

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**REGENERATION
CABINET MEMBER**

CREATION OF ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT POST

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1. To approve the creation of one new fixed term post to assist with the delivery of the Northern Lincolnshire Broadband Business Support Programme.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1. The Northern Lincolnshire Broadband Business Support Programme offers support to eligible Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) across Northern Lincolnshire. The aim is to maximise the benefits of broadband. The offer provides 12 hours of free support to SMEs.
- 2.2. The council successfully bid for £0.9m from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to fund the support. A team of five officers are currently delivering the programme.
- 2.3. The council has achieved savings by directly providing the programme. As a result, not all of the ERDF monies are likely to be spent. Officers have discussed various options for dealing with the underspend with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The DCLG allocates ERDF funds. The options are to reduce the funding and not claim the full amount, or use the surplus to deliver more business support by recruiting additional posts and awarding a free device for businesses that complete the business support programme.
- 2.4. An additional Business Adviser post was approved recently. The post will enable the programme to deliver 30 more assists. SMEs who complete the programme will also receive a free device.
- 2.5. The purpose of this paper is to ask the Cabinet Member to approve a further additional post of Administration Assistant (grade 3). The post will provide additional support to the delivery of the programme.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1. The recommendation is to approve an additional fixed term post of Administration Assistant for the period up to 31 March 2015.
- 3.2. The option is to not approve the post and, as a result, reduce the ERDF funding.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1. Appointing an Administration Assistant will free up the time of other team members, allowing them to provide further business support. Each officer currently spends time undertaking admin tasks, which this post could perform. This adversely impacts on the effectiveness of the team. Approving this additional post is therefore the preferred option

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

- 5.1. The cost of the post with on-costs for a 15 month period up to 31 March 2015 is £24,488. ERDF monies are available to fully meet this additional cost.
- 5.2. The post will be advertised as a secondment opportunity.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACTASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 6.1. Not applicable.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 7.1. Officers have consulted the DCLG on the proposal. They support the suggested approach.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1. That the Cabinet Member approves the establishment of an additional fixed term Administration Assistant post (grade 3) to support the Northern Lincolnshire Broadband Business Support Programme.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None