

**8 March 2018****Agenda Item: 14****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE****ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW POST WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT  
MANAGEMENT TEAM****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the recruitment of a new post of Planning and Monitoring and Enforcement Officer for a temporary two year period.

**Information**

2. Nottinghamshire County Council has been subject to planning applications for shale gas exploration at two sites in the county: at Misson, and between Barnby Moor and Retford. Both applications were granted planning permission and are now in the process of being developed with site construction works having now commenced at both sites. With these two sites now becoming operational, it is evident already that the workload required to monitor these sites is considerable, largely on account of the huge public interest in them and the need therefore to monitor the sites and deal with all associated correspondence with additional care and detail. This is placing significant pressures on Monitoring and Enforcement Officers to the detriment of other aspects of their workload, in particular processing formal enforcement action on a number of sites across the county which have been subject to unauthorised development, in particular unauthorised waste disposal.
3. Given the continued submission of planning applications to the Development Management team, a number of which are themselves complex and high profile, there are insufficient resources within the team to divert additional resources to the monitoring and enforcement side of the team's work. It is therefore considered that the best way to deal with this increased workload is to recruit a Grade 4 Planning and Monitoring and Enforcement Officer to a temporary two year post. There are already two such posts in the Development Management Team, also at Grade 4, both held by officers beginning a career in planning. The nature and scope of the roles and job descriptions allows the post holders to carry out a variety of roles, such as dealing with less controversial planning applications and monitoring sites for which the County Council has granted planning permission. This provides flexibility in the team to deal with peaks in particular workloads and providing the post holders with a wide range of work experiences.

4. At present, the two post holders' workloads are predominately based around monitoring development the County Council has granted planning permission for, albeit less complex work such as schools development and the smaller minerals and waste operations in the county. In addition to this, the post holders are also dealing with a small number of relatively minor planning applications which is giving them valuable experience of the planning application process.
5. It is envisaged that this additional Grade 4 post would also work predominately on monitoring sites granted planning permission and would allow the two present post holders the opportunity to deal with some more complex monitoring work, given the experience they have already gained. Taking on this more complex from more senior officers (one Senior Monitoring and Enforcement Officer and one Senior Practitioner – Monitoring and Enforcement) would in turn allow them to deal with the most sensitive cases, including the monitoring of shale gas developments at Misson and Tinker Lane in addition to some ongoing enforcement cases relating to unauthorised development in the county, primarily regarding unauthorised waste disposal at a number of sites across the county.
6. In recognition of the anticipated increase in workload for planning authorities dealing with shale gas applications, the Government has, on a number of occasions, made grants (the 'Shale Wealth Fund') available to support the timely determination of these applications and to support the post-decision monitoring of sites once they are operational. NCC has been successful in bidding for Government grants and some of the monies received have already been used to engage specialist consultants during the planning application process and seeking counsel advice and support on committee reports and committee meetings. However, the Development Management Team continues to hold around £195,000 of shale wealth funds, which are managed in a separate budget to the budget of the Development Management Team, and it is considered appropriate to use some of these funds to support the post-decision monitoring of the two shale gas sites. It can therefore be confirmed that funding for the post is not required from corporate budgets.
7. The decision to recruit to a two year temporary post reflects the anticipated timescales for the completion of the exploratory borehole developments granted planning permission. However, both developments could be subject to delays in the future and the length of the temporary post could need reviewing in light of any such changes. It is considered that the remaining shale wealth fund would provide for an extension to the temporary post, should this be required.

### **Other Options Considered**

8. As highlighted above, an alternative option to dealing with this increased monitoring and enforcement workload would be to direct some of this work to planning officers. However, the number and complexity of planning applications being dealt with at the present time could result in Government monitored targets for determining planning applications with statutory timescales (or agreed extensions in time) being compromised. From the latest available data, up to the year ending September 2017, the County Council dealt with 94% of applications within the statutory timescale, or an agreed extension in time, significantly above the target of 60%.

## **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

9. The establishment of this additional temporary post would allow the Development Management Team to continue to determine planning applications in a timely manner whilst also having sufficient resources available to monitor sites and also deal with ongoing enforcement issues.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

10. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

11. The post would be advertised at NJE Grade 4 which presently has a pay scale between £18,746 to £21,268. The total costs for the two year period including on costs would be up to £55,596 which will be funded from the Shale Wealth Fund grant of which there is a current balance remaining of £195,000.

## **Human Resources Implications**

12. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. The posts will be recruited to in accordance with the agreed Vacancy Control Process.

## **Implications for Sustainability and the Environment**

13. Increased resources in the Development Management team would allow for increased monitoring and enforcement of minerals, waste and County Council development, to the benefit of the environment of the county.
14. There are no crime and disorder; data protection and information governance; Human Rights; NHS constitution; public sector equality duty; smarter working; safeguarding of children and adults at risk; or service use implications.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) It is RECOMMENDED that approval be given to the establishment of a Planning and Monitoring and Enforcement Officer (Grade 4) for a temporary two year period.

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**Constitutional Comments [KK 22/2/2018]**

15. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Communities and Place Committee.

**Financial Comments [CSB 22/02/2018]**

16. The financial Implications are set out in paragraph 11 of the report.

**HR Comments [JP 26/02/18]**

17. The temporary fixed term post noted in the report will be recruited to in accordance with the Authority's relevant policies and procedures.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

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.

- None

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All