

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 26th MARCH, 2008

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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STAR CHAMBER – ADJUSTMENTS TO POSTS

Summary: This report identifies posts recommended through the Council's Star Chamber as part of the budget setting process in Autumn 2007, supported by the appropriate funding, and seeks approval to proceed with changes to the posts.

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 At its meeting on 17th January 2008, Full Council approved the Council's Budget. An integral part of the Budget incorporated the Star Chamber process, which included a range of changes to established posts and four new posts as follows:

- Extension to 3 fixed full-time (TP313, TP323, TP392) and 3 new fixed part-time posts (TP753, TP754, TP755) to March 2009 - Contact Centre
- Make permanent the current Arts Development Officer post (PN369), at a grade to be determined by the Job Evaluation Panel – Culture and Leisure
- Extension to Technical Administrative Officer post (TP377) at Grade 10 for two years to March 2010 - Housing and Homelessness section
- Extension to fixed term Marketing Officer post (TP315) at Grade 8 for further year to March 2010 – Marketing and Communications
- Set in permanent establishment new post of Local Land and Property Gazetteer Assistant at Grade 10 – Environmental Planning

Reasons for recommending the posts be agreed by GPC are set out in section 6 below.

2. KEY DECISION

2.1 This is not a key decision.

3. COUNCIL PRIORITIES

3.1 The matter raised in this report falls within the following Council priorities:

- A safe and healthy environment
- A well planned place to live which encourages vibrant communities
- A prosperous place to live and work

4. STAR CHAMBER PROCESS

4.1 The Star Chamber positions were considered using a new template which contained the following criteria analysis:

- Link to existing and new Statutory obligations
- Contribution to performance achievement on BVPIs
- Timing issues in relation to the six year budget plan

- Links to the Business Plan and Corporate Objectives
- Comprehensive Performance Assessment
- Comparing information with other Authorities
- Non regulatory risks if the funding is not agreed
- Opportunity costs both corporately and at service level on utilisation of resources for the bid made

The funding for the posts have been included within the base budget as outlined in the attached Proforma B.

Please refer to Appendix A which shows the full cost of all post changes and additional information regarding the self funded bids.

5. OPTIONS AVAILABLE

- Members approve the changes to recruitment of posts listed in Paragraph 1
- Members do not approve the changes to recruitment of posts listed in Paragraph 1

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Outlined below are the reasons for each of the post changes:

- Contact centre post extensions – Currently the posts assist with all queries and service requests for Benefits, Council Tax /NNDR, Streetscene, Development services and compliments and complaints which impact upon BVPIs for these service areas. Performance of the call centre would be severely diminished if these posts were not extended. The funding was agreed by Star Chamber to March 2009 and the posts are required till then, whilst awaiting the outcome of the BPR process in services in relation to redeployment of resource to the contact centre.
- Permanent Arts Development Officer post - Arts Development is a discretionary service which has a key role to play in terms of articulating government policy. A key risk in not maintaining the service will be an inability to demonstrate consistent maintenance of partnership arrangements, delivery of place shaping and performance against the Council's Business Plan.
- Technical Administrative Officer post - This is a key front line post, the substantive post having been transferred to support the contact centre. As yet the Strategic Housing Service has not been migrated into the contact centre. This post undertakes all the first point housing advice and prevention activity with the customers and is therefore not just an admin role, it provides vital support to the team in improving performance against BVPI's and Audit Commission expectations. The post will also be responsible in part for the collection of income into the homelessness team, with the expectation that collection levels will rise. The post is required at this stage for 2 years to allow any outcomes from the Strategic Alliance.
- Marketing Officer post extension - Currently the pressure on the marketing budget is alleviated by a prudent estimate of income from advertising through Breckland Voice of £5k in 2007/08 and £10k in each of the years following. If the post is not funded there will be no ability to take advantage of this income generation through Breckland Voice. The reputational risk of not promoting the council's activities with the public and keeping them informed of key Local Government policy and initiative on an ongoing basis.
- Local Land and Property Gazetteer Assistant post (LLPG) – This post is required to provide the national hub with daily updates on street naming and numbering data including creation of new unique property reference numbers for use by emergency services and post office. LLPG is the council's corporate address database that all applications run from e.g LAGAN, FLARE, ACADEMY and OCELLA. Currently there is no identified resource to maintain or update it hence the need for this post. The

Improvement & Development Agency compliance requires this work to be done. There is some latitude in terms of implementation however the liability of fines does exist and so resourcing this area is a preferable option.

7. RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Members approve the recruitment of posts listed in Paragraph 1

Appendix A –

Posts recommended by Star Chamber including full costs of self funded posts.

Proforma B –

This includes the Impact of posts on base budget and the accompanying financial and risk related commentary.

Where appropriate, this report has taken account of the need for compliance with

- The Council's Equal Opportunities Policies and Gender Equality Scheme
- Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Section 40, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006