

Report to Council

Agenda
Item:

20(iii)

Meeting Date: 7 MARCH 2017
Portfolio: Economy and Enterprise
Key Decision: Yes: Recorded in the Notice Ref:KD02/17
Within Policy and Budget Framework Yes
Public / Private Public

Title: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL SUPPORT REVIEW
Report of: CORPORATE DIRECTOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Report Number: ED. 11/17

Purpose / Summary:

This report proposes changes to the structure of the Economic Development Administration Team in order to meet the increasing demands on the service and bring much needed capacity to focus on statutory services in particular Building Control, whilst supporting the corporate priority of economic growth. This new structure requires additional resource as set out in the report.

Recommendations:

Council are requested to consider approving the release of funds from reserves as set out in the report.

Tracking

Executive:	13 February 2017
Overview and Scrutiny:	
Council:	7 March 2017

Report to Executive

Agenda
Item:

A.3

Meeting Date: 13 FEBRUARY 2017
Portfolio: Economy and Enterprise
Key Decision: Yes: Recorded in the Notice Ref:KD02/17
Within Policy and Budget Framework Yes
Public / Private Public

Title: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL SUPPORT REVIEW
Report of: CORPORATE DIRECTOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Report Number: ED. 04/17

Purpose / Summary:

This report proposes changes to the structure of the Economic Development Administration Team in order to meet the increasing demands on the service and bring much needed capacity to focus on statutory services in particular Building Control, whilst supporting the corporate priority of economic growth. This new structure requires additional resource as set out in the report.

Recommendations:

The Executive are requested to make recommendations to Council to approve the release of funds from reserves as set out in the report.

Tracking

Executive:	13 February 2017
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The ED Admin & Technical Support Team was established in 2011 to support the work of the whole of the Economic Development Directorate. Since then, a series of lean system reviews have been undertaken in order to ensure that services are appropriately supported and business needs are met.
- 1.2 The work is mainly technical in nature, requiring a rolling programme of procedural and protocol reviews with matrix managed training for staff in order to ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and skill set to carry out their role.
- 1.3 Work demands have increased year on year with the numbers of Planning and Building Regulation applications rising and legislative changes bringing additional time pressures. Planning and Building Control Officers are working at the upper limit of the recommended numbers in terms of caseload and require timely, accurate technical support in order to deliver to statutory deadlines.
- 1.4 The number of Planning Applications has increased from 1092 in 2013 to 1284 in 2015. Current Planning Officer case load is 154 applications (national recommended max being 150) so they are working at capacity. In addition, Planning Officers are dealing with over 100 enquiries each per year. As part of the lifecycle of every planning application, the Technical Support team deal with each application at least 5 times during the process. The increase in planning applications is also reflected by a consequent increase in applications to comply with the Building Regulations.
- 1.5 Whilst the number of Building Regulation applications has increased compared to last year by approximately 5%, the number of multi plot housing applications has increased significantly by approximately 200%, which results in a disproportionate amount of additional work to service all the plots. There have been 1148 Building Control applications from December 2015 to November 2016, which is a significant increase on 875 submitted in the same period in 2014/15.
- 1.6 There has been a significant increase in the interest in planning by the public since the legislative changes in 2012. With increased consultation and challenge, comes increased volume of work and pressure on staff to deliver within the statutory timeframe. Added to which, the increased Government monitoring has increased the pressure on the Council for a 5 weekly cycle for DC Committee. Additionally, there are similar time constraints when dealing with Building Control application that are also completing with the private sector. This puts additional pressure on the

Technical Support Team to get applications through the process in time for reporting to the next Committee which puts the Council at risk of not meeting statutory targets.

- 1.7 The ED Admin & Technical Support Team are a vital resource supporting the delivery of services which generate income. In light of the above, our analysis shows that the minimum number of staff required to support the business needs of Economic Development is 4.87FTE.
- 1.8 As part of the ED Admin & Technical Support review, a detailed cost analysis of the proposed structure was prepared, which identified a shortfall in the staffing base budget of £31,700 for 2017/18.
- 1.9 As per the structure outlined above, the additional budget required to fund the structure for the three years, taking into account of an anticipated 1% salary increase in years two and three, will be a total of £96,000.
- 1.10 Sufficient budget is held within Building Control reserves to fully fund the ED Admin & Technical Support structure for three years.

2. CONCLUSION

- 2.1 The review undertaken highlights the urgent need to address capacity issues affecting the ability of the ED Admin and Technical Support Team to deliver the full range of support required by providing additional resources to support Building Control; and freeing up staff to support services driving the growth agenda for the City as set out in the Carlisle Plan.

3. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is proposed that the new structure set out in Appendix A be implemented.
- 3.2 In order to ensure that the necessary budget is in place, the Executive are requested to approve the release of funds from reserves, for recommendation to Council.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

- 4.1 The Economic Development Technical Support team structure is crucial to the delivery of statutory functions of the Directorate. The team provides support to

services driving the growth agenda for the City Council and is a key resource in the delivery of actions contained within the Directorate Service Plan and Carlisle Plan.

