

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CORPORATE SERVICES CABINET MEMBER

CREATION OF RECESSION SUPPORT OFFICER

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the establishment of a six month temporary post to support the impact of the recession in North Lincolnshire.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In broad terms the current national and international situation has been brought about by three key factors; the credit crunch, the collapse of the housing market and the steep increases in oil, food and energy/commodity prices.

Recent report towards the end of 2008 predicted the UK economy would enter a recession this year. (Definition "a decline in a country's real gross domestic product (GDP) or a negative real economic growth for two or more successive quarters of a year).

The UK economy shrank at the fastest rate since the early 80's in the final three months of 2008. With this being the second successive quarterly fall in GDP, it means that the UK is officially in recession.

Alongside the news that we are now in a recession, statistics show that unemployment has risen at fastest rate since the last recession.

- 2.2 Locally we have seen redundancies from within the following sectors:

Manufacturing
Engineering
Logistics
Retail

The number of people seeking JSA has risen to 5,079 an increase of 2.44% on April 2009. This is an increase of 121.6% on May 2008.

- 2.3 Given this national picture, it is appropriate for the council to consider it's position in terms of measures employed to mitigate some of the areas which will be most affected by the recession locally to North Lincolnshire. The council interacts in a wide range of areas, which would include both local residents who may be affected by the

economic downturn as well as local businesses who may also be struggling to cope.

- 2.4 It is clear that the council has little or no scope to influence the position of the national economy, but at a local and sub-regional level there may be some areas in which we can have a noticeable or significant impact for those individuals or businesses concerned. The council can also seek to influence national thinking on the role of local government generally in dealing with recession looking to ensure that local needs are recognised in national strategy.

The recession group has been working on a single response for the last three months and feel this post would add value to a one council approach to the recession. The posts main responsibilities would be:

- To co-ordinate within the council and with partner organisations supporting processes aimed at improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the North Lincolnshire area and its communities during the recession.
- Using an evidence based approach identify the impacts of the recession locally and develop and lead on the development on a plan of action for minimising negative impact.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The options for consideration are:

Option 1 – To create a six month temporary post to co-ordinate the council's work in relation to the recession. This will be initially offered as a secondment opportunity within the EMT service.

Option 2 – To do nothing.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Option 1 is the preferred option and will ensure that the co-ordinated response to the recession delivered across the Northern Lincolnshire sub-region effectively and efficiently.
- 4.2 Option 2 is not viable as existing resources cannot deliver a one council approach.

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

5.1 Financial

A job description has been created and graded. The grade of the post is 8 which is £18, 291.50 inc. on-costs for six months.

The post will be funded through the recession group funding.

5.2 Staffing

The post will report directly to the Recession Group for workload and the Strategy Development Manager will manage the post on a day to day basis in EMT.

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

6.1 Diversity

N/A

7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 A copy of the report has been sent to the Branch Secretary of Unison and to the full-time officials of the GMB Branch Secretary and the TGWU, and positive feedback was received.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1. That Corporate Services Cabinet Member approves the proposal to create the post of Recession Support Officer.

HEAD OF STRATEGIC REGENERATION, HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

None