

 Employment Committee 13 June 2018		Agenda Item No. 7
Title	Administration Officer Visiting Team	
For further information about this report please contact	Mike Snow 01926 456800 David Leech 01926 456052	
Wards of the District directly affected	N/A	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A	
Background Papers	N/A	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	N/A
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	N/A

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	30/05/18	Andy Jones
Head of Service	30/05/18	Mike Snow
CMT	30/05/18	
Section 151 Officer	30/05/18	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	30/05/18	Andy Jones
Finance	30/05/18	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	30/05/18	Peter Whiting
Consultation & Community Engagement		
N/A		
Final Decision?		Yes/No
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **Summary**

1.1 In view of the huge increase in new domestic and commercial property within the District (both currently and as set out in the Local Plan) and the associated responsibilities in ensuring we have these properties accounted for, banded/rated and billed, it is proposed to increase the establishment by ½ a post (Band G) in order to create a Full Time Administration Officer for the Revenues Visiting Team.

2. **Recommendation**

2.1 That the Employment Committee agree to increase the Finance establishment by ½ a permanent post to create a Full Time Administration Officer for the Revenues Visiting Team with immediate effect.

3. **Reasons for the Recommendation**

3.1 In recent years there has been a substantial increase in the volume of new property being built within the District and this is only going to continue with the Local Plan outlining a further 17,000 domestic properties to be built over the next 11 years. Each new property will require:-

- The new property being set up on the Revenues billing system.
- Visits or calls/correspondence with the builders to establish when the property build has been completed.
- Production of the Billing Authority Report to the VOA, complying with their new stringent submission standards.
- Banding to be applied once received from VOA
- Liability information to be obtained and added to account in order for Council Tax demand to be issued.

This large increase in workload through the increased property build will place greater demand and pressure on the visiting team and therefore generates the need for greater administrative support

3.2 The increase in banded domestic properties is shown by the following statistics:-

Date	Domestic Properties	Increase
01/04/2012	60,369	
01/04/2013	60,573	204
01/04/2014	60,798	225
01/04/2015	61,119	321
01/04/2016	61,742	623
01/04/2017	62,523	781
01/04/2018	63,666	1,143

3.3 Unreported new properties can have a huge negative financial impact on the Council with potential losses of New Homes Bonus, Council Tax income,

Business Rates income and opportunities that arise from Business Rates retention. Delayed billing presents payment issues for customers and can lead to an adverse effect on the collection rate

- 3.4 There is currently a 0.5FTE vacant post with appropriate funding however for the reasons stated we require to make this a full time post.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

The Council’s FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council’s FFF Strategy.

FFF Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
Impacts of Proposal		
No impact	No impact	No impact
Internal		
Effective Staff	Maintain or Improve Services	Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers’ needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money
Impacts of Proposal		

<p><i>The proposals help to deliver the intended outcomes as described above.</i></p>	<p><i>The proposals will ensure that sufficient resource is in place to continue to deliver ongoing services and implement changes required as a result of both external and internal influences.</i></p>	<p><i>Business Rates, Council Tax and Benefits subsidy are important income streams for the Council. The proposals will help in ensuring these income streams are maximised and reduce the potential financial risks to the Council.</i></p>
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4.2 Supporting Strategies

There are no relevant supporting strategies for the proposals within the report however the redesign is part of the Service Area Plan for Finance.

4.3 Changes to Existing Policies

4.4 There are no changes to existing policy

4.3 Impact Assessments – There is no requirement to carry out an impact assessment for these proposals.

5. Budgetary Framework

5.1 Funding exists for 0.5 FTE Administration Officer for the Revenues Visiting Team of £12,650. Within the Revenues salary budget, there is £9,350 available towards the additional 0.5 FTE. This leaves a balance of £3,300 for which Executive approval will be required for this cost to be included in the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

6. Risks

6.1 The delay in setting up and reporting new properties to the VOA has the following risk implications:-

- Reputational risk – the service provided to customers is not at a suitable standard. A delay in getting a bill to a customer is likely to cause complaints which need to be investigated.
- Financial risk – processing delays will result in delayed bills and collection of sums due. In addition to delays in collection, it is also likely to lead to more difficulty in terms of recovery and potentially increased write-offs. There are also implications of missed New Homes Bonus.
- Staff facing a constant, often growing backlog, staff will invariably feel demoralised. This in turn may have implications for sickness, staff turnover and recruitment.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1 If the new post is not agreed, it is likely that the backlog in setting up new properties will get worse as the number of properties in the District increase, leading to a number of the risks mentioned above.