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Appendices Appendix A - Proposed Economic Development Admin Team
attached to report: Structure Chart

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- **None**

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:

Chief Executive's -

Deputy Chief Executive –

Economic Development –

Governance –

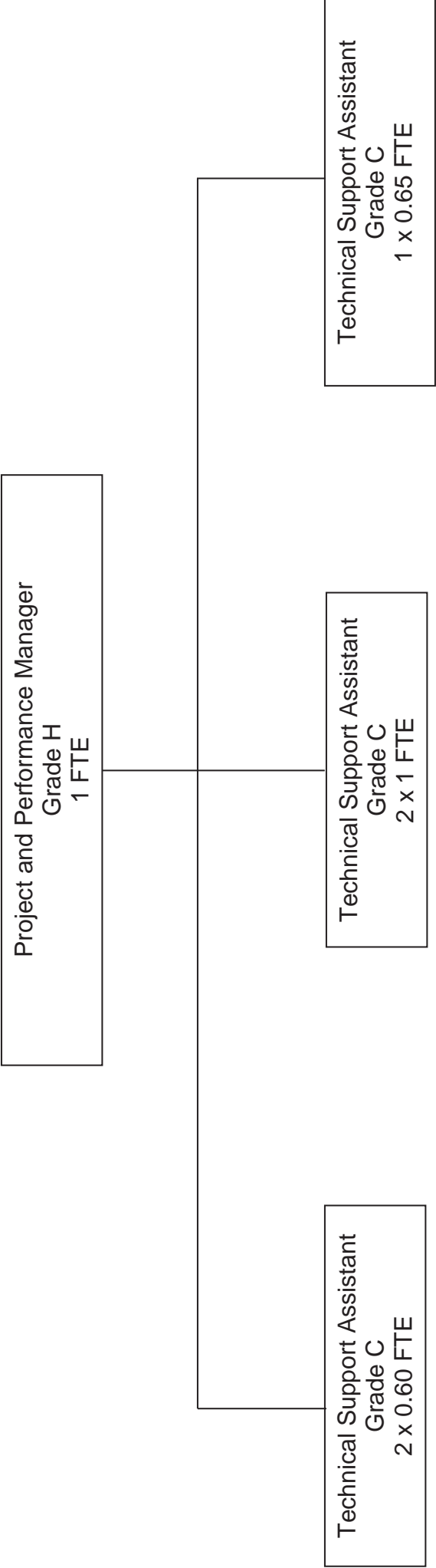
Local Environment –

Resources – This report requests the release of funding from the Building Control Reserve (subject to Council approval), to provide funding for the Economic Development Admin Team to ensure the level of support needed from increased Building Control application levels can be provided. The Building Control Reserve is ring fenced by statute to provide funds for improvements to the delivery of the Building Control function. Management of the reserve rests with the Corporate Director of Economic Development and approval to release funds from the reserve can only be given by Council. The balance of the reserve as at 1st April 2016 was £136,884.73 and it is estimated that additional funds will be transferred into the reserve this year due to an increased level of income received from increased applications.

It is proposed to release a total £96,000 from the Building Control Reserve over a period of 3 years (£31,700 in 2017/18, £32,000 in 2018/19, and that £32,300 in 2019/20).

APPENDIX A

Proposed Economic Development Admin Team Structure Chart = 4.87 FTE



EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE HELD ON 13 FEBRUARY 2017

EX.13/17 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL SUPPORT REVIEW
(Key Decision – KD.02/17)

(In accordance with Paragraph 15(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Mayor had agreed that call-in procedures should not be applied to this item)

Portfolio Economy, Enterprise and Housing

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Environment and Economy

Subject Matter

The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder submitted report ED.04/17 concerning the Economic Development Technical Support Review.

The Portfolio Holder outlined the background position and increased work demands, as detailed at Section 1 of the report. She emphasised that the Economic Development Administration and Technical Support Team was a vital resource supporting the delivery of services which generated income, such as Building Control. In light thereof analysis showed that the minimum number of staff required to support the business needs of Economic Development was 4.87 FTE.

As part of the Economic Development Administration and Technical Support review, a detailed cost analysis of the proposed structure had been prepared, which identified a shortfall in the staffing base budget of £31,700 for 2017/18.

As per the structure alluded to, the additional budget required to fund the structure for the three years, taking into account an anticipated 1% salary increase in years two and three, was a total of £96,000. Sufficient budget was held within Building Control Earmarked Reserve to fully fund the Economic Development Administration and Technical Support structure for three years. The Building Control Reserve is ring fenced by statute to provide funds for improvements to the delivery of the Building Control function, a service which is supported by the Economic Development Administration and Technical Support Team.

The Portfolio Holder reiterated that the review undertaken had highlighted the urgent need to address capacity issues affecting the ability of the Economic Development Administration and Technical Support Team to deliver the full range of support required. She further summarised the wide ranging nature of the work provided by the Team.

In conclusion the Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder requested that the Executive make recommendations to Council to approve the release of funds from reserves to fund the proposed new structure.

The Leader seconded the recommendation which clearly demonstrated the level of increased confidence in the City and increased number of planning applications year on year.

Summary of options rejected not to recommend release of the funding alluded to

DECISION

That the Executive recommended to Council approval of the release of funds from reserves to support the Economic Development Technical Support Review, as detailed within Report ED.04/17.

Reasons for Decision

In order to ensure that the necessary budget was in place to fund the proposed Economic Development Administration and Technical Support Team structure