

## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

**Report to:** Employment Committee  
**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024  
**Report for:** Information  
**Report of:** Director of Human Resources

### Report Title

**Environmental Health and Trading Standards Officers - Market Supplement**

### Summary

This report provides an update in relation to a market supplement payment for Environmental Health and Trading Standards Officers.

### Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Employment Committee: -

- Note and approve a market supplement payment of £2,182 per annum (pro rata) for Environmental Health and Trading Standards Officers with effect from 1 April 2024 for a period of 2 years.
- Note that a review of the payment will be undertaken in line with the current policy arrangements in 12 months time.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

**Name:** Nigel Smith, Head of Regulatory Services  
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Background Papers: None

*Implications:*

Relationship to Corporate Priorities	<i>The Environmental Health and Trading Standards Officer roles directly contribute to the Council's corporate priorities of reducing health inequalities and addressing our climate crisis.</i>
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	<i>Not applicable - the decision to pay a market supplement is a local decision.</i>
Financial	<i>There is an additional financial cost arising from the payment of a market supplement. This will be met from within the existing service budget.</i>
Legal Implications	<i>The Environmental Health and Trading Standards Officer roles both involve regulatory enforcement. The ability to recruit and retain staff is therefore crucial to the Council meeting its statutory responsibilities.</i>
Equality/Diversity Implications	<i>Not applicable</i>
Sustainability Implications	<i>Not applicable</i>
Carbon Reduction	<i>Not applicable</i>
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	<i>The intention of the market supplement is to lessen recruitment and retention challenges</i>
Risk Management Implications	<i>There is a risk that if we do not implement the market supplement that we may face increased remuneration and retention challenges.</i>
Health and Safety Implications	<i>Not applicable</i>

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) and Trading Standards Officers (TSOs) provide a wide range of statutory functions for Trafford Council, covering fair and safe trading, food hygiene & standards, workplace health and safety, infectious disease control, animal welfare and licensing, safety at sports grounds, private sector housing enforcement, statutory nuisance and pollution control.
- 1.2 Local authorities across the country are struggling to recruit EHOs and TSOs, with the biggest challenge being an aging workforce and a decline in the number of people gaining the required qualifications. In addition, there has been an increase in qualified staff moving into the private sector to access a higher salary.
- 1.3 In Trafford, there have been significant recruitment and retention issues for EHOs and TSOs in recent years. Trafford have lost five EHO's and a TSO in the last couple of years to higher paid positions in other local authorities (mainly in Greater Manchester), and in the last six months the service has also lost an EHO and a TSO through retirement.
- 1.4 A breakdown of Trafford Council's EHO and TSO workforce is as follows: -

Position	FTE in post	FTE vacant posts
Environmental Health Officers	8.8	3.4
Trading Standards Officers	0	2

- 1.5 Within Regulatory Services there are currently 3.4 FTE vacant EHO posts and 2.0 FTE vacant TSO posts. This represents a significant proportion (38%) of the workforce within these teams.
- 1.6 Several attempts have been made to recruit to the vacant posts, but with a national shortage of suitably qualified candidates together with the lower salary paid by Trafford compared with other local authorities, we have been unsuccessful.
- 1.7 The majority of the statutory functions undertaken by EHOs and TSOs can only be carried out by suitably qualified officers, which means that the service are unable to recruit unqualified candidates. The service has recruited two Regulatory Compliance Officer apprentices; however these are 3-year training programmes and the post holders will not be able to act as a replacement for an EHO or TSO due to restrictions on certain regulatory functions.
- 1.8 There is currently a reliance on agency spend and overtime to complete certain statutory functions, for example, food inspection programmes and age-related sales testing.
- 1.9 Most other Greater Manchester authorities are offering higher salaries for identical jobs. With other local authorities also advertising positions on higher salaries this makes Trafford's attempts to recruit challenging. Not only does this impact our recruitment into the posts, but it also attracts our existing staff to move from their posts in Trafford.
- 1.10 Benchmarking was undertaken across other Greater Manchester authorities, and the following table shows a breakdown of how Trafford's EHO / TSO salary compares to other authorities: -

GM Local Authority	EHO / TSO Salary – Top of Scale
Salford	£47,420
Oldham	£44,482
Manchester	£43,421
Wigan	£42,403
Tameside	£42,403
Stockport	£42,403
Bury	£41,418
Trafford	£40,221
Bolton	£39,186
Rochdale	£37,336

- 1.11 The above table shows that Trafford are ranked 8<sup>th</sup> overall for the maximum salary paid to EHOs and TSOs compared to other GM local authorities. Six of the neighbouring authorities in Greater Manchester are paying between £2,182 and £7,199 additional salary (at top of scale) per year for identical roles.
- 1.12 Officers are aware of salary differences across Greater Manchester and wider authorities, as there have been several posts advertised and officers openly discuss Trafford's lower rate of pay for EHOs and TSOs.
- 1.13 The risk of not granting a market supplement to these posts is that Trafford will be unable to recruit to the current vacant posts. In addition, there is a risk of not retaining existing staff with further people leaving the authority for better paid positions elsewhere. A high proportion of our existing EHO's have worked at Trafford for a long time and their local knowledge and experience is of great value and would be difficult to replace.
- 1.14 In addition, officers in the teams are already under considerable pressure to meet increasing workloads and statutory functions on behalf of the Council, as they have been impacted by past reductions in staffing following restructures, and the impact of being unable to recruit to vacant posts is adding to this.

## **2.0 Market Supplement**

- 2.1 A Market Supplement Request Form was submitted to the Pay and Reward Team. As a result of the ongoing recruitment and retention difficulties, and the difference between Trafford's salary compared to the market rate at other local authorities, it was agreed that the EHO and TSO posts would qualify for the payment of a market supplement in line with the Council's Market Supplement policy.
- 2.2 Factoring in the £2,182 market supplement payment this increases the maximum annual salary to £42,403 per annum. This means that EHOs and TSOs are now paid an equivalent maximum salary to three other GM local authorities and sees our ranking increase to joint 4<sup>th</sup> overall.

## **3.0 Recommendation**

- 3.1 It is recommended that Employment Committee: -
- Note and approve a market supplement payment of £2,182 per annum (pro rata) for Environmental Health and Trading Standards Officers with effect from 1 April 2024 for a period of 2 years.
  - Note that a review of the payment will be undertaken in line with the current policy arrangements in 12months time.