

**REPORT FROM: HOUSING, HEALTH AND ENGINEERING SERVICES
MANAGER**

TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATE: 24th JUNE, 2021

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REGENERATION STAFFING

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval to increase the Regeneration staffing resource.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to agree that two additional permanent posts of Regeneration Manager and Programme Monitoring Officer be appointed, subject to approval of the Nelson Town Investment Plan.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To enable continuing delivery of the Regeneration function.

ISSUE

1. The Regeneration function sits within Housing, Health & Engineering Services. The function includes:
 - Funding Bids e.g. Nelson Towns Fund, Homes England, Lancashire LEP
 - PEARL Joint Venture liaison and project development
 - Bringing forward Council owned sites for development
 - Land Assembly, including Compulsory Purchase Orders
 - Housing and economic project delivery
 - Management of funding programmes
 - Production of masterplans, working jointly with Economic Development
2. There is currently only one member of staff who is dedicated to regeneration, a Senior Regeneration Officer (30 hours per week). The Service Manager spends around 75% of

her time on this work area. Staff from Engineering, Planning, Economic Development, Estates, Legal and Finance also provide input when required, in particular on project development and delivery.

3. We also use consultants, for a time limited period, to bring in a range of specialist expertise not available within the Council e.g. to develop economic cases for funding bids, or to produce masterplans. There will always be a need for this specific support but due to the limited staffing resources we have had to increasingly rely on consultants to provide additional capacity. This is costly and is not appropriate for ongoing project and programme management where there is a need to build knowledge within the Council.
4. The work that has recently been undertaken on putting together a £29m Town Investment Plan (TIP) for Nelson, to secure Towns Fund, required the Senior Regeneration Officer to be almost exclusively dedicated to this work area for several weeks, even with consultants employed to produce the TIP. Subject to the TIP being approved this will require significant dedicated resources for project development and delivery, programme management, reporting to the Nelson Town Deal Board and this Committee and providing monitoring and evaluation information to MHCLG who oversee the funding.
5. We have the opportunity to bid for funding of upto £25m of Levelling Up Fund and should this be successful this will also need dedicated staff resources to manage and implement the programme. We anticipate that this will need similar skills to those required for Nelson Town Deal.
6. We also have ongoing major projects at Further Clough Head and Lomeshaye which have obtained external funding. These will need management and monitoring for several years to meet the requirements of funders. A report submitted to the last meeting of the Committee set out the existing PEARL projects which are underway and require Regeneration input.
7. A report elsewhere on the Agenda sets out proposals for a further 3 Masterplans to be developed over the coming year and these will fall within the remit of Regeneration.
8. There is a requirement to bolster the Regeneration function in order to continue to manage and deliver all these key initiatives, as well as respond to future bidding opportunities. An additional two posts are requested, to create a Regeneration Team.

Post	New/Existing	Grade
Regeneration Manager	New	PO 6 - 9 (indicative and subject to grading)
Senior Regeneration Officer	Existing	PO5 - 8
Programme Monitoring Officer	New	Scale 4

9. Due to problems with recruiting appropriately qualified and experienced staff it is proposed that the new posts be permanent. This is expected to be an increase in the region of £82k

per year for salary, pension and NI. There will also be some additional costs such as IT provision.

10. For 2021/2 this additional cost can be funding through Capacity Funding that has been provided to the Council to support the development of the Future High Streets and Towns Fund bids. We have recently been successful in securing a further £70k of Capacity Funding and there is some underspend on the previous funding.
11. As a priority area for Levelling Up Fund we will be awarded a flat £125,000 of capacity funding. This capacity funding will be provided with the primary intention of supporting the relevant local authorities to develop their bids for later rounds of the Fund. It is expected that local authorities will not be able to use the capacity funding in time to support bids for the first round and that it will instead support the development of proposals for later bidding rounds
12. Funding has also been built into each of the projects within the Town Investment Plan for programme management. This would amount to approximately £122k per year until March 2026 (including some resources to cover input from Finance and Communications). At this stage we do not know if the full bid will be successful but even with a reduced amount it is expected that the additional costs for the proposed staff could be covered. We will also look at other opportunities within future funding bids to support staff costs.
13. The Committee are asked to agree to the additional Regeneration staffing resources. No appointment will be made in advance of knowing the outcome of the Towns Fund bid but an approval from Committee at this meeting will allow preparatory work to be undertaken to allow for an early appointment.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: Increasing Regeneration staffing resources will assist with delivery of the Strategic Plan

Financial: As set out in the report. The posts would be funded using external funding.

Legal: None directly arising from this report

Risk Management: None directly arising from this report

Health and Safety: None directly arising from this report

Sustainability: None directly arising from this report

Community Safety: None directly arising from this report

Equality and Diversity: None directly arising from this report

APPENDICES

None

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None