

AGENDA ITEM NO. ....22.....

To: PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: AMENDMENTS TO POLICY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICE STRUCTURE
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 20 February 2002	Ref: CMcA/EH/REP839	

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Committee to make amendments to the Policy and Economic Development structure as outlined in the Planning & Environment Department's restructuring plan.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 In March 2001, the Committee approved the conclusions of a departmental review and restructuring. Implementation of the review has been ongoing since this date and most posts are filled.

## 3.0 Economic Policy Officer Amendments

- 3.1 In order to fully implement the restructuring and address emerging operational issues a number of amendments to the original plan require to be made. These include changes to the Economic Policy Officer posts.
- 3.2 The original structure included 2 Policy Officers and 8 Economic Development Officer posts. Due to changes in the nature of the work being undertaken by the teams, there has been an underestimation of the policy support required. It is therefore proposed that the number of Policy Officers be increased to 3 and the number of Economic Development Officers be reduced to 7.
- 3.3 In the previous structure one of the Economic Development officers did undertake mainly social exclusion policy work as part of his remit. This post is now vacant and it is proposed that this post be moved to the Policy Team and be re-titled as a Policy Officer. The work of the Corporate Working Groups, implementation of Charter Mark and Best Value Initiatives, the Council taking lead in the European Equal Initiative have all lead to increased demand on policy support.
- 3.4 At present only one Policy Officer is in post and recruitment has been ongoing to fill the remaining vacancy. Despite advertising the post twice the number of applications has been minimal. A short list of 3 was drawn up and interviews were held but no suitable appointment could be made.
- 3.5 After some analysis, it was concluded that the post being advertised covered too wide a remit to attract someone with experience in all areas. The main duties of the job related to service improvement initiatives such as Best Value, EFQM, Charter Mark and economic policy issues. It is considered that if the remit was split to specialise in either service development or economic policy, the post would be open to more applicants.

3.6 It is therefore proposed that 1 post re-titled as a Service Development Officer and the existing post of Economic Policy officer have job descriptions amended to reflect more focused remits. Copies of the job descriptions are available.

#### **4.0 Personnel**

4.1 Personnel are aware of the proposed changes and discussions are on-going to seek approval of all the changes.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

5.1 The changes to the Policy Officer posts will enable more effective recruitment to take place and therefore the appointment of more experienced staff. Attempts to recruit under the existing job titles and job descriptions have failed twice and delayed the filling of these vacancies by over six months, which has had an impact on progressing several key initiatives within the Department. It is important that improvements to the restructure can be recognised and amendments made.

#### **6.0 Recommendation**

6.1 It is recommended the Committee approve the following changes to the Planning & Environment Department's structure as follows :-

6.2 An Economic Development Officer be re-designated as an Economic Policy Officer.

6.3 A Policy Officer post be re-designated as a Service Development Officer.

6.4 This report be referred to the Policy & Resources (Personnel) Sub-Committee.



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