 2024 - To enter into contract extension for temporary staff to extend current contract periods due to recruitment and retention issues in order to deliver key projects and statutory services. Published on the Council [Website](#).

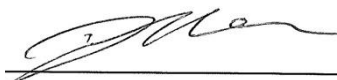
17. APPENDICES

- 17.1 None.

NOTIFICATION DATE

13 September 2024

Signature of Executive Member Consulted



Date

12/09/2024

Signature of Decision Taker



Please Note: that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS