

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

To: Environmental Services Committee

6th October 2015

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SHARED SERVICE OFFICER

For Decision

1.0 Report to Committee

Linkage to Corporate Plan	
Strategic Priority	Innovation and Transformation
Objective	To ensure the efficient delivery of the Environmental Health Service.
Lead Officer	Bryan Edgar
Cost: (If applicable)	£15000

1.1 Background

Following the cessation of Northern Group Systems (Environmental Health) the Chief Executives agreed that the specialist environmental protection services should transfer into Mid and East Antrim Borough Council on the understanding that a shared services model would be put in place between the relevant parties/stakeholders. Consultation with the individual councils involved (Antrim & Newtownabbey, Causeway Coast & Glens and Mid Ulster) has resulted in agreement in principle being reached on the nature and scope of the shared specialist services to be delivered.

1.2 Recommendation

A copy of the service level agreement may be found at Appendix V to this report. Subject to acceptance/approval by MEA ratification (full Council) on the 2nd November 2015, it is recommended that Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council grant authority to the Chief Executive to sign the above service level agreement.

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT BETWEEN

MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH
COUNCIL

AND

ANTRIM & NEWTOWNABBEY
BOROUGH COUNCIL,

CAUSEWAY COAST & GLENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL, AND

MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

2015

BACKGROUND:

Following the cessation of Northern Group Systems (Environmental Health) the Chief Executives agreed that the specialist environmental protection services provided by Dr Chris Jordan (Specialist Environmental Health Officer) should transfer into Mid and East Antrim Borough Council on the understanding that a shared services model would be put in place between the relevant parties/stakeholders. Consultation with the individual councils involved (Antrim & Newtownabbey, Causeway Coast & Glens and Mid Ulster) has resulted in agreement in principle being reached on the nature and scope of the shared specialist services to be delivered and the corresponding financial arrangements across the four councils, as set out in this document.

1.0 PERIOD

The Agreement shall take effect from 01 April 2015 and shall remain in force unless, further to review by the Chief Executives, the provision of a shared service is no longer deemed necessary.

2.0 REVIEW OF SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

- 2.1 Stakeholders shall jointly review the Agreement on an annual basis. See 7.1
- 2.2 The review process will be initiated and facilitated by the Head of Regulatory Services, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (hereafter MEA), 3 months prior to the end of the financial year.
- 2.3 Stakeholders may at any time propose revisions of the Agreement. However the Head of Regulatory Services (MEA) shall assess what impact any such revision may have and consult upon same, prior to agreeing to any reasonable alteration out with the review process.
- 2.4 It is acknowledged within this Agreement that there is a need for flexibility within the model to allow for reprioritisation of service delivery at short notice, albeit that this should not impact significantly on the agreed level of service to be delivered to each stakeholder on an annual basis.

3.0 SCOPE AND LEVEL OF SERVICE DELIVERED

3.1 The Head of Regulatory Services (MEA) is responsible for ensuring services are delivered as per this Agreement and reported on as detailed in section 7.

3.2 The services covered by this Agreement would include :

- Planning consultation responses; including determining need for environmental impact assessments, reviewing environmental impact assessments, preparation of rebuttal evidence, drafting of suitable conditions, representation at Committee, Planning Appeals and Judicial Reviews
- Planning policy development; assist in the development of local planning policies ensuring that environmental health aims and objectives are appropriately represented and given meaningful weight, representation at Committee and Judicial Reviews
- Nuisance Investigations; including interpretation of legislation and case law, evidence gathering, drafting and serving of enforcement notices, evidence gathering, preparation and provision of evidence in court.
- Pollution Prevention and Control; including surveying district, determining need for permit, drafting permit conditions, inspections, enforcement and defending position.
- Licensing, entertainment & petroleum; assist in drafting licence, inspections, enforcement and defending position.
- Peer review of council investigations; assist with the peer review of council officer's planning consultation responses or investigations to inform internal complaint investigations.
- Capacity Building; mentoring of new staff, production of competency frameworks for the development of professional and technical officers, provision of seminars, courses, workshops on environmental protection matters, one-to-one training
- Expert Witness at Planning Appeals, Criminal and Civil Courts, providing expertise in statutory nuisance investigations and environmental impact assessments.
- Preparation of consultation responses and liaison with central government departments, professional and trade bodies to influence, maintain and further environmental protection aims. Interpret, evaluate and prepare reports on proposed or existing legislation, public consultations, codes or practices, standards and guidelines.
- Undertake research into emerging environmental protection matters to inform decisions and direction
- Out of hours working; concerts, night-time nuisance investigations, background noise level surveys etc.
- One off surveys and investigations as and when required (e.g. fall from quarry faces)
- Prompt response to urgent queries
- Operation, demonstration, calibration and maintenance of specialist shared equipment. Identification and assessment of other specialist equipment and preparation of reports on same.

