

 <b>Employment Committee – 20<sup>th</sup></b> <b>March 2019</b>		<b>Agenda Item No. 8</b>
<b>Title</b>	New and Extended posts in Development Services	
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	David Barber <a href="mailto:Dave.barber@warwickdc.gov.uk">Dave.barber@warwickdc.gov.uk</a> 01926 456065	
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	All	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?</b>	No	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	N/A	
<b>Background Papers</b>	Report – Employment Committee March 2018	

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

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	7/3/19	Bill Hunt
Head of Service	6/3/19	Dave Barber
CMT	7/3/19	Chris Elliott/Bill Hunt/Andy Jones
Section 151 Officer	7/3/19	Mike Snow
HR	7/3/19	Elaine Priestley
Finance	7/3/19	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	7/3/19	Cllr Alan Rhead
Consultation & Community Engagement		
N/A		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

## 1. **Summary**

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposals to utilise the Planning Investment Reserve to introduce two new posts within Development Services and to make an existing part time post permanent.
- 1.2 It also recommends that a vacant Assistant Building Control Officer post is filled by a part-time Senior Building Control Officer for a further period of two years.

## 2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the existing part-time (0.73fte) enforcement officer post within Development services be made full time on a permanent basis
- 2.2 That following new posts be established within Development Services:
  - a full time Planning Assistant post be established within the Development Services
  - a full time Senior Planner post be established within the Development Services
- 2.3 That an existing Assistant Building Control Officer post that is currently vacant be established as a part-time (0.6fte) Senior Building Control Officer for a further two years until 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 (this is a continuation of an arrangement that has been in place for year)

## 3. **Reasons for the Recommendation**

- 3.1 In January 2018, the Government introduced new regulations to increase Planning Fees by 20%. The guidance associated with this suggested that the additional funds arising from the fees increase should be spent "to support the delivery of an effective planning system". A report agreed by the Executive on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017 agreed that budget apportionments from the planning fees increase should be determined by the Section 151 officer in consultation with the Senior Management Team.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018, the Employment Committee agreed that a number of new posts be established in Development Services and Health & Community Protection (in addition to a post already established in Neighbourhood Services) to be funded from the increase in planning fees. These posts have since been recruited to and have increased the capacity of the services involved.
- 3.3 Since that time, the workload involved with dealing with planning applications has continued at a high level and as a result, planning fee income has exceeded the cautious assumptions made in early 2018. This has meant that the existing and forecast balance within the Planning Investment Reserve (the reserve which is funded by the 20% increase in planning fees) is higher than had been assumed when the proposals were brought forward in March 2018. The Section 151 Officer, in consultation with SMT (meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019) has therefore agreed that funding from the reserve can be allocated to a number of posts as follows:
  - a) two new posts in Development Management to provide additional capacity to deal with the increased workload for both householder and more complex planning applications. Specifically, it is recommended that a full time Planning Assistant post is established and a full time Senior Planner established.

- b) an increase in hours of an existing Enforcement Officer post from 0.73FTE to full-time to provide additional capacity and resilience to deal with the continuing high levels of demand within the planning enforcement team.

3.4 This report seeks to establish these posts.

3.5 Separately from the Planning Investment Reserve, this report seeks agreement to establish a part-time (0.6fte) Senior Building Control Officer post for a further period of two years. This post was established on a temporary one-year basis in 2018 under delegated powers. It replaced a vacant full-time Assistant Building Control Officer post. Since being established it has been filled by an experienced officer who has provided capacity to deal with more complex building control cases at a time when the service has had difficulty in recruiting to full-time Senior Building Control Officers. The existing postholder is keen to continue with the arrangement and for these reasons it is proposed to extend the current arrangement for a period of two more years until 1st July 2021.

#### 4. Policy Framework

##### 4.1 Fit for the Future:

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
<b>External</b>		
<b>Health, Homes, Communities</b>	<b>Green, Clean, Safe</b>	<b>Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment</b>
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Improved 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 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
<b>Impacts of Proposal</b>		
The new posts will have an important role in supporting the delivery of high quality, safe development and infrastructure and in ensuring buildings are constructed in a safe way in line with the building regulations.	The new posts will have an important role in support good quality design that delivers an environment that people are proud of and supports community safety.	The new posts will support the delivery of timely and high quality development of all kinds

<b>Internal Effective Staff</b>	<b>Maintain or Improve Services</b>	<b>Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term</b>
<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
<b>Impacts of Proposal</b>		
The proposals will ensure the right resources are available to address current priorities for Development Services	The new posts will ensure a focus on customer priorities and will work closely with services across the Council to ensure a responsive service.	The new posts will support S106 and CIL providing an important and reliable alternative source of funding for infrastructure.

## 4.2 Supporting Strategies

Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies. The Local Plan is one of the key strategies, cutting across many of the FFF strands. The new posts will play an important role in delivering the Local Plan, Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

- 4.3 **Impact Assessment:** There are no equalities or environmental impacts associated with the proposal in this report.

## 5. Budgetary Framework

- 5.1 The additional posts within Development Management and the extended enforcement officer role will be funded from the Planning Investment Reserve. Expenditure from this budget has been approved by the Section 151 in consultation with SMT in accordance with the delegated powers.
- 5.2 There are no budgetary implications of extending the existing arrangement for a 0.6fte Senior Building Control Officers as this post can be funded from within the Building Control salaries budget.

## 6. Risks

- 6.1 There is a risk that the Planning Fees increase will not come forward as projected and that the Planning Investment Reserve will not have sufficient funds to cover the costs of these posts. This risk has been mitigated by ensuring planned expenditure from the Reserve does not exceed 85% of the projected income over a three year. The Head of Finance and Head of Development Services will continue to closely monitor the income and costs in the Reserve. If there is likely to be any shortfall to meet the planned costs this will be because income (and

associated workload) is lower than anticipated. As a result, it is expected that it will be possible to ensure a balance is retained by not filling vacant posts.

**7. Alternative Option(s) considered**

- 7.1 A number of alternatives were considered regarding how to utilise the Reserve. However, the proposals for utilising the funds have already been approved.