BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL

DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION

NB Officers taking delegated decisions must ensure that they are fully conversant with the conditions applicable to the exercise of delegated powers by officers and in particular that the decisions are in accordance with the Council’s policies, powers and financial regulations.

Details of such conditions are to be found in the Council’s Constitution and in cases of any doubt advice must be sought from the Council’s Financial and/or Legal officers.

DELEGATED POWERS REFERENCE

2.8 In consultation with the HR Business Partner, to deal with all staffing and human resources matters (within agreed terms and conditions of employment, Human Resource policies and procedures) affecting Directorate staff including:

2.8.5 Changing the establishment and approving the establishment of additional posts if there are no net additional costs or grading implications; the deletion of posts; and the granting of honoraria and onerous duty payments subject to a quarterly report being submitted to the relevant Cabinet member on such matters.

IS THE DECISION CONFIDENTIAL? NO
(If yes - apply Public Interest Test below)

OFFICERS ADVICE:

Concerns have been raised about the ability of the service to deliver the anticipated level of Regeneration & Investment opportunities that are available at present as there is currently only two members of staff within the team, with one member of staff working on the private company S80. Although it should be noted that a new member of staff to cover the Urban and Retail post will start within the team shortly however, this role will purely focus on the town centres.

This Delegated Decision wishes to address and assist the Growth & Enterprise Team with the forth coming community projects that are being established due to the current Homes England Community led Affordable housing fund that the Government has released. The prospectus can be found on the link below.

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-housing-fund

The purpose of the fund is to support an increase in housing supply in England by increasing the number of additional homes delivered by the community-led housing sector; to provide housing that is affordable at local income levels and remains so in perpetuity; and to deliver a lasting legacy for the community-led housing sector in the form of an effective and financially self-sustaining body of expertise within the house building industry in England.

Following the advice from Homes England it has been considered appropriate for an application to be made from the Local Authority to apply for the funds for a part time
Community Housing Officer. The Community Housing Officer would be required to help support the community groups within Bassetlaw in applying for the Homes England funding and help project manage the funding available to the community groups to deliver the projects and to assist local residents in building out self-build plots for private individuals. This part-time post would be paid for at 90% by Homes England for a 12 months period which should (if successful) start in April 2019 and cease in April 2020. The application for the funding for the post would only require a 10% input from the local authority. If the application is successful the authority would have a decision by the end of March 2019 to allow for recruitment to start.

It is proposed that the recruitment of staff is dealt with through an agency or through a consultant as it is important that the post starts in April 2019 to maximise the benefits of the funds. The Council currently only has three weeks to set up the arrangements for the post which does not work within the recruitment policy time frame.

It should be noted the Growth & Enterprise team are already dealing with the community and self build enquires through the Strategic Housing team and have supported a Town Council to submit an application already. The team currently know of three other community groups that wish to make an application for support to Homes England for Revenue Funding up to Planning Application Stage and then the groups would also be applying for further financial support from Homes England through the capital funding programme. The Strategic Housing Team currently hold a register with 70 individuals listed upon it seeking to build self-build housing for private use. This funding could also assist in the delivery of these projects also.

By applying for the Revenue funding to support a part time post within the Growth & Enterprise team for a year, this would provide extra support and capacity within the team and allow the team to concentrate on other regeneration and growth initiatives within the District.

**IMPLICATIONS:**

a) **For Service Users**

The proposal will ensure the ability to continue the delivery of Regeneration and Investment within the District and in particular within the community led housing schemes and self-build projects within the District. This will assist with ensuring the confidence of local communities and also maximising the Council ability to secure external funding opportunities within our communities.

b) **Strategic & Policy**

The post will enable the continued delivery of key corporate objectives.

c) **Financial plus Financial Reference – Fin Ref 19/434**

Officers have discussed the funding with Homes England’s representatives and a job description has been provided. Evaluating this job description against other jobs currently within the team and working with other local authorities that have also applied for this funding, it has been advised that the council should seek to appoint a consultant or use a recruitment agency and the scale should be at S01. Therefore, in connection with the finance department the team explored the cost to the Council for a full cost recovery which is approx. £25,500. The Council is required to input 10% of the costs and this would be £2,550 for a part time (0.50 FTE) post for one year to cover the financial year 2019/2020. The money required for the 10% input is proposed to come from the Growth & Enterprise team’s intervention pot D349.
From the experience gained over the past year when exploring the opportunities to appoint candidates, with the relevant experience, qualifications and the ability to start the role as soon as practically possible (anticipated to be April 2019). This has proven to be extremely difficult. Therefore, to enable the team to appoint an officer with the experience, knowledge of the area, management skills and the availability to start as soon as possible it is proposed that an officer is appointed through an agency or through a consultancy. This will secure the ability to deliver the community led housing projects available at present within the district for a 1-year period.

d) **Legal plus Legal Reference – 72/07/2019**

There are no specific Legal implications arising from this DD.

e) **Human Resources**

Standard recruitment procedures will be followed in recruiting to this post. Formal Cabinet approval will be required if the post extends beyond the 1 year proposed.

f) **Community Safety, Equal Opportunity & Environmental**

The are no specific implications arising

g) **General Data Protection Regulations**

The are no specific implications arising

**OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

Whilst the department could continue to deliver this service to the communities with its existing staffing structure, the opportunity to have a 90% funded post for 2.5 days per week within the Council is recommended as this would create the much needed capacity within the team as there are existing vacancies within team at present. As the housing service has now come back in house this post will also work in tandem with council objectives for housing going forward.

**DECISION (With Reasons):**

That a consultant or a recruitment agency officer will be appointed for the new post of community housing office for a period of 1 year as detailed above.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None

**SIGNATURE OF DECISION MAKER**

**DATE** 29/7/19

The signed original of this form must be sent to the Democratic Services Unit.

The author of this form should retain a copy for their file and send copies to:
- Monitoring Officer
- Section 151 Officer

Note: Completed retrospectively 29.7.19.