



REPORT TO: CORPORATE COMMITTEE ON 12 OCTOBER 2021

SUBJECT: TEST AND PROTECT TEMPORARY STAFF

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES
AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to authorise the use of Covid-19 funds to appoint a temporary member of staff to meet demand for Test and Protect calls in the contact centre.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B) (43) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all matters relating to developing and monitoring customer access and information

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The committee is asked to :
- i. **Authorise the allocation of Scottish Government pandemic funding to recruit one temporary post of Customer Service Advisor on Grade 3 for a period of 5 months to support the on-going requirements in the contact centre to support Scottish Government Test and Protect to be funded from state grant funding in support of covid-related expenditure; and**
 - ii. **Note the work that continues as a result of Test and Protect and the impact on other customer service day to day activities.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Government Test and Protect scheme offers assistance to all those that need to self-isolate due to them being infected with Covid-19 or have been identified as a close contact of someone that has had a positive diagnosis and are not fully vaccinated. People who are contacted by Test and Protect as needing to self-isolate can choose to allow their contact details to be shared with their local authority for support during the isolation period.

- 3.2 The council receives a daily report from NHS Scotland of Moray residents that have been informed to self-isolate and have provided consent to be contacted by the local authority. The contact centre staff make contact with each contact to identify if they require any assistance during their period of self-isolation, plus direct them towards support that is available through the Self-isolation support grant (SISG) which is administered by the Moray Council Benefits team.
- 3.3 The contact centre also provide an in-bound facility for telephone, e-mail and e-form to Moray residents to request assistance advice and support during Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.4 The Grampian Coronavirus Assistance Hub was set-up to co-ordinate both volunteers and requests for assistance, initially staffed by Aberdeenshire Council. In October 2020 responsibility for staffing was transferred to each of the three local authorities. In Moray all requests for assistance or those volunteering were directed to the Contact Centre and dealt with by the support team.
- 3.5 In January 2021 some library staff were redeployed to supplement the support team to deal with the number of enquiries being received. When libraries re-opened the redeployed library staff returned to their normal duties, leaving only the contact centre support team to deal with requests for assistance.
- 3.6 As services have adapted to new ways to serve the residents of Moray, the contact centre are seeing a shift in the types of customer contact, with a higher percentage of contact by e-mail increasing the demand to support these changes.
- 3.7 Over the last 4 weeks we are averaging 55 out bound calls and 20 inbound calls a week. Calls on average last around 10 minutes for inbound and 20 minutes for outbound with follow up work required on around half of the calls.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Supporting the Scottish Government Test and Protect system supports the 10 year LOIP aim of Improving well-being of our population. It is consistent with the corporate plan to ensure that Moray offers caring and healthy communities for all our citizens and to support day to day service delivery.

(b) Policy and Legal

Test and Protect, Scotland's approach to implementing the 'test, trace, isolate, support strategy', is a public health measure designed to break chains of transmission of COVID-19 in the community

(c) Financial implications

The post will be accommodated by funding from the Scottish Government provided for Covid-19. The cost for 5 months at top of G3 would be £10,145

(d) Risk Implications

The risks of not approving the additional temporary post are:

- I. Reduced ability to support Moray residents requiring assistance as part of Test and Protect.
- II. Reduced ability to provide support and develop existing customer contact will be negatively impacted as staff diverted to Test and Protect duties.

(e) Staffing Implications

One temporary new post of Customer Service Advisor at G3 (£17,890 to £19,208) for a period of up to 5 months

(f) Property

There are no property implications as a result of this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

Whilst there is no direct impact the Test and Protect calls can signpost more vulnerable people to sources of help and funding.

(h) Consultations

The Chief Financial officer, Head of Governance Strategy and Performance, Equal Opportunities Officer have been consulted,

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Test and Protect is a key Scottish Government public health strategy to break chains of transmission of COVID-19. Though the contact centre support staff have been providing this service for Moray residents since October 2020, the impact is now being felt on the work provided by this team to support other customer contact.

5.2 The funding made available by the Scottish Government for Test and Protect should be utilised to ensure that Moray can deliver the assistance required to our residents without impacting on other customer contact.

Author of Report: Andy Donegan Customer Services Development Manager
Background Papers:
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