

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CORPORATE SERVICES CABINET MEMBER

RURAL RENAISSANCE TEAM

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the establishment of the Rural Renaissance Team to deliver the Rural Renaissance Programme and the development and implementation of individual schemes.
- 1.2 That the posts be established initially on a fixed term contract till March 2011 and extended to up to five years subject to external funding being secured.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 A Rural Renaissance Manager post was established in 2007 to deliver the former Isle of Axholme Renaissance Programme and work with the former Brigg Market Town Initiative.
- 2.2 Despite a national recruitment campaign the council was unable to recruit to this post. An attempt was made to appoint through a consultant/agency but this also proved unsuccessful. This has placed significant pressure on existing staff to deliver the support to the renaissance partnerships and implementation of individual schemes and can no longer be sustained.
- 2.3 A review of the role has been undertaken and there are two clear functions – the implementation of capital schemes (requiring high level technical skills) and a secretariat/support role (to develop the partnerships and identify and develop new initiatives). The indication is that this was a considerable factor in the unsuccessful recruitment to the post. The role was so diverse it required an individual that had high level skills to undertake the more technical requirements yet would also undertake administration and organisational tasks. The review also indicated that the salary for the post was at the lower end of the scale when comparing with similar roles across the country.
- 2.4 The post was 100% funded externally through Yorkshire Forward's Rural Renaissance Programme. The council is renegotiating with Yorkshire Forward and it has been agreed to establish a Rural Renaissance Team to ensure that we are able to recruit two individuals with the appropriate and necessary skills to undertake both the

technical and support elements of the roles to deliver capital schemes arising from the Rural Renaissance Programme.

- 2.5 It is proposed to establish a part-time (18 hours) Rural Renaissance Implementation Manager post on a Grade 10 (£35,079-£37,665 pro rata) and a full-time Rural Renaissance Support Officer (37 hours) on a Grade 7 (£22,001-£26,016).
- 2.6 The Crowle Market Place Scheme is the flagship project being delivered as part of the Rural Renaissance Programme. It is now at a critical stage in terms of securing funding and programme planning for physical delivery of the scheme. A dedicated implementation post would ensure the scheme is delivered within the parameters of the external funding conditions. The scheme value is in excess of £4m and will be at risk without dedicated officer support to implement the scheme.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The options for consideration are:

Option 1 – To create two fixed term posts to create a Rural Renaissance Team - an Implementation Manager to deliver the technical aspects and physical implementation of capital schemes and a Support Officer to support and advise the partnerships and identify and develop new projects. These will initially be offered on a fixed term contract till March 2011 with a view to extending once confirmation of extended funding is obtained (up to March 2015).

Option 2 – To extend the existing fixed term post of Rural Renaissance Manager on the existing job description.

Option 3 – To do nothing.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Option 1 will ensure that external funding is secured and the current Crowle Market Place Development Scheme is implemented. The support role will ensure that a co-ordinated and effective programme of work is developed for the Rural Renaissance Programme and individual schemes are progressed.
- 4.2 Option 2 would not fully deliver the outcomes required under the funding requirements of Yorkshire Forward. It is unlikely that we would be able to recruit as experienced previously and there is no capacity within existing staffing resources to progress the necessary work within the timescales of the funding conditions.
- 4.3 Option 3 - is not viable as existing resources cannot deliver the Crowle Market Place scheme or provide the support to develop the Rural Renaissance Programme work programme and no further schemes will come forward.

4.4 Option 1 is the only option that will ensure the Programme is developed and delivered to meet the requirements of the funding conditions.

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

5.1 Financial

Job descriptions have been created and graded through the job evaluation process. The part-time Implementation post is a grade 10 and costs equate to £22,914.36 (based on 18 hours per week including on-costs). The full time Support post is a grade 7 – total costs £31,091.01 (including on-costs).

The posts will be externally funded but will require match funding through in-kind and project development support that will be met from within existing Strategic Regeneration resources.

5.2 Staffing

The implementation post will report directly to the Head of Spatial Planning, Strategic Housing and Area Renaissance on a day-to-day basis in the same way as the former Rural Renaissance Manager post. The support officer will report to the implementation post and the Head of Spatial Planning, Strategic Housing and Area Renaissance in their absence.

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

6.1 Diversity

The Rural Renaissance Team will work with the local partnerships to deliver schemes that will ensure local communities are involved, are accessible to all and will reduce inequalities in rural locations.

6.2 Section 17

Impact assessments will be undertaken on any scheme developed to ensure it takes account of the implications and responsibilities of Section 17.

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. There have been no adverse comments.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. That Corporate Services Cabinet Member approves the proposal to create the Rural Renaissance Team.

- 8.2. That the two roles of Rural Renaissance Implementation Manager and Rural Renaissance Support Officer be established initially on a fixed term contract till March 2011 and extended subject to external funding being secured.

HEAD OF STRATEGIC REGENERATION, HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None