

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 3 November 2015

Subject: Creation of New Post - Water & Pollution Control Officer

Portfolio Holder: Councillor W Breare-Hall

Recommending:

(1) That a supplementary estimate for the Continuing Services Budget in the sum of £10,000 for 2015/16 be approved.

1. The Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009 (PWSR) were implemented to meet the UK's obligations under the revised European Union (EU) Directive 98/83EC. The regulations placed a number of additional statutory requirements on Local Authorities and consequently increased the burden on both staff and financial resources. At the time the Regulations were introduced, it was decided by the Council to try and implement the new provisions within existing staff and budgetary resources. Despite the commitment and concerted effort made to try and get the work done, this has not been possible.

2. The Council has been identified by the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) for failing to meet its statutory obligations. The DWI has said that, in the event of the EU fining the UK for failing to meet the relevant directive, it may look to the Local Authorities who have not met their obligations under the PWSR to cover the cost of any infraction. Officers have met with the DWI in order to discuss the challenges that the Council faces with regards to the nature of the PWS within the District, and to demonstrate its commitment to meet its obligations. If the Council is to meet both its statutory duties with regard to private water supplies and other pollution related work and reduce the potential risk of both reputational and financial penalties, an additional member of staff is required.

3. This issue was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 8 October, and, following the consideration of a number of different options, it was agreed to add a new post of Water and Pollution Control Officer to the Council's establishment. To fund the new post in the long term, a growth bid for the Continuing Services Budget in the sum of £36,650 for 2016/17 was agreed. However, it is important to recruit to this new post as soon as possible, so a supplementary estimate in the sum of £10,000 for the Continuing Services Budget is being sought to fund the post from January 2016 to 1 April 2016.

4. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.