

Report to: **Executive**

Date: **28th January 2021**

Title: **Future Localities Service**

Portfolio Area: **Customer First**
Portfolio holder: Cllr Nicky Hopwood

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance **N**
obtained:

Authors: **Cllr Nicky Hopwood** Role: **Portfolio holder; Customer First**

Sarah Moody **Business Manager (Case Management)**

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RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive RESOLVES to:

- 1) To approve Four additional seasonal posts to operate from 01st April until 30th September (inclusive) each year; and approve an additional £25,000 be built into the establishment base budget each year to meet the additional costs; and**
- 2) Note the new structure and approach set out in the report and agree to the implementation of the new service from April 1st 2021**

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1** At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel in September 2019, it was resolved to form a Task & Finish Group to review the Localities service and its future function (Minute O&S.25/19 refers).
- 1.2** Subsequently, a report was submitted to The Overview and Scrutiny panel in November 2020 setting out clear recommendations for the Localities service which would support the Council's emerging corporate strategy and were also reflective of the Council's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic (Minute O&S 25/20 refers).

- 1.3 The Portfolio holder and Lead Officers have considered the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group and have determined a new structure; including new roles to reflect the seasonality of the South Hams.
- 1.4 This report sets out the proposed changes for Members to consider to deliver on the Task and Finish Group recommendations and includes the associated costs of the new operating model.
- 1.5 The work of the Task and Finish Group is acknowledged, with Members and Officers working closely together to scope out the concluding recommendations.

2. Background

- 1.1 The Localities team have been operating for over five years and its creation was a key and innovative part of the Councils transformation programme.
- 1.2 The Localities Team act as a liaison and support service to Elected Members, residents and visitors to the South Hams. The service also undertakes work on behalf of a number of services across the organisation.
- 1.3 Following the Extended Leadership Team restructure in 2019, the team are now managed by the Business Manager for Case Management, supported by the Localities Team Leader.
- 1.4 Since its inception, the Localities service has not been reviewed and it's Operational and strategic direction has lost focus over time, with both Officers and Elected Members unclear on its purpose.
- 1.5 Currently the Localities service only operates core hours Monday to Friday with any weekend working requested on a voluntary basis incurring overtime costs.

3. Future Locality service - Outcome

- 1.6 The Task and Finish Group set out a clear set of recommendations to ensure the Council delivers on its emerging priorities. Therefore careful consideration has been given to the Operational delivery of this to ensure a robust and 'fit for purpose' service without compromising current work tasks and responsibilities. A number of proposals outlined below for Members to consider will deliver on these:
 - 1.6.1 The implementation of a seasonal calendar to operate seven days a week through the 'High season' to reflect the high footfall of visitors through the District at this time (Appendix B). In the event of Easter falling before 01st April in a Calendar year, then the 'High Season' will be brought forward in these years to ensure that the increased service provision is in operation;
 - 1.6.2 Recruit four additional seasonal posts from 01st April to 30th September each year to assist with work load, provide resilience and the ability to re prioritise workload at short notice. This is consistent with other seasonal services such as the Grounds Maintenance service. (Please see Appendix A which sets out the structure)

1.6.3 Restructure the service, redefining roles and responsibilities to;

- provide a consistent visible presence within the community
- provide clarity to Members and communities about who does what
- enable officers to focus on problem solving in the field
- move administrative tasks to a central function

1.7 All of the Council's operational workforce are now managed by the Business Manager - Case Management, therefore to ensure a fair and consistent approach to Operational delivery, it is proposed that the following teams are included as part of the wider localities function (please see further details in Appendix C):

- Environmental Protection Case Managers
- Waste Case Managers
- Civil Enforcement Officers

By merging the teams together, there is the ability to raise the profile of the Council through more on-street visibility when it is needed most and increased public & business engagement. The outcome will be a consistent approach to education, enforcement and contract monitoring with the aims of improving environmental quality, encouraging tourism and supporting the positive reputation of the Council.

1.7.1 It is proposed to 'rebrand' the team to recognise the expansion and the new operating model. This will ensure the wider organisation, residents and visitors of the South Hams understand the role of the Officers within their communities.

2 Financial considerations

2.1 As per the proposed structure there is a budget pressure of £25,000 which is required to be built into the salary base budget each year. This pressure derives from the four additional seasonal posts (from 1 April to 30 September) that will be required to support delivery each year.

3 Options available and consideration of risk – future recommendations;

3.1 The Executive are asked to consider and agree the proposed recommendations as set out in the report.

3.2 There is a reputational risk of not adopting the proposals in particular during the summer months when footfall in the South Hams is high. This would impact the street scene and public engagement with visitors and local Business's.

6 Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Executive is responsible for recommending the Revenue Budget Proposals on an annual basis to Council.
Financial	Y	To acknowledge and approve an additional £25,000 to be built into the staffing establishment base budget each year to meet the additional staffing costs associated with the seasonal posts.
Risk	N	
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	
Safeguarding	N	
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	
Other implications	N	

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A – Proposed structure

Appendix B – Seasonal calendar

Appendix C – Team working