- Undertake other related duties within the necessary skills and competences of a specialist EHO (e.g. noise at work assessments)

4.0 OPERATING AND FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Each Council is responsible for nominating a single point of contact to liaise with the post holder for the purposes of making, and where necessary, reprioritising service requests.
- 4.2 Each Council shall provide at least two working weeks' notice of the specifics of the service they require, to facilitate work planning and to ensure delivery by agreed timeframes. This is particularly critical for planning consultation work in order to meeting statutory time frames.
- 4.3 If or any reason, it is not possible to facilitate a request by a council, a report shall be prepared for the Head of Regulatory Services (MEA) giving the explanation for same.
- 4.4 All reasonable steps will be taken to undertake priority work at short notice but Mid and East Antrim reserves the right to make the final decision in respect of which work takes priority in periods when demand is high, and the Head of Regulatory Services (MEA) will be responsible for making and reporting the final decision should the need arise.
- 4.5 Councils may make use of monitoring equipment in conjunction with the service, and this Agreement will only cover the maintenance and calibration of the existing equipment inventory in Appendix 1, albeit that the equipment inventory shall form part of the annual review process.
- 4.6 The training and development needs of the shared post will be assessed and managed by Mid and East Antrim subject to agreement with all stakeholders.
- 4.7 The four councils have agreed to operate the shared service model on an equal split basis, with each contributing 25% to the costs.
- 4.8 In conjunction with the review process as outlined in Section 2, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council shall provide an estimated annual bill to facilitate the annual budget process.
- 4.9 Mid and East Antrim Borough Council will issue invoices on a quarterly basis and councils will be responsible for prompt payment.

5.0 AUTHORISATION

Each Council shall authorise the specialist officer to undertake work on their behalf under all relevant legislation.

6.0 HEALTH & SAFETY

6.1 Health and Safety of staff employed by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is the responsibility of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

6.2 Mid and East Antrim Borough Council employees must adhere to the Health & Safety requirements of their employer council. This includes adherence to health and safety requirements specific to council offices as well as in the delivery of services external to council offices such as lone working and site specific requirements.

7.0 PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND REPORTING

7.1 The Head of Regulatory Services (MEA) shall facilitate joint performance reviews with all stakeholders on a six monthly basis, providing such reports as required to inform the process.

7.2 The Head of Regulatory Services (MEA) shall ensure that necessary action as agreed is taken to maintain a high level of service delivery.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF
MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL

_____ DATE:
Chief Executive

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF ANTRIM & NEWTOWNABBEY BOROUGH
COUNCIL

_____ DATE:
Chief Executive

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF CAUSEWAY COAST & GLENS BOROUGH
COUNCIL

_____ DATE:
Chief Executive

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF MID USTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

_____ DATE:
Chief Executive

APPENDIX 1**EQUIPMENT INVENTORY FOR SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION SERVICE (as of 01.04.15)**

Equipment
Light Meter
Drager Multi Gas Analyser
Radiation Monitoring Equipment
Met Mast
Bruel and Kjaer 2250 Sound Level Meter
Bruel and Kjaer 2238 Sound Level Meter
Bruel and Kjaer 4231 Calibrator
Cadna Noise Modelling Software
GIS Historic Mapping