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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 23.03.22

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

13 JANUARY 2021

In accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman has agreed to take this item as a late item of business.

This report contains information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority which is a category of exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Paragraph 4 which the Committee has the power to exclude the press and public if it so wishes.

RECOMMENDATION

That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of this item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

It is considered that the need to treat the information in this report as exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosure because of the likely staffing sensitivities.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TOURISM RESOURCES

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To seek agreement that the Committee recommends support to the Policy and Finance Committee for structural changes and additional staffing resource to support the delivery of the Council's Economic Growth and Tourism agendas.

2.0 Background

2.1 Members will be aware of the economic challenges facing the District and our aspirations to create opportunities for industry and residents to stabilise and ultimately flourish by fulfilling their potential. The Council's enhanced focus on Economic Growth and associated activity is captured in the Community Plan (revised Sept 2020), Covid-19 Economic Recovery Strategy (Oct 2020), and NSDC Economic Growth Strategy (Nov 2020). This is in addition to programs, interventions, and activities associated with the Newark Towns Investment Plan (July 2020) and Ollerton & Boughton Regeneration initiatives.

2.2 The Visitor Economy forms a significant part of the NSDC economy, representing spend of £298.32 million (2019). The tourism and hospitality sector has been disproportionately hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, with latest forecasts suggesting a - 62% increase in the value of the visitor economy for the District in the coming year. The Council's retained focus on Tourism is captured in the Council's Destination Management Plans for Newark, Southwell, and Sherwood Forest and the adopted Visitor Economy Strategy (Nov 2020).

2.3 Operationally, it is clear that a number of activities across the Economic Growth and Tourism Business units are closely aligned, including work around towns centres regeneration, destination development (as opposed to destination marketing), visitor wayfinding, business co-ordination, data insights (eg. footfall counting and analysis) and place and event promotion.

3.0 Proposals

3.1 Structure

3.2 It is proposed, in the interests of optimising the clarity, coordination, and delivery of the Council's aspirations that the current Economic Growth and Tourism team be merged to create a single Economic Growth and Tourism Business Unit. The intention is not to dilute the importance of either agenda, which as detailed above are captured in a raft of Council strategy and priority documents. Rather, it will streamline overall responsibility for the management of the service, allowing the creation of lead practitioner specialisms with a focus on: 1. Town Centres, 2. Business and Skills, and 3. Tourism. Appendix A details the existing and recommended changes. For the avoidance of doubt such changes are subject to: 1) support in principle from the Policy and Finance Committee and 2) consultation with affected employees and the recognised Trades Unions.

3.3 Additional Economic Growth Officer

3.4 The current Economic Growth team delivers an array of services including: Business Development, Business Information, Advice and Guidance, Skills Programmes, and Inward Investment in addition to the Councils Towns Centres agenda which includes Development Programmes, Retail and Business engagement.

3.5 Creating a 1 x additional Economic Growth Officer FTE post (which aligns with an existing Job Evaluated post) would allow for the following additional or enhanced activity:

- Provision of targeted Key Account Management Capacity for NSDC with medium and large employers
- Provide additional capacity in provision of information, advice, guidance and support to SMEs given enquiries of Covid19

- Provide advice and guidance on importing and exporting opportunities to business and develop operational relationships for FDI/RDI with international Quangos like CBBC and IBC
- Improve business communication and dialogue through improved messages of an e-newsletter and other mechanisms
- Improve local supply chain development by working with business, Welland Procurement, and other providers to encourage local procurement
- Support Town Centre Businesses with Information, Advice and Guidance programmes and marketing activity

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 This proposal, whilst likely negatively affecting one individual financially will benefit the delivery of the service.

5.0 Digital Implications

5.1 A laptop and ICT equipment to facilitate working from home for the additional Economic Growth Officer post will be required.

6.0 Financial Implications (Fin20-21/1485)

6.1 The annual cost of an additional Economic Growth Officer from April 2021 would be £37,620 (including on-costs). If appointed in February 2021 the additional cost for 2020/21 would be £6,270. This cost can be funded from Tranche 4 of the Covid funds. There is currently no funding available to meet the additional cost in future years and therefore would be an increase in the base budget from 2021/22 onwards.

6.2 A one off cost of a new laptop and ICT equipment is in the region of £2,000 and can be funded from Tranche 4 of the Covid fund.

