

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Outbreak Control measures – Covid-19
Date of decision:	11-24 July 2020
Decision maker:	Chief Executive
Authority for delegated decision:	Council constitution 3.7.9 all necessary decisions in the case of emergencies
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	n/a
Decision made:	Spend of £52k for the urgent response to the Covid-19 outbreak on Rook Row Farm inclusive of risk costs.
Reasons for decision:	<p>As a category 1 responder in an emergency and based on the work of the Outbreak Control Group working to the <u>Outbreak Control Plan</u> the council have made spend decisions in relation to the containment of the Covid-19 outbreak at Rook Row Farm.</p> <p>The outbreak control plan follows three specific objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the spread of infection in Herefordshire, minimise the number of cases, protect our health and care system, and save lives • Support settings which experience an outbreak or complex single cases to mitigate the consequences and help to keep as many services and businesses going as possible in a way that is safe and releases our economy and • Give the public confidence that we are able to respond appropriately to outbreaks of Covid-19 in order to minimise anxiety. <p>The outbreak of Covid-19 was among the workforce on the farm (designated key workers) and the council worked with Public Health England (PHE) to support the farm and take appropriate action to manage the outbreak. Therefore urgent interventions were needed by the council to support people to stay on site in an attempt to contain 223 workers on site. This included catering for 21 additional people joining the workforce who needed accommodation (the accommodation for the new arrivals would have been provided for by people due to finish their period of employment at the site). Another important factor was to support the owners in sustaining their business through the emergency situation as important to the local economy.</p> <p>The spend was based on dealing with immediate impact of the emergency and follows weeks (based on isolation rules). The provision by the council covered the following items:</p> <p>Washing and Toilet provision. The council also organised the provision of additional wash facilities based on 2 x male urinal units; 4 standard portable toilet units; 2 toilet/wash hand basin trailer units; and 2 x 4-Bay Transhower portable shower blocks. The provision by Andyloos at a cost of £5k.</p> <p>Welfare and Office facilities. To support the new people arriving on site and in order to isolate people with the infection, provision was made to cover 2 sleeper pods, 2 welfare units and 1 canteen unit. For the council one welfare unit was provided that included office space, kitchenette and WC. The cost was £18k. The service was provided by Balfour Beatty Living Places.</p> <p>Emergency food and supplies. To ensure people in isolation had the food and supplies needed initially based on their requests so they would not go hungry as well as mitigation against leaving the site (therefore included cigarettes and medical items). There was also supplies of bedding particularly for the new arrivals, and delivery made by Balfour Beatty Living Places. The cost spent was</p>

	<p>£9.2k.</p> <p>Internet connection – wifi was installed to help retain people on site over an extended period and to enable contact with friends and relatives. The owner had previously ordered a full fibre service to the farm from Gigaclear, but a strong wifi connection was needed to cover the worker accommodation. This cost £6k and was provided by SWS (Secure Web Services) working with Gigaclear.</p> <p>Translation costs: The council needed to provide translation in several languages so important information was relayed. This cost £11k.</p> <p>Site supervision: Though most site supervision was via the council teams, Balfour Beatty Living Places also supported this at a cost of £1.5k.</p> <p>Contingency – A small number of additional items were required – mainly stationary, posters, etc. This was in the region of £1k.</p> <p>The council is also made PPE available to people needing to visit the site and this is from the council’s existing provision for which there was a previous decision.</p> <p>The council has needed to procure goods and services in an extremely urgent situation. Direct purchasing is permitted using regulation 32(2)(c) under the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (Government guidance). The purchase of items is below the EU thresholds and relate to one-off costs.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>Procurement challenge – an alternative supplier to the goods could claim they did not have the opportunity to supply items. This risk is addressed above in that the council has permission to procure goods in a urgent situation under regulation 32(2)(c).</p> <p>People leaving the site – this was a risk which could mean spread of Covid-19 in the county and further afield. Therefore mitigating actions to retain people on site is a secure and controlled environment.</p> <p>Impact on the economy – there is a direct risk to the owner in terms of ceasing operations. Also, wider impact to the county on risk associated with Herefordshire produce.</p> <p>The expenditure has been deemed necessary and proportionate to respond to the emergency and will be kept under review.</p> <p>The costs are being covered by government Covid 19 funding.</p> <p>The figures have been rounded and based on confirmed spend.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>The council could have left the owner to make provision and cover costs. However, the owner was not in agreement to cover these costs, and this was an urgent emergency situation that needed support from the public sector as part of the council’s public health duties. The top priority was to stop community spread of Covid-19 infection with the largest single outbreak experienced in UK at that time. The council could have taken a lighter touch approach through its enforcement role and inspected the site but this was considered highly unlikely to have contained infection spread. The strategy taken was successful – there was no development of infection from this outbreak within the community. The Secretary of State and the Head of National Test and Trace have singled out Herefordshire as an example of best practice.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date: