

Bassetlaw District Council

Cabinet

05th September 2023

Report of the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Strategic capacity to deliver the Vision 2040 and Corporate Plan 2023-27

Cabinet Member: Identity and Place
Contact: Craig Taylor

1. Public Interest Test

The author of this report Craig Taylor has determined that the report is not confidential.

2. Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 To seek approval to create a new Head of Service post to bolster the strategic capacity of the Council, enabling delivery at pace of the Vision 2040 and Corporate Plan 2023-2027 following adoption later this year.

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1 The draft Vision 2040 *'is for Bassetlaw to become the greenest, most sustainable district in which to live and work, building on its legacy of energy production, manufacturing and logistics to power the net zero economy'*. Delivery of the vision is structured through six strategic pillars (Identity, Skills, Business, Environment, Facilities and Health) which set the framework for action. The Vision provides a clear direction for a new Corporate Plan for 2023-27, against which resources will need to be allocated.
- 3.2 The Vision and Corporate Plan will require change and interventions from services throughout the Council, however the priorities and ambitions within the business & skills and identity & place themes are significant in both scale and number. This is reflected in the creation of an additional Cabinet Portfolio position to progress what was deemed an overly large and almost unwieldy remit for one person.
- 3.3 Together with its partners, the Council has been very successful over the past 12 months securing significant multi-million pound investment into the district, for example through STEP, Levelling Up round two, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Rural England Prosperity Fund, and with various additional funding opportunities such as a new Levelling Up Partnership currently being progressed.
- 3.4 As a result, it has become clear that, despite officers' high levels of commitment and dedication, existing staffing resources are over-stretched. This is particularly apparent within the regeneration, planning, economic development and growth and enterprise services. Strategic capacity urgently needs bolstering and a more sustainable staffing resource developed if we are to realise the significant

benefits these opportunities present for the residents and businesses of Bassetlaw.

3.5 It is therefore proposed to:

- Create an additional Head of Service post to lead on growth, economic development, business and skills, and
- Revise the responsibilities of the existing Head of Regeneration post to provide that role with more strategic capacity to meet the significant requirements arising from the STEP project, ensure key planning functions are well placed to meet new legislative requirements and support growth sites coming forward.

3.6 The proposed new structure will be most effective with some overlap of remits between the service areas, however the summary below provides a broad overview of the proposed responsibilities of each post.

3.7 Head of Regeneration (current) – proposed job title ‘Head of Planning & Place’

- Lead officer for activities associated with the delivery of the STEP project including advocacy and promotion, stakeholder relations (internal/external), spatial & infrastructure planning, technical planning support and employment growth opportunities
- Advising on and promoting future site opportunities to bring more high-tech and green energy jobs into the district
- Establishing and facilitating a network of key site developers and existing businesses to help build and promote relationships
- Facilitating investment by simplifying the planning process through the use of appropriate planning tools at the former power station sites
- Strategic lead for Planning Development Management
- Flood alleviation advice in relation to land use
- Strategic lead for Building Control
- Strategic lead for Planning Policy
- Strategic lead for Neighbourhood plans and Masterplans
- Strategic lead for Conservation
- Development of a green Local Area Energy Plan for Bassetlaw

3.8 ‘Head of Growth and Economic Prosperity’ (new post)

- Lead officer for ensuring the benefits of the STEP project are fully realised including promotion and support for supply chain growth, business development, skills/apprenticeships and employment opportunities
- Strategic lead for economic development and business growth
- Strategic lead for Town Centre transformation - investment, external funding bids and delivery of major projects
- Creation of an inward investment strategy including grant funding opportunities to deliver economic prosperity and carbon reduction objectives
- Development of BDC owned business centres, educational facilities and museum
- Support the commercial success of Council owned companies Bersahill and S80

- Develop more affordable workspaces to attract and provide support services to micro business, creative industries, entrepreneurs and tech companies.
- Setting up new trade hubs across the district
- Working with local education providers and employers, developing a comprehensive programme of skills and apprenticeship opportunities
- Developing a strong brand and identity to market the district to promote the best that Bassetlaw has to offer to its residents and visitors
- Developing and Implementing an emissions strategy to reduce the Council's operational emissions to net zero by 2030

4. Implications

a) For service users

The creation of an additional Head of Service post and revision to the responsibilities of the current Head of Regeneration will provide a wide range of benefits to residents and businesses as outlined in the bullet points in paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8.

b) Strategic & Policy

The changes proposed will bolster the strategic capacity of the Council enabling the Council's Vision 2040 and Corporate strategy to be delivered at pace. The additional resource capacity will also support the STEP project, implementation of new planning reforms and delivery of strategic externally funded projects.

c) Financial - Ref: 24/127

There is a new grant for Local Growth Capacity Support that may contribute to costs in the short term (£70k). Future years' costs, i.e. those recurrent costs in the longer term, will be found through a strategic review of vacancies and/or a review of existing budgets. This new post will be included in the annual review of the establishment as part of the 2024/25 budget process.

d) Legal – Ref: 079/08/2023

None arising directly from this report.

e) Human Resources

The current Head of Regeneration has been consulted on the proposals in accordance with the Council's Job and Structure Redesign Policy and is in agreement with them, and comments received have been incorporated into this report where appropriate.

f) Climate change, Environmental

The additional strategic capacity created by this proposal will assist with developing and implementing a Carbon Emissions Strategy and a Green Local Area Energy Plan.

g) Community Safety, Equality and Diversity

Recruitment into the new Head of Service position will take place in accordance with the Council's processes and procedures.

h) GDPR

None arising from this report.

i) Key Decision number **1015**

5. Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 The option to continue with the current Head of Service structure and resource level has been considered. However, given the existing significant capacity challenges and the scale and volume of strategic priorities within the draft Vision 2040 and draft Corporate Plan 2023-27 it is deemed that additional strategic resource is essential in order to realise the ambitions of the Council.

6. Recommendations

6.1 To approve the creation of a new post of 'Head of Growth and Economic Prosperity' and re-designate the current 'Head of Regeneration' post to 'Head of Planning and Place'.

Background Papers

Location

None