

Operational Decision Record

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| Publication Date 11/05/23 | Decision Reference Number 4931 |
| Decision Title | |
| Agency support for Building Control (further extension of contract to Delegated Decision 4673) | |
| Decision Value | |
| £130,000 | |
| Revenue or Capital Spend? | |
| Revenue | |
| Department | |
| Growth and City Development | |
| Contact Officer (Name, job title, and contact details) | |
| Matt Gregory, Head of Planning Strategy and GIS | |
| Decision Taken | |
| <p>To approve expenditure of an additional £80,440 to allow the extension of the contract period of two agency workers for an additional 6 months from June 2023 to December 2023.</p> <p>The gross cost of the decision is £130,000, however £49,590 will be funded from vacancies within the existing salaries budget.</p> | |
| Reasons for Decision and Background Information | |
| <p>The Building Control (BC) service has two Principal BC Surveyor posts, both of which are vacant. Recruitment has been unsuccessful, even with a £5,000 Market Supplement. These posts undertake the more complex BC duties for larger residential and non-residential buildings and are critical to service delivery and continuity. The roles are currently being undertaken by agency staff, pending a remuneration review by HR.</p> <p>BC is a statutory duty, and the service is unviable without this support. The structural integrity and fire safety of new buildings are a key part of the service provision. Two agency posts have previously been procured, to ensure service continuity prior to further recruitment. Support is required for up to a further 6 months to December 2023, to allow sufficient time for the remuneration review (to include drafting and evaluating new Job Descriptions, and then to move to permanent recruitment and appointment).</p> <p>As highlighted above, it is proposed that the agency support (which will provide capacity to deliver our minimum statutory service) will be part funded from existing vacancies within the team which we have been unable to recruit to, however this is insufficient to cover the full cost. The net cost of £80,440 will therefore create a</p> | |

budget pressure. We will seek to manage this pressure across Divisional budgets. A review of the BC team structure and gradings is in progress to seek a stable establishment without recourse to agency support.

Other Options Considered and why these were rejected

None. There is no expertise within NCC to cover the duties, which are of a specialist statutory nature and fee earning.

Reasons why this decision is classified as operational

Approving expenditure of less than £250,000.

Additional Information

Finance Advice

The Building Control service is a statutory duty, and the service is unviable without this support. Therefore the cost of this agency staff of £130,000, of which £49,490 is already budgeted is recognised as a legitimate business need to fulfil statutory obligations. The Planning department, Which building control sits within, generates fees to mitigate this extra cost, combined with a review of team structure and Pay and grading review to avoid the requirement of agency support in the longer term. The proposal will add a financial pressure to the MTFP of £80,440, which can be contained within the divisional budgets and is supported. This will be monitored by the service for any variance and reflected in the monthly forecast for the service. Advice provided by Paul Rogers (Commercial Finance Business Partner (G&D)) on 26/04/2023.

Procurement Advice

Quotations were originally sought by the Author in compliance with Contract Procedure Rules and that this procurement falls under the Light Touch Regime, then the decision to be taken to extend the contract raises no significant procurement concerns.

Advice provided by Paul Ritchie (Procurement Manager) on 03/05/2023.

Human Resources Advice

Building Control is a statutory duty, and the service is unviable without urgent support. The structural integrity and fire safety of new buildings are a key part of the service provision. Currently there are two agency posts in place to ensure service continuity prior to allow sufficient time for permanent recruitment and appointment and pending a remuneration review by HR. Support is required for up to a further 6 months to December 2023.

There are known recruitment and pay challenges within both the broader market and specifically in this area of expertise. Several longer-term options to support resourcing are being considered, however, in the interim, consideration of continuing immediate resourcing through an agency is considered the most viable option and is therefore supported.

As highlighted above the costs for the above will be continued and part funded from existing vacancies within the team which we have been unable to recruit to, however this is insufficient to cover the full cost. The net cost of £80,440 will therefore create a budget pressure. We will seek to manage this pressure across

Divisional budgets. A review of the BC team structure and gradings is in progress to seek a stable establishment without recourse to agency support.
Advice provided by Raj Athwal (HR Advisor) on 26/04/2023.

Decision Maker (Name and Job Title)

Sajeeda Rose, Corporate Director, Growth and City Development

Scheme of Delegation Reference Number

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Date Decision Taken

10/05/23