

APPENDIX N

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE - 2 OCTOBER 2012

Title:

AIR QUALITY OFFICER AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH STAFFING

Portfolio Holder: Brian Adams/Bryn Morgan

Wards Affected: All

Summary and purpose:

Dialogue regarding the potential for Waverley to provide some specialist Environmental Health functions to Guildford Borough Council has been underway in recent months. This conversation has focused specifically on PPC (Pollution Prevention and Control), PWS (Private Water Supplies) and AQ (Air Quality).

In light of this work, and the imminent departure of this Council's Air Quality Officer in mid-October 2012, it is felt that a review of the delivery of these specialist functions should be undertaken.

This review has resulted in a proposal to increase the establishment, to enhance the existing Air Quality and Sustainability aspects of the role, to bring PPC (which is currently contracted-out) in-house, and to provide sufficient capacity to adequately deliver the council's newly-acquired PWS functions.

Executive Members are requested to endorse the proposed approach.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

This report supports the overall Environment and Leisure & Lives priorities included in the Corporate Plan. In support of the Council's Service Plan objective to improve air quality in the Borough, it is proposed that the scope and duties of these posts are enhanced, by joining up sustainability and carbon reduction functions.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

Waverley treats all individuals consistently and fairly regardless of age, sex, gender, disability and sexual orientation and to ensure that individual's rights under data protection and human rights legislation is protected. The recommendations of this report are in line with these principles.

Environment and Climate Change Implications:

These posts are partly responsible for contributing to improvements in Waverley's Climate Change Policy, through reducing air pollution, educating residents and businesses about pollution and through consultations during the planning process.

Resource/Value for Money Implications:

The proposals in this report would result in an overall increase in the establishment of 0.8fte posts.

It is anticipated that 0.3fte of this cost will be offset by the retention of income that is currently paid to external contractors and/or currently not generated as the relevant PWS inspections have not yet commenced.

On this basis, it is estimated that the net additional full year cost of this proposal is £16,400 for which there is no budget currently.

Furthermore, there is a risk that if the projected level of income (estimated at £16,000) is not generated, any shortfall would need to be offset by savings in other budgets.

The additional 0.5fte Sustainability role is to be funded by a virement of up to £10,000 in 2012/13 from overall savings as identified in the mid-year budget review, earlier in the agenda; thereafter to be financed from ongoing savings of £16,400 to be achieved as part of the 2013/14 Star Chamber/ Budget process.

Legal Implications:

The creation of a further Air Quality & Environment resource would support the Council to meet its statutory duties regarding maintaining good air quality within the Borough and the sustainability objectives in its current Service Plan.

1. Background

- 1.1. Dialogue between this Council and Guildford Borough Council has been underway in recent months, regarding the potential for Waverley to provide some specialist support to them on an ongoing basis. The specific Environmental Health functions that have been discussed are PPC (Pollution Prevention and Control), PWS (Private Water Supplies) and AQ (Air Quality).
- 1.2. Waverley's existing specialist Air Quality Officer will be leaving the part-time (0.7fte) post in mid-October. The duties, skills and knowledge required to undertake this role are key elements of the shared services discussions. Of this post, currently 0.5fte is allocated to air quality work and 0.2fte to pollution control, contaminated land work.
- 1.3. It is proposed to increase the establishment by 0.8fte, or just over 29 hours per week, to 1.5 posts and utilise the increased capacity to develop the sustainability and air quality agendas, to undertake PPC work (a function which is currently contracted out), and duties resulting from the neighbouring authority or incumbent through existing legislation. These proposals will also provide the basis for increased growth if shared service demands continue to develop.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Environmental Health Service's Environmental Protection (EP) Team carries out a number of functions, including the Council's responsibilities for the control of pollution. This in turn comprises: Air Quality Management,

Pollution Prevention and Control (through a permitting process), the Contaminated Land Strategy and Private Water Supply functions.

