



Agenda Item: 5

**REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR POLICY, PLANNING AND
CORPORATE SERVICES**

**STAFFING PROPOSALS TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH AND
DEVELOP THE TOURISM POTENTIAL IN THE COUNTY**

Purpose of the Report

1. This report seeks approval for additional staffing resources in the council's Economic Development and Conservation Services to support the Council's ambitions to promote economic growth and develop tourism potential in the county.

Information and Advice

2. In the context of a difficult economic climate both nationally and globally and a period of austerity which is likely to continue for some time many of the issues facing the County's economy appear challenging. However there are also many opportunities which if exploited, may drive positive economic change.
3. The Council has a broad role to play in relation to supporting economic growth in the county including being a champion, campaigner, facilitator, enabler and coordinator as well as directly providing and commissioning services.
4. The recent LGA Peer Challenge Review recommends that the council should "Ensure sufficient focus and capacity in order to deliver the stated priority of 'economic development and growth' and take advantage of all opportunities to promote economic development".
5. The current Economic Development Service is primarily a strategic service working with businesses, business organisations and public sector partners to promote economic growth in the county however it also directly manages a number of economic development projects including the Broadband Project, Innovation Centres and Work Clubs. The service currently comprises 5.5 (fte) members of staff with a total budget of £800,000.
6. The Economic Development service work programme was considered by Economic Development Committee in June 2012 and provides details of the three areas Business and Prosperity; Employment and Skills; and Leadership the service focuses upon.

7. Additional resource is required to deliver on both this work programme and other emerging priorities around the Growth Plan, external funding and tourism which are outlined below.
8. **Growth Plan** - A key priority for the service is to lead and facilitate with partners the development and implementation of a Growth Plan for Nottinghamshire. Both businesses and public sector partners have requested that a collective, long-term and aspirational response and priorities for economic growth in the county is developed. The County Council has been asked by partners to give strategic leadership and direction to this work and a Nottinghamshire Growth Plan has now been produced and is out for consultation with businesses and stakeholders. The Growth Plan will enable Nottinghamshire's economic priorities to be articulated at a national level with Government; at a sub-regional level with the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership; enable strategic interventions at a County level and provide a context for activity at more local levels. The County Council will subsequently develop its own corporate Economic Development Strategy which will effectively be the Council's response to the Growth Plan. Additional capacity will be required to drive forward this work.
9. **External Funding** – the need to secure external funding to support the council's and partners aspirations for economic growth has become even more important in recent years. External funding is now more limited for economic development and therefore the quality of the proposals/bids submitted to attract this funding are key to success. In addition, informing services within the council of sources of external funding and providing expertise in drafting funding bids is a service Economic Development has the expertise to provide if additional resources were available to support other existing work.
10. **Heritage Tourism** - A priority for the council is the development of the county's tourism offer. Tourism and the visitor economy is an important sector of the Nottinghamshire economy worth an estimated £0.91 billion to the County (source: Nottinghamshire STEAM Report 2010). Nottinghamshire has huge potential for developing heritage based tourism working with partners, and focussing on a number of key themes as outlined below. Proposals for this work will be developed with Experience Nottinghamshire to ensure economies of scale and sharing of expertise:
 - **Wartime Heritage** incorporating War of the Roses, Civil War, war memorials, airfields, munitions etc but in particular the county's role in the **Civil Wars** of the 17th century. This would involve working in partnership with Newark and Sherwood District Council and Experience Nottinghamshire to develop a national Civil War Centre in the Magnus Buildings in Newark and a wider heritage trail in Newark and other parts of the county showing unique artefacts and collections that relate to civil war. Our emphasis would be on ensuring that a tourism offer is developed that provides a strong visitor experience attracting a national as well as local market and that has tourism attractions that are viable.
 - **Social Heritage** tourism in particular relating to the **Pilgrim Fathers** who started their epic journey to the new world from Nottinghamshire in the early

1600's. However there is currently a limited Pilgrim Fathers offer in North Nottinghamshire and work is required with partners to improve this. The conservation service would have an important role to play in identifying the heritage artefacts and collections within the county (and wider) relating to this and working with partners to identify how the tourism potential of these could be developed.

- **Sherwood Forest Regional Park** – there are currently aspirations to develop a Landscape Partnership project with a central theme of sustainable tourism in the wider Forest (beyond the Visitor Centre). It is anticipated that an application will be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund early in 2013. There is also the potential for a Landscape Partnership project in the Idle Valley, which would provide an opportunity for developing connections to the Pilgrim Fathers.

Resource Proposals

11. It is proposed that the following posts are established to enable the Economic Development and Conservation Services to address the priorities outlined above.

- a. A Senior Economic Development Officer to support the development of the Growth Plan, in particular the Business Competitiveness theme, and positive senior-level engagement with the business community
- b. An additional Economic Development Officer post to provide project development and project management capacity to economic development and tourism projects
- c. A specialist heritage officer, on a two year fixed term contract, to identify the tourism heritage opportunities offered by Pilgrim Fathers and Civil War. (The current conservation and heritage service team is focused entirely on an internal specialist advisory role meaning that any proactive work can only happen on an ad hoc basis or where additional funding is provided).

12. The cost of these additional posts, including on-costs would be £137,327 per annum for the next two years reducing to £96,327 per annum after this.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

13. Economic growth and the development of the county's tourism offer are key priorities of the council and the additional staffing resources proposed will enable these priorities to be more effectively supported.

Statutory and Policy Implications

14. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

15. There are no material implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service.
16. The posts have been evaluated, established and will be appointed to in line with the County Council's agreed policies and procedures. The recognised Trades Union have been consulted on the establishment of this post.

RECOMMENDATION/S

17. It is recommended that:
- a. The posts of Senior Economic Development Officer at Band D (£35,430 - £39,855) and Economic Development Officer at Band C (£32,800 - £37,206) are established on a permanent basis from 1st January 2013.
 - b. The post of Heritage Officer at Band B (£28,636 – £32,800) is established on a two year fixed term contract with effect from 1st January 2013.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact: Celia Morris, Group Manager – Corporate Strategy, Tel: 0115 9772043

Constitutional Comments ([KK 24/10/12])

18. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Policy Committee.

Financial Comments (MA 24/10/12)

19. The costs in the current financial year, assuming a start date of 1st January 2013, are estimated at £34,000, and will be subject to a contingency allocation. The full year costs, £138,000 at top of grade including oncosts, will be considered as part of the 2013/14 budget process.

HR Comments (MS 5/11/12)

20. The HR implications are contained within the body of the report. The posts will be recruited to in line with the County Council's agreed policies and procedures.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Economic Development service work programme 2011/12
Nottinghamshire STEAM Report 2010

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All