

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Executive – 13 March 2013

Use of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) to Provide Staffing Resource to Support the Implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Report of the Planning and Development Manager

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Mark Edwards)

1. Executive Summary

The report seeks the Executive's approval to use uncommitted Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG), to provide staffing resources necessary to support the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

2. Background

Taunton Deane Borough Council needs to introduce the CIL if it is to maximise opportunities to fund the strategic infrastructure necessary to support the Borough's growth in years ahead.

The draft charging schedule is currently being consulted upon and it is hoped to introduce the levy from September 2013.

The introduction of CIL brings with it a range of administrative tasks as set down in the regulations. The Council will therefore need additional resource to administer the levy.

3. Proposal

It is therefore proposed to appoint a Community Infrastructure Levy Officer to administer the CIL process, including calculation, billing, collection and monitoring. This post may also initially have capacity to support monitoring of planning obligations (S106). The post would need to be evaluated but the indicative grade would be F (£22,958 - £26,276) which equates to £29,200 with on costs for 2013/14 at the bottom of the scale.

The CIL regulations allow the charging authority to top-slice five percent of

the levy for administration. Therefore, the full cost of this post will ultimately be funded through CIL. However, whilst it will take sometime to generate the necessary income, the need for the post is generated from implementation and it is therefore requested that HPDG is used to fund the post for a two year period.

The proposal was considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 21st February. Members of the Committee supported the use of HPDG for this purpose. Issues raised around the benefits of a fixed term contract will be considered in relation not only to the recruitment of this post, but also to any backfill arrangements.

4. Finance Comments

The current uncommitted balance on HPDG funds is £142k so if the use of HPDG is approved the remaining balance would be £84k. After the initial two years it is anticipated that the 5% slice of CIL income will fund the project.

If there is insufficient CIL income to support the post after two years the post will need to be re-evaluated. Confirmed with manager that non-staff costs will be absorbed within existing budget and eventually from the admin element of CIL income.

5. Legal Comments

The Legal and Democratic Services Manager has been involved throughout the project to develop CIL processes to ensure that the process accords with the regulations and that appropriate governance arrangements are in place.

6. Links to Corporate Aims

CIL will be able to deliver infrastructure aimed at Tackling Deprivation and Sustainable Communities; Regeneration and Climate Change. (Affordable Housing cannot be delivered through CIL).

7. Environmental Implications

Not appropriate

8. Community Safety Implications

Not appropriate

9. Equalities Impact

The role is needed to administer functions set out in regulations for which Government will have completed an EIA. An EIA has also been prepared

in relation to the proposal in this report.

10. Risk Management

If the Council fails to administer the CIL process as is set out in the regulations it could be open to legal challenge and loss of reputation

Failure to correctly calculate and monitor CIL could result in a loss of income which is necessary to provide infrastructure and support to our local communities.

The appointment of this post will significantly reduce that risk.

11. Partnership Implications (if any)

The post will form the pivotal contact point for all Agencies and Service Provides involved with CIL.

12. Recommendations

That the Executive approves the allocation of £58,400 of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant Earmarked reserve to fund the post of Community Infrastructure Levy officer for two years.

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