6.3 The impact of the deletion of the two existing Business Manager roles and the creation of the new Business Manager and Tourism Manager roles is an expected increase in budget requirement of c£1,280. This is, however, subject to consultation and assessment. The budget will be adjusted accordingly to reflect the final position.

6.4 The overall increase in the base budget requirements for the proposed restructure from 2021/22 onwards would be c£38,900.

Post & Scale (Subject to Job Evaluation)	Cost of Annual Budget (£) (Including on-costs) 2021/22	Cost of Annual Revised Budget (£) (Including on-costs) 2021/22 plus future years
Business Manager Economic Growth (Z002)	74,730	0
Business Manager Economic Growth & Tourism (Z004)	0	82,030
Business Manager Tourism (Z001)	68,890	0

Tourism Manager (NS16)	0	62,870
Town Centres Developments Manager (NS14)	52,460	52,460
Economic Growth Snr (NS13)	51,150	51,150
Economic Growth Officer (NS10)	39,950	39,950
Economic Growth Officer (NS10)	0	37,620
Digital Marketing and Tourism Officer (NS8)	31,590	31,590
Tourism & Economic Growth Support Officer (NS7)	28,820	28,820
Apprentice, Tourism & Economic Growth	22,880	22,880
Total	370,470	409,370

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

That Members approve and recommend to Policy & Finance Committee the creation of additional revenue budget from financial years 2021/22 onwards to support structural and resource changes required to deliver the Council's Economic Growth and Tourism agendas, subject to ongoing consultation with affected employees and the recognised Trades Unions.

Reason for Recommendation

To ensure that the Council's Economic Growth and Social Mobility agendas are delivered in accordance with the Community Plan, Economic Growth, Tourism and Covid-19 Recovery Strategies.

Background Papers

For further information please contact Matt Lamb on extension 5842.

Matt Lamb
Director - Planning & Growth

Figure 1.
Current Structure

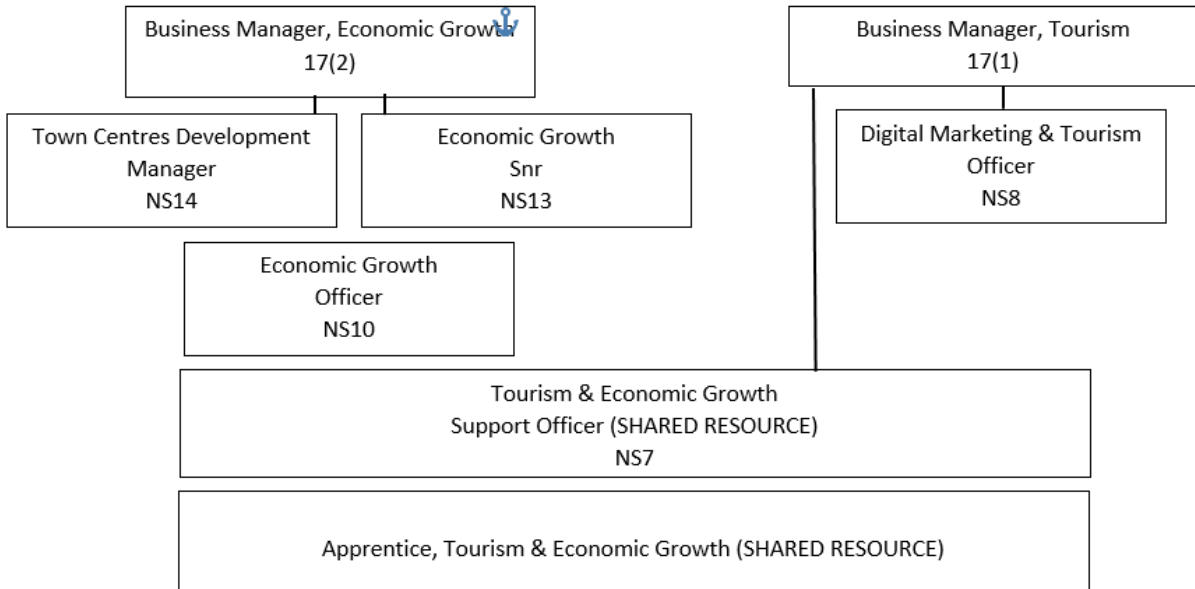


Figure 2.
Proposed Structure

