

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

8 July 2014

SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Contact Officer: Simon Eden Tel No: 01962 848313

RECENT REFERENCES:

None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City Council has an ambitious programme of development planned, to deliver improvements for local communities and generate income to support the provision of services. To deliver that programme requires investment in staff with the skills and knowledge to drive that programme forward. This report proposes the Council create a new role of City Development Manager, who will support the Head of Estates in bringing forward sites for development.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That approval be given to the creation of a new role of City Development Manager (Scale 7 subject to job evaluation), reporting to the Head of Estates.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The City Council has an ambitious programme of development over the next few years. Some projects, such as Silver Hill, the proposed Doctor's Surgery on Upper Brook Street or proposed development at the Carfax site, are already being progressed. Others, notably the old Depot Site at Bar End, the Cattle Market Site, the proposed business incubation space and the City Offices, are likely to come forward soon. There is much potential for more effective use of our Estate to realise its income potential, enhance local facilities or achieve our priority outcomes.
- 1.2 These major developments help us achieve a range of objectives, whether supporting service provision, encouraging the local economy or earning income to assist in protecting services to the public as austerity continues to bite. However, taking any of them forward is complex, requiring public consultation, site master planning, land assembly and financial evaluation, as well as subsequent project management skills.
- 1.3 The biggest single constraint in the Council is capacity – lack of staff and skills to progress matters as fast as we would like. That is an issue across Teams. In the case of development projects, the single biggest pressure is on the Estates Team, although there are also heavy demands placed on others, and in particular Finance and Legal Teams. This report considers augmenting the Estates Team to help provide the capacity necessary to deliver these projects in a timely manner.

2 City Development Manager

- 2.1 Many other Councils with major programmes of development of regeneration recruit to specialist roles who take a lead responsibility in bringing forward sites for development. Usually these individuals come from a planning background, and bring with them broader skills ranging from community planning to valuation. Crucially, they work closely with Estates professionals to co-ordinate and manage development projects and programmes.
- 2.2 Such a role in Winchester, reporting to the Head of Estates but working across all relevant teams, would bring much needed resource and additional focus to our development programme. That in turn would allow the financial

and other benefits of projects to be realised earlier, thus delivering against our Community Strategy and supporting the budget through increased income.

- 2.3 This role will be financed from existing Estates budgets, and if necessary through budget Virement from underspend elsewhere in the Council. That is consistent with the more flexible approach we have taken to managing spending within the overall paybill set by Council in recent years. Members will know our practice is to seek to recruit internally before public advertisement, and it may well be that the role will be filled in that way.
- 2.4 There are other pressures on capacity to support development projects elsewhere in the Council, notably in the Finance and Legal teams. The former are currently under consideration as part of a wider review of the Finance function, and steps have already been taken to enhance capacity in the Legal team. However, CMT will continue to keep capacity in this area and elsewhere under review.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

3 COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

- 3.1 This role will assist in bringing forward major development projects to assist in achieving Community Strategy objectives and Portfolio Plan priorities, including the generation of income to support services.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 4.1 No additional resources are requested. The cost of this proposed post, estimated at c£50k per annum including on-costs (Scale 7 mid-point subject to job evaluation) will be met from existing budgets in the Estates Team and, if necessary, budget Virement from other areas. Those will be agreed with the Leader after consulting the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Organisational Development.
- 4.2 There will be no increase in the Establishment numbers in respect of this post, which will be contained within existing approved numbers.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 5.1 The Council faces a number of risks if major development projects are delayed or not delivered, or if opportunities for enhancing the estate are not taken. Importantly, we risk not achieving priorities set out in Portfolio Plans, including the generation of income from our estate to support services to the public.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

APPENDICES: None