

Decision under Delegated Powers

Request to create a new Principal Planning Officer post

Officer Requesting Decision

Group Leader Plans Policies and Place Making

Officer Making the Decision

Head of Planning and Regeneration

Recommendation

1. To increase the hours of post P212 Principal Planning Officer, PO2, from 37 hours per week to 59.5 hours per week, with effect from 1st April 2016.

Reason

1. To ensure staff capacity to enable the Council's appropriate service delivery at a time of significant growth proposals, the implementation of the Core Strategy and preparation of new planning policy documents.

Authority for the Decision

Under Section 8 of the Council's Constitution the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) has delegated authority to agree changes to the establishment, within budget and without major service or policy implications, affecting no more than five posts (irrespective of their post number) in any single case (item 6 on page 8-4 of the Constitution). This has been further delegated to Heads of Service in certain situations (DD28 11/12) which this decision falls within.

Decision and Date

Background

Post 212 is a 1FTE equivalent post with the current postholder contracted for 22.5 hours, leaving 14.5 hours vacant. The implementation of the Core Strategy and preparation of further planning policy documentation to deliver and manage growth to Charnwood is a significant task for the Council sitting at the heart of the Corporate Plan.

Experience suggests that a competitive recruitment process is unlikely to secure appropriately qualified and experienced candidates for the 14.5 hours which are vacant under Post P212.

Council approved the budget for 22.5 hours for a Principal Planning Officer (at scp39) to assist in the provision of pre-application advice in the service at its meeting on 29th February 2016 (minute 84.2 15/16 refers). The intention is to combine that with existing available hours from Post P212 and undertake a competitive recruitment exercise to secure a 1FTE Principal Planning Officer within the Plans Policies and Place Making Group.

The result of this would be that the available resource for P212 would amount to 59.5 hours a week (or 1.6FTE) and in addition to the current post holder (0.6FTE) there would be an opportunity to recruit an additional 1FTE officer to Post P212 at grade PO2.

Having access to Principal level professional resources within the Plans, Policies and Place Making Group is essential, particularly so during the initial implementation of the statutory development plan, preparation of further planning policy documents and at a time when there is significant work to be undertaken on the delivery of strategic growth proposals as part of the Council's development team approach. Each of the Principal Planning Officers provides strategic input to the Council's 5 strategic growth sites.

Financial Implications

There are 14.5 hours currently vacant under post P212 equating to £20,400 a year in the 2016/17 budget.

An additional 22.5 hours at scp39 (base of PO2) was approved by Council on 29th February and amounting to £28,200.

Taken together there is £48,600 available, sufficient budget to provide for a full time Principal Planning Officer at scp39.

Human Resources

Anna Cairns (9/3/16)

The normal recruitment process should be followed when recruiting to this new post.

Risk Management

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
That the Council will not be able to deliver an	Possible	Moderate	Consider access to agency workers at time of resource stress

