

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 15 September 2014

Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Grigg
(Asset Management & Economic Development)

Recommending:

(1) That a supplementary estimate from the Continuing Services Budget in the sum of £30,770 be approved to implement the new structure for the Asset Management & Economic Development Team.

1. The top management restructure introduced an Asset Management and Economic Development Team which currently is managed within the Governance Directorate – with a transfer to Neighbourhoods from April next year. Appendix 1 of the report shows the proposed structure with existing posts shown shaded for context with proposed additional posts in outline.

2. The current Asset Management Team is fully staffed on the professional side. However internal audit has requested more resilience in managing and operating the commercial rent collection and estate administration computer system and initial stages of debt recovery. This can be accomplished by adding duties to the proposed Assistant Asset Management and Economic Development Officers' job descriptions, which will mean that should the Business Manager be absent, then the computer system aspect of that role is covered.

3. The two new posts would be responsible for the early stages of debt collection prior to potential reference to the Legal Services Team, and will assist in income recovery. There is a current temporary resource at present for one of these posts (subject to job evaluation) but the need to provide support across the team will require the two assistants as set out.

4. The Economic Development posts will be tasked with providing a focal point for the local business community and third parties in both public and private sectors. They will develop and implement a range of initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable economic growth and contribute to the formulation of an Economic Development Strategy.

5. In addition, there is common consensus that the Council needs to produce an Economic Development Strategy to inform the Local Plan and support the economic aspirations of the Council. The proposed structure and new posts will support the financial and economic aims of the Council, which in turn will reduce the Council's reliance upon grants from the Government.

6. The costs of the proposed four new posts, using the mid point grade ranges and including pension costs, are:

- Grade 4 £21,700;
- Grade 6 £29,630;
- Grade 8 £39,840.

7. Assuming two posts at grade 4 and two at grade 8, the total cost would be £123,080. A bid for Continuing Services Budget growth in 2015/16 has already been agreed, but there is a need to start funding these new posts during 2014/15. It is anticipated that these posts will not be recruited to before January 2015, so a Continuing Services Budget Supplementary estimate of £30,770 is requested for 2014/15.

8. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.