

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	PLANNING COMMITTEE	23 JUNE 2021	8

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM RESOURCING

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

Over recent years the focus of the council's corporate objectives have evolved to place greater emphasis on the delivery of strategic economic development initiatives. In addition, the government is seeking to improve the quality of new development in terms of urban design and sustainable development. In order to ensure the Regeneration Team is best placed to address these evolving ambitions, it is considered that the roles within the team should be reviewed and the structure of the team refreshed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council be requested to approve an unfunded revenue budget increase of £15,657 during the current financial year (2021/22) and £32,176 in 2022/23 and subsequent years, together with inflationary increases in subsequent years.
2. That Council be requested to authorise the proposed expenditure to allow the appointment of a full time (37 hrs per week) Economic Development and Regeneration Manager and to increase the hours of the Technical Support Officer (Regeneration) to 29.5 hours per week.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

On 23 November 2020 finance and Democracy Committee resolved:

1. Approve a revenue funded budget increase (to be split between the years 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24) in the total sum of £45,000, to be funded from the Funding Volatility Reserve, in order to provide the required level of resource for the appointment of an Enterprise Zone Project Manager;
2. Approve a revenue funded budget increase (to be split between the years 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24) in the total sum of £246,000, to be funded from the Funding Volatility Reserve, in order to provide the required resource for the appointment of a Town Centres Manager and an Economic Development Officer;
3. Approve a revenue funded budget increase of £5,000 for 2020/21 and £25,000 for 2021/22, to be funded from the Funding Volatility Reserve, in order to provide an enhanced financial resource in respect of the existing St Annes town centre maintenance budget;
4. Authorise the proposed expenditure to fund the recruitment of an Enterprise Zone Project Manager for a temporary period of 3 years;

5. Authorise the proposed expenditure to fund the recruitment of a Town Centres Manager and Economic Development Officer, each for a temporary period of 3 years; and
6. Authorise the proposed expenditure in respect of the enhanced St Annes town centre repairs and maintenance budget in the total additional sum of £30,000.

On 11 November 2020, Planning Committee resolved:

1. That the Finance & Democracy Committee be requested to approve a revenue funded budget increase (to be split between the years 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25) in the total sum of £45,000, to be funded from the Funding Volatility Reserve, in order to provide the required level of resource for the appointment of an Enterprise Zone Project Manager;
2. That the Finance & Democracy Committee be requested to approve a revenue funded budget increase (to be split between the years 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24) in the total sum of £246,000, to be funded from the Funding Volatility Reserve, in order to provide the required resource for the appointment of a Town Centres Manager and an Economic Development Officer;
3. That the Finance & Democracy Committee be requested to approve a revenue funded budget increase of £5,000 for 2020/21 and £25,000 for 2021/22, to be funded from the Funding Volatility Reserve, in order to provide an enhanced financial resource in respect of the existing St Annes town centre maintenance budget
4. To authorise the proposed expenditure to fund the recruitment of an Enterprise Zone Project Manager for a temporary period of 3 years;
5. To authorise the proposed expenditure to fund the recruitment of a Town Centres Manager and Economic Development Officer, each for a temporary period of 3 years; and
6. To authorise the proposed expenditure in respect of the enhanced St Annes town centre repairs and maintenance budget in the total additional sum of £30,000. 7. That the Town Centres Working Group be requested to review of the maintenance provisions and budgets for Lytham and Kirkham Town Centres.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	√
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	√
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	√

REPORT

BACKGROUND

1. Over recent years the Council, through its Corporate Plan, has placed increased emphasis on the economic development of the borough. Over the coming years, the Regeneration Team will be responsible for delivering the Heritage Action Zone and Future High Street Fund programmes in Kirkham, delivering major improvement works in the Lytham and St Annes Town Centres in addition to other initiatives across the borough including the promotion of the two Enterprise Zones.
2. In addition, the Planning for the Future White Paper issued in August 2020 sets out the UK Government's proposals to improve the design and sustainability of new developments. This sits alongside the Government's existing 25 year action plan to improve the environment which includes a commitment to significantly boost tree planting and protect the natural environment.
3. The recovery of the local economy from the impacts of the pandemic is also a priority for the council and the work of the Regeneration Team is key to developing and delivering initiatives to assist in this.
4. A number of recent appointments and successful bids for Government funding have seen the size of The Regeneration Team and the projects they will be delivering over the next few years grow. It is already apparent

that additional resources will be required within the team to deliver the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan and the governments emerging design and natural environment agenda.

