

Report of the Strategic Director of Place to the meeting Executive to be held on 7 February 2017.

BD

Subject: Petition Seeking to reverse the decision to delete the Post of Development Officer Inclusion & Mobility Post.

Summary statement:

A petition was received by the Council seeking the reinstatement of the Post of Development Officer Inclusion & Mobility within Planning Transportation and Highways Service. The petition was referred to Executive by Full Council on 13 December 2016.

This report sets out the background to the deletion of the post including as part of the budget process and a service wide restructure in 2016 and the alternative arrangements to be put in place to undertake this work and meet its duties to equalities groups in on going service delivery.

This report has not been included on the published forward plan as an issue for consideration however the matter relates to the implementation of a restructure and agreed budget proposal and as such a decision is needed urgently in order to be consider as soon as possible any budget implications and also implications for the current post holder . As it is impractical to defer the decision until it has been included in the published Forward Plan the report is submitted in accordance with paragraph 10 of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution.

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Regeneration & Economy



1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 A petition was received by the Council seeking the reinstatement of the Post of Development Officer Inclusion & Mobility within Planning Transportation and Highways Service. The petition was referred to Executive by Full Council on 13 December 2016
- 1.2 This report sets out the background to the deletion of the post including as part of the budget process and a service wide restructure in 2016 and the alternative arrangements to be put in place to undertake this work and meet its duties to equalities groups in on going service delivery.
- 1.3 This report has not been included on the published forward plan as an issue for consideration however the matter relates to the implementation of a restructure and agreed budget proposal and as such a decision is needed urgently in order to be consider as soon as possible any budget implications and also implications for the current post holder . As it is impractical to defer the decision until it has been included in the published Forward Plan the report is submitted in accordance with paragraph 10 of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The post of Development Officer Inclusion and Mobility was established in November 2006 for a fixed 2 year period, linked to one off funding. Following the end of the temporary funding the post was rolled forward on a temporary basis and funded from Transport Planning staffing budget base. The post was subsequently made permanent in May 2011.
- 2.2 The prime objectives of the post as set out in the Job profile are:
 1. To support and help develop Bradford Access Action, Mobility Planning Group, Planning (MPG), Highways Access Forum (PHAF), and Disability Discrimination Act Task Group;
 2. To work with Planners, Architects, Engineers, Building Control Surveyors, Landscape Architects, Conservations officers, other technical staff and key policy makers (both within the Council and its partners) to develop understanding, ownership and capacity to deliver an inclusive environment.
 3. To raise awareness within the Council of its requirement to promote inclusion and demonstrate leadership and best practice.
 4. To inform support and advise elected members, as circumstances require including presenting reports at committee meetings and developing and delivering appropriate training material; and
 5. To be an ambassador for the council supporting its aims and objectives, in



particular in relation to its Disability Equality Duty

- 2.3 The Council as part of its budget setting process for 2016/17 and 2017/18 included a proposal to review the role of the Inclusion and Mobility support and advice within Planning Transportation and Highways (PTH). The Draft budget proposals approved by Executive 1 December 2015 included proposal 3R18 entitled 'Restructure of PTH and transfer of some functions to the WYCA'. In the supporting text specific reference was made to a review of the 'provision of highways inclusion and mobility advice'. This advice and support was at the time provided by the post of Development Officer Inclusion and Mobility. The combined savings of these proposals over two years was proposed to be £315,000 (190K in 16/17 and £125 in 17/18). These proposals were approved at the subsequent Executive on 23 February 2016 and Full Council on 25 February 2016, following public consultation.
- 2.4 In response to the Council's agreed budget 2016-18 Planning Transportation and Highways began a comprehensive restructure in March 2016 in order to deliver the approved savings. This went through several key stages which involved consultation with internal staff and unions in line with the Council's agreed procedures. An initial Stage 1 consultation document entitled 'Planning for Change', was issued to staff and unions in April 2016 for comment. This set out the package of proposals to meet the required savings. This included a proposal to delete the post of Development Officer Mobility and Inclusion and deliver this function through a different arrangement which would move away from a dedicated specialist officer and see other officers picking up functions relevant to their area of responsibility and expertise. This would seek to embed inclusion and mobility within teams rather than make it a specialist role. The 'Planning for Change' document was supported by an Equalities Impact Assessment.
- 2.5 As part of the consultation comments were received raising concerns over the deletion of the post from both staff and unions. These were considered and responded to as part of the next stage. The proposal to delete the post was retained in the further 'Planning for Change' document published in June 2016 which included other changes following the stage 1 consultation. Comments were invited on the stage 2 document. Further comments were again received to the proposal to delete the post, which were considered and responded to.
- 2.6 Following stage 2 some further changes were made to the restructure proposals which were agreed with the Unions in July including at Level 3 service meeting.
- 2.7 A number of comments were submitted to the Council from external individuals and groups (Including the Strategic Disability partnership (SDP) and Mobility Planning Group) raising concerns over the proposal to delete the post. These in the main echoed the comments raised internally by staff and unions which were considered as part of the internal process. These comments were considered as part of the process. A meeting was held with the Chair of SDP in September to discuss their concerns and explain the Council's position and outline its proposals for changing how the functions currently undertaken by the post will be provided in future under the new structure and arrangements.



- 2.8 The majority of the key roles of the deleted post that related to the built environment and transport/access will now be picked up by professional staff and management within PTH. All the key activities have been scoped out and assigned to named officers for example the Planning and Transport Strategy Manager will be the lead contact for the Strategic Disability Partnership (SDP).
- 2.9 In scoping the roles within PTH, the risks and mitigation has been identified including need for some targeted further training and development. The new arrangements will be monitored by management.
- 2.10 There are some limited corporate activities (see Prime Objectives 3-5 of post above) which will need to be picked up by Corporate Support and /or support commissioned as and when needed.
- 2.11 The new arrangements will be outlined to the SDP and they will be monitored by management.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 None

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 The post has been deleted following its inclusion as part of the agreed Council budget proposal and subsequent review. The deletion of the post makes a significant contribution towards the overall saving of the PTH restructure of approximately £759,000.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 There are risks from the deletion of the post which were considered as part of the restructure and in considering the new arrangements. These relate in the main to the discharge of the Equalities Duty. The new arrangements have put in place appropriate arrangements and mitigation in order to manage any risks.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

No legal issues.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The restructure was supported by an Equalities Impact Assessment. This concluded that the new arrangements would not have an adverse impact. The function would continue to support effective consideration of mobility and inclusion issues in new development and transport proposals through the on-going partnership working with the established arrangements (SDP/Mobility Planning



Group and PHAF).

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Inclusion is a key element of sustainable communities. The change will continue to ensure that this is still a key consideration which will inform development and change.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

No implications.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Accessible built development is one key element of ensuring safe environments for all.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

No implications

7.6 TRADE UNION

The restructure has followed agreed council procedures and has been subject to formal staff and union engagement and consultation.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

No ward implications

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

9.1 There are two options for consideration:

Option1

Endorse the decision made to delete the post and the new arrangements to discharge the key functions

Option 2

Reinstate the post.

9.2 As the post makes a significant saving in line with the agreed budget proposals this



would result in a financial pressure which would have to be addressed elsewhere within with the service or wider Council.

- 9.3 The Executive are recommended to endorse the deletion of the post and alternative arrangements for the discharge of the function as agreed and implemented by the PTH restructure.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended -

- 10.1 The post of Development officer Mobility and inclusion is not reinstated and the new arrangements are endorsed.

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Petition to Council

11.2 Statement of lead petitioner to Full Council held on 13 December 2016

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

