

For publication

Capacity to support work on HS2 (R000)

Meeting:	Joint Cabinet and Employment and General Committee
Date:	7 th March 2017
Cabinet portfolio:	Economic Growth
Report by:	Michael Rich, Executive Director

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1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To outline the case for additional time-limited resource for work to support HS2 proposals for a station and depot in the borough.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree that provision within reserves of £100k made by Council on 23rd February should be used to fund a time-limited project manager post to lead and coordinate the work required by the council on HS2.
- 2.2 To establish a post in line with the draft job description set out at appendix A and delegate to the Executive Director approval of a final version.

3.0 Report details

- 3.1 A parallel report to Cabinet sets out the latest position regarding the proposals for HS2 that include a maintenance depot in

Staveley and high speed services stopping at Chesterfield station. The approach being taken by the council is described in the Cabinet report and a draft response to the current consultation is also set out.

- 3.2 The report notes the increased expectation on the council to work with partners to support the case for a station and depot and develop more detailed plans for how this can be delivered and how the benefits can be maximised.
- 3.3 At present, the work is being undertaken by several officers within the development and growth service, overseen by an Executive Director. However, the amount of activity required by the council, in order to maintain its reputation and deliver strong proposals that will ultimately lead to investment in the borough, is increasing. Officers currently engaged are also working on a number of key development schemes around the borough and delivering the revision to the local plan.
- 3.4 Given the scale of the opportunity for the borough and the competing demands on officers, it is considered that additional capacity is required to ensure work is carried out in a timely manner and of the quality necessary.
- 3.5 At its meeting on 23rd February, Council approved a Budget that included provision for up to £100k to be used from the Service Improvement Reserve to fund additional capacity to work on HS2. This was subject to Joint Cabinet and Employment and General Committee approving the case for this resource and establishing a post(s).
- 3.6 The preferred use of this resource is a dedicated project manager post for a two year period. A draft job description is provided at appendix A. The model for this role has been the recently approved Northern Gateway project manager post. As with that project, there is considered to be significant value in having the right skills in place dedicated to a single project and able to drive it forward on behalf of the council.
- 3.7 Key activities for the postholder are set out in appendix one. In summary, the role would ensure that the work the council is required to do to support the case for a station and depot and

maximise the benefits for the borough is delivered on time and to quality. This would be through strong project management and partnership working, to ensure others within and outside the council are contributing as required, as well as through directly delivering tasks themselves. Internal project management and governance will be put in place to ensure the work of the project manager is suitably directed and performance managed.

3.8 The grade for the post is still being finalised through the job evaluation process but is likely to be around scale 12, with approximate total costs of £50k p.a. The allocation within reserves would act as a cap on the overall expenditure and if the final salary costs exceeded £50k p.a. then the post would be reduced in duration in order to fit within the available budget.

3.9 The draft job description has been shared with the county council for comment in order to avoid duplication of activity with officers already working on HS2.

4.0 **Human resources/people management implications**

4.1 The post would be time limited, likely to be around 2 years. The post would sit within the economic development team with line management arrangements to be confirmed.

4.2 The post will be advertised externally and the experience of recruitment to the Northern Gateway post used to inform the approach.

5.0 **Financial implications**

5.1 As noted above, council has made provision of up to £100k from the Service Improvement Reserve to fund this post over the next two years. The provision would act as a cap with the duration of the post limited to that affordable within this budget.

5.2 The postholder would be responsible for overseeing the use of other funding from D2N2 and SCR for specialist studies, masterplanning etc.

6.0 **Legal and data protection implications**

6.1 The postholder will be required to comply with the council's policies and made aware of statutory duties and data protection issues.

7.0 **Consultation**

7.1 The proposal to establish this post does not place any existing staff at risk and therefore no consultation has been carried out.

8.0 **Risk management**

8.1 Key risks are considered in the parallel report to Cabinet. In addition to these, there is a risk that the council fails to recruit to this post. Mitigation will include evaluation of the recent process for the Northern Gateway post to learn from that experience.

9.0 **Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

9.1 No assessment has been undertaken. Recruitment will be carried out in line with council policies which are compliant with equalities duties.

10.0 **Alternative options and reasons for rejection**

10.1 A number of alternatives to recruiting a dedicated project manager have been considered. Firstly, the council could continue to allocate work to current officers and potentially deprioritise other activity in order to generate more capacity for work on HS2. This option has not been pursued since officers with the relevant skills are already working at capacity on existing priorities, such as strategic growth projects, or statutory activities, such as the revision to the local plan.

10.2 Another option considered is to use resources to fund further consultancy work to project manage as well as undertake specialist studies. This has been discounted as it will be far less cost effective than directly employing a member of staff and will not provide appropriate ownership of the project by the council.

10.3 A further option is to allocate some additional hours and/or establish part time roles rather than have a single postholder. This would have a potential advantage of greater resilience, but

would lose the benefit of having dedicated and focused capacity to drive the project and avoid competing calls on postholders.

11.0 **Recommendations**

11.1 To agree that provision within reserves of £100k made by Council on 23rd February should be used to fund a time-limited project manager post to lead and coordinate the work required by the council on HS2.

11.2 To establish a post in line with the draft job description set out at appendix A and delegate to the Executive Director approval of a final version.

12.0 **Reasons for recommendations**

12.1 To ensure the council has sufficient capacity to lead the work required to support HS2 proposals for a station and depot in the borough.

Decision information

Key decision number	719
Wards affected	All
Links to Council Plan priorities	Thriving Borough

Document information

Report author	Contact number/email
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Background documents These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>N/a</i>	
Appendices to the report	

Appendix A	Draft job description
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