5. The current Regeneration Manager has announced that he wishes to retire from his current role, with an anticipated date to be towards the end of September. However, he is willing to be flexible to allow an unbroken handover to a successor. Given the above evolving agenda and circumstances it is timely to undertake a review of the structure of the Regeneration Team.

PROPOSED STRUCTURE

6. Although the Regeneration Team has been involved with a wide range of projects since it was originally created over 20 years ago, there has been a clear focus on delivering physical regeneration projects in the borough's towns and villages. Whilst this aspect will remain an important part of the work of the team, there is an ambition to move the focus of the work of the team to other strategic projects that will support the wider economy of the borough. In addition, it should be noted that the Regeneration Manager role is currently filled on a part time basis. It is considered that, in order to manage the work of the expanded team, this role should be filled on a full-time basis. To address this change in emphasis, a revised job description has been produced and evaluated.
7. As set out above, the government is placing a greater emphasis on the quality design and sustainability of new development. Much of this design input, both in regard to the design of the council's own schemes and to assist the Development Management Team in the determination of planning applications is currently provided by the Regeneration Manager. If this role is to be refocused toward strategic economic development initiatives, it will be necessary to ensure that urban design skills are retained elsewhere within the team. The current Principal Economic Development Officer post remains vacant with the most recent advertising of this role not drawing any suitable candidates to fill the role. It is proposed to redesignate this role as a Principal Urban Design and Heritage Officer who would oversee the delivery of the work of the team that relates to the built and natural environment.
8. In addition to the management of the team, a requirement for additional administration and technical support has been identified. The current role that provides this support is a part time post (18.5 hrs per week) and it is proposed to increase this role to 29.5 hrs per week (i.e. 4 days per week). This additional support will increase the productivity of the individual officers within the team.
9. In addition to the core Regeneration Team, it will be necessary to ensure that the Kirkham Futures programme is adequately resourced. The FHSF grant award has only recently been confirmed and the details of this role still need to be developed and evaluated. Accordingly, this role will be the subject of a further report and is set out here to ensure members are aware of the comprehensive proposals. It is intended that this new Kirkham Futures Programme Manager post would oversee the delivery of both the Future High Street Fund and Heritage Action Zone projects and would work alongside the existing HAZ Programme Manager to ensure the two projects are delivered in a unified manner. These roles would be supported by a part time Technical Support Officer. It is proposed that the funding of these posts, which would only be required for the remaining 3 year duration of the Kirkham Futures programme, would be via the Future High Streets Fund that has been secured and so would have no direct cost implications to the council.
10. The existing team and proposed team structures are attached as appendix A.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11. The staffing proposals set out in this report would require additional resource with the hours of the service manager increasing from 29.5 to 37 per week at the same grade and the technical support officer increasing from 18.5 to 29.5 hrs per week also at the same grade. Based on current salary scales this, including salary on costs, would require an additional £12,154 for the remainder of the current financial year and £24,973 for the first full year of the posts in 2022/23 as set out in the table below.

Economic Development and Regeneration Manager

	2021/22*	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Existing Annual Salary incl on-costs (Total)	17,754	36,519	37,557	38,623
Proposed Salary incl on-costs (Total)	29,126	59,888	62,884	64,646
Additional Cost	11,372	23,369	25,327	26,023

Technical Support Officer

	2021/22*	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Existing Annual Salary incl on-costs (Total)	6,600	13,598	14,323	14,751
Proposed Salary incl on-costs (Total)	10,885	22,404	23,560	24,242
Additional Cost	4,285	8,806	9,237	9,491

Total Additional Cost	15,657	32,176	34,565	35,514
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*assuming remaining 6 months of the current financial year

CONCLUSIONS

12. It is considered that the revised staffing structure set out in appendix A will allow the Regeneration Team to deliver both the council's and the government's emerging economic development and sustainable development objectives and members are asked to support the proposals set out in this report.
13. If the proposals are supported the Economic Development and Regeneration Manager post will be advertised at the earliest opportunity incorporating external recruitment to ensure the widest reach of applicants for this key post and the hours of the existing Technical Support Officer will be increased with immediate effect.

IMPLICATIONS

Finance	The report seeks approval of an unfunded revenue budget increase of £15,657 for the current financial year (2021/22) and £32,176 in 2022/23 and subsequent years, together with inflationary increases in subsequent years. The next update of the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy will be updated to reflect these additional costs.
Legal	There are no implications
Community Safety	There are no implications
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no implications
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	There are no implications
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no implications

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Document name		Council office or web address

Appendix A – Existing and proposed Regeneration Team Structures