

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**HOUSING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING CABINET
MEMBER**

**APPOINTMENT OF PROGRAMME OFFICER FOR THE LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CORE STRATEGY**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the establishment of a fixed term post to act as Programme Officer for the Public Examination of the Core Strategy DPD of the North Lincolnshire Local Development Framework.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 North Lincolnshire Council are progressing quickly towards the production of the Publication version of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) as part of its Local Development Framework (LDF). The Core Strategy is the principal DPD of the LDF and will be the first DPD of the new North Lincolnshire LDF to be adopted.
- 2.2 To adopt a DPD it must first be subjected to independent Examination by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). The purpose of the Examination is to consider whether the DPD meets the requirements of the relevant legislation and is 'sound'. Soundness is tested by considering whether the DPD is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
- 2.3 As part of the independent Examination it is a requirement of PINS that the local planning authority appoint a Programme Officer whose role it is to organise and administer the cost effective and efficient running of the public Examination under the direction and guidance of the Inspector, who is like a judge in a court case. It is essential that for the duration of their appointment, the Programme Officer is seen as an impartial officer of the Examination process.
- 2.4 The Programme Officer is responsible for:
- managing the day to day arrangements of the Examination process before and during the period of the Examination;

- recording all documents submitted;
 - arranging for the inspection of sites by the Inspector; and
 - dealing with correspondence on his/her behalf to those who have made representations, including requests for and exchange of all statements.
- 2.5 It is the responsibility of the local planning authority to appoint the Programme Officer for a DPD Examination who should ideally be in place by Publication stage. But must be in place at Submission stage. PINS will not appoint an Inspector unless the Programme Officer is in place and they should remain employed until receipt by the local planning authority of the Inspectors final report.
- 2.6 A Programme Officer is therefore required to ensure compliance with the requirements of planning legislation, the requirements of PINS, and to ensure that the Core Strategy DPD progresses to Examination.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 The options for consideration are:

Option 1 – To appoint a fixed term post of LDF Programme Officer for a minimum of twelve months from commencement of post to ensure the Core Strategy progresses to public Examination.

Option 2 – To do nothing.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Option 1 is the preferred option as it will ensure that the Core Strategy public Examination is organised and administered in a cost effective and efficient manner.
- 4.2 The appointment of a Programme Officer is a mandatory requirement and is the responsibility of the local planning authority. The Programme Officer should ideally be in place by 'publication' stage, but must be in place at the stage of 'submission' to the Secretary of State. The publication stage of the Core Strategy is programmed for the end of November 2009 and therefore it is important that an appointment is made shortly.
- 4.3 PINS will not appoint an Inspector unless the Programme Officer is in place. This will mean that the Core Strategy will not proceed to the public Examination stage and subsequently the Core Strategy will not be adopted.
- 4.4 Option 2 is not a viable option as this would mean that we could not progress the Core Strategy DPD to full adoption.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial – The grading for the post is Grade 6 (£18,270 - £21,306). The salary and associated on-costs will be funded 100% by Housing and Planning Delivery Grant.

5.2 Staffing – The post reports directly to the Inspector (once they have been appointed) but prior to this the post will receive guidance from the Spatial Planning Manager. However the post holder will be expected to be seen to work independently from the Spatial Planning Team seeking advice and researching, when necessary, how and where to find necessary information, resolve issues, and deal with queries.

5.3 Property – There are no property implications.

5.4 IT – There are no IT implications.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 Statutory – Implementing the North Lincolnshire Local Development Framework in accordance with the requirements of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Planning Act 2008, the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.

6.2 Environmental – The preparation and implementation of the North Lincolnshire Local Development Framework will assist in the delivery of sustainable development.

6.3 Diversity – There are no direct diversity implications.

6.4 Sections 17 Crime & Disorder – There are no direct Section 17 implications.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 This post has evolved in consultation with PINs to ensure compliance with their requirements for the public Examination of DPDs.

7.2 A copy of the report has been sent to the Branch Secretary of Unison and to the full-time officials of the GMB Secretary and the TGWU. There have been no adverse comments.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That approval be given for the proposal to create the post of Programme Officer to facilitate the Examination of the Core Strategy DPD of the Local Development Framework on fixed term contract until receipt of the Inspector's Report.
- 8.2 That the report be submitted to the Corporate Services Cabinet Member for approval.

HEAD OF STRATEGIC REGENERATION, HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

Pittwood House
Ashby Road
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN16 1AB
Author: Chris Barwell
Date: 4 September 2009

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
the Planning Act 2008, the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.
the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.
Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks.
Planning Advisory Service Plan Making Manual.
Examining Development Plan Documents: Procedure Guidance
Examining Development Plan Documents: Soundness Guidance