- 2.2. Air Quality Management is a specialised role that requires considerable technical knowledge and skills. Local Authorities are legally obliged to provide local air quality monitoring and approximately half of a post is employed on this function. There is scope to provide a wider service by increasing the capacity of this post.
- 2.3. Sustainability and carbon reduction duties are undertaken by the Council's Sustainability Manager. In the past, common ground has been identified and initiatives meeting both agendas (Schools projects on lesson plans for pollution reduction and a pollution reduction art competition) have been delivered jointly by the Sustainability Manager and the Air Quality Officer.
- 2.4. Waverley is also obliged to ensure Permitted Processes (premises where polluting process are controlled through issuing a Permit with operating conditions). This is currently managed internally with inspections undertaken by an external contractor. Under this proposal, it is recommended that this function be brought back in-house and the income from Permits used to resource this rather than using it to meet contractor costs.
- 2.5. Waverley's Contaminated Land Strategy is the subject of a report to be considered at the Executive's November meeting (due to recent changes in central government guidance); this function is covered through the 0.2fte of the air quality officer and a further 0.8 FTE Pollution Control Officer post.
- 2.6. Private Water Supply duties are the subject of recently-revised legislation (since January 2010) whereby all such supplies within Waverley must be risk-assessed within a 5-year period. The highest risk locations in Waverley are either assessed or nearing completion – this includes sources such as springs, wells and boreholes which provide drinking water to a variety of premises. The regime also requires all PDNs (Private Distribution Networks) to be risk assessed within the 5 year period.
- 2.7. PDNs are water supplies that enter premises through a piped distribution network that is privately owned, even if the source water is from the mains. Premises such as hospitals, schools, shopping centres, industrial estates and similar may have PDNs. Thames Water has identified networks in Waverley that are potential PDNs, and these must be programmed for assessment. A programme covering 18 additional assessments per annum would generate an income of around £9,000 and help to meet the current deadline. There may be some external costs associated with this service.
- 2.8. These existing and newly identified duties support the establishment of 1.5 FTEs, as follows
 - 1 FTE- Air Quality, Contaminated Land, PPC and PWS
 - 0.5FTE- Air Quality & Sustainability Officer

2.9. The successful outcome of discussions with neighbouring authorities could generate further work and income – these options will depend on the technical skills being present within the Team and being properly supported. The net cost of the creation of these two posts in the place of the existing 0.7FTE is £16,400.

2.10. Clearly, should these proposals be endorsed, both new roles would be subject to job evaluation. However, based on current experience it is anticipated that a combined Air Quality/ PPC/ PWS & Contaminated Land role is likely to attract a scale 6 salary, whilst the 0.5 FTE sustainability role is expected to be evaluated at a scale 8. Based on these assumptions, a comparison between the current position and the potential financial implications of the change are set out in the tables below:

Current – Air Quality Officer

Post Functions	FTE	Scale	Budget (Incl. oncosts)
Air Quality	0.5	8	16,400
Contaminated Land	0.2	8	6,600
Total	0.7		£23,000

Proposed – 1.5 FTE- Air Quality/ Sustainability/ PPC/ PWS

Post Functions	FTE	Scale	Costs (Incl. oncosts)
Air Quality	0.5	6	18,000
Contaminated Land	0.2	6	7,200
Waverley PPC element	0.2	6	7,200
Waverley PWS element	0.1	6	3,600
Sustainability functions	0.5	8	16,400
Potential additional costs of PPC/PWS work			3,000
Total	1.5		£55,400
Less – estimated income:			
-PPC			-7,000
-PWS			-9,000
Total			£39,400
Net additional Cost			£16,400

2.11. If an element of the above (e.g. some PPC or AQ work alone) is subject to shared services it should be possible to absorb this in the new establishment; if all elements come through in the future the resources will need reviewing in light of this.

2.12. If the proposals contained in this report are endorsed, it is proposed that new Job descriptions are drafted and evaluated, and that the recruitment process commences as soon as possible.

Recommendation

That the Executive recommend to Council to Increase the establishment to 1.5FTE posts in the place of the existing 0.7FTE Air Quality Officer post, covering the duties of air quality, environment, PPC, PWS and contaminated land; And

That the Executive resolve to agree:

1. A virement of up to £10,000 from the overall underspend for part-year and start-up costs in 2012/13; and
2. Ongoing funding of £16,400 for the staff changes in subsequent years to be achieved through savings identified in the budget-setting process.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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