

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**REGENERATION
CABINET MEMBER**

CREATION OF LEADER PROGRAMME STAFFING

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1. To approve the creation of two new fixed term posts to deliver the Northern Lincolnshire RDPE LEADER Programme.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1. North Lincolnshire Council has previously managed and delivered the LEADER rural development programmes using funding from DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). The previous Programme ran from 2007-13. Additional Transitional Funding allowed for continuation of the programme during 2014/15.
- 2.2. A Local Development Strategy (LDS) was submitted to government in September 2014 to develop a further LEADER Programme. The LDS seeks to build on the success of the previous programme. It provides a strategy for growth across rural Northern Lincolnshire.
- 2.3. Our bid for LEADER funding was successful. The precise allocation will be confirmed in February 2015, but will be between £1.466m and £1.587m. The Programme itself will open for applications in April 2015.
- 2.4. The council is the Accountable Body for the local programme covering the rural areas of North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire. A Local Action Group (LAG) will oversee the allocation of funding. Staffing is now required to run the Programme. The LAG comprises representatives from the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- 2.5. The 2015-20 LEADER Programme will differ from previous years as Government tasked the LDS with becoming more business focussed. In support of this, Economic Growth and Job Creation are two new focuses for the Programme. To support this we have recruited new LAG members to ensure that the Group allocating the funds have the requisite skills to oversee and determine allocations.
- 2.6. The proposed structure for delivering the LEADER Programme for Northern Lincolnshire is to have a LEADER Coordinator (grade 9) and a part-time (0.4 FTE) LEADER Support Officer (grade 6). Both posts were subject to the council's job evaluation process, yielding the grades in question.

- 2.7. The role of the LEADER Coordinator is to facilitate and support the LAG in its strategic decision making. This will include providing the secretariat for the group; to develop and manage the LEADER Programme ensuring compliance with regulatory and audit requirements, and delivery against budget and outputs; to liaise with DEFRA, the LAG, Councils and other stakeholders regarding all aspects of the programme; and to undertake projects assessment and contracting procedures and manage the delivery of LAG procured projects.
- 2.8. The Support Officer will undertake project monitoring and evaluation; to provide administrative and financial support for the Programme and to oversee the Marketing and Communications Plan for the Programme.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1. To approve the two LEADER posts on a fixed term basis until 31 March 2020.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1. Appointing the two posts will enable a successful delivery, management and administration of the LEADER Programme. All areas receiving LEADER funding must have dedicated resource managing and supporting the programme.
- 4.2. Not appointing the LEADER posts would result in no resource to enable access to the £1.4m awarded to local projects.

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

- 5.1. The annual costs of providing the posts in question amount to £54,397 based upon salary mid-points and including 29.5% on-costs. As such, the total cost of the Programme staffing with on-costs for the two posts up to 31 March 2020 is £264,000. DEFRA funding will fully cover these costs.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 6.1. Not applicable.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 7.1. DEFRA were consulted on this proposal and support the recommendation.
- 7.2. Both the Greater Lincolnshire LEP and Humber LEP support the Local Development Strategy which the posts will deliver.

7.3. The relevant trade unions were consulted and raised no objections to the proposals.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. That the Cabinet Member approves the creation of the two LEADER posts.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

LEADER Local Development Strategy