



Personnel Sub-Committee - 05 November 2018

Request for an additional Waste Management Officer

Purpose of report

This report seeks permission to create a new post within the Waste Team to address emerging capacity needs, which include resilience for officers engaged in emerging Unitary transitional activities, a Twywell Hills and Dales Dog Initiative and spatial mapping of waste infrastructure and collection rounds.

1.0 Background relating to Union Support for Unitary transition.

- 1.1 The Council and its officers are starting to give consideration to and make preparations for the possible move to a new Unitary configuration for Northamptonshire if the Secretary of State accepts the proposal submitted by this and other councils.
- 1.2 When the Council Leader and Chief Executive briefed staff in September on the proposals, and the impact for them with regard to the transition toward Unitary, it was stated that the Council would invest in the existing workforce to ensure that they are best placed to succeed in any future authority.
- 1.3 It is anticipated that one of the areas of significant workload will be the requirement for the existing Union officials to join a number of projects and meetings which specifically relate to work on transition to the new Unitary arrangements. These new requirements are in addition to the existing Union officials' current commitments to provide trade union representation to the organisation and provide advocacy and support for staff who have experienced individual workplace issues. In addition, Union personnel have experienced an increase in the numbers of ENC staff who are requiring a range of support in relation to stress related issues which are being experienced across the whole organisation, some of which can be attributed to the uncertainty arising from the potential creation of the new Unitary Councils. .
- 1.4 During April 2017 to March 2018 the Council made a contribution which was equivalent to 0.036% of its total staff costs for Union activities. During the period of April 2018 to present the proposals for additional shared services with Borough Council of Wellingborough have already begun to create an additional workload for Union officials and this piece of work is only the first of what could be a number of similar projects. It is estimated that the amount of time for the current financial year will be closer to 0.72% of the total staff costs. The remainder of the time that Union officials commit to these matters is voluntary. It is anticipated that further substantial increases will follow if the proposals are accepted. It should be noted that union representation is not equally shared across the Council, with three of the senior staff who provide Unison support located within the Environmental Services team.

2.0 Background relating to requirements specific to services provided by the Waste Team

- 2.1 Following the commencement of our new Waste Collection and Cleansing contract, and in order to begin preparation for the waste service transition to Unitary, it is necessary to undertake some work to accurately review and map all of the existing resources that are provided by the Council in respect of the waste management and street cleansing service and translate this information into spatial mapping that can be managed as a layer on the Council's Geographical Information System (GIS) and link directly with the Council's website.
- 2.2 There are a number of resources such as the location of litter bins and locations with special arrangements that currently are not mapped into the Council GIS system. In order to ensure that the service is prepared for the transition to Unitary this need to be captured prior to any work is undertaken to consider further optimisation.
- 2.3 There is a close link with the waste team and the GIS officer as much of the information available to customers, regarding collection days other information is collected and managed utilising the ArcGIS software and is directly linked to the Councils' website. In addition the Council's GIS officer has been undertaking, while on secondment to the waste team, all of the route optimisation work. This has been a key element of optimising the existing waste collections to ensure maximum efficiency is achieved with a view to the reduction of fuel and time costs.
- 2.4 In addition there has been additional work by the seconded GIS Officer to map all of the areas that the Council is responsible under its Grounds Maintenance contract and they has been instrumental in improving the contract management element of this service, by enabling officers to have improved information relating to the exact size, location and frequency of cuts for land maintained under this contract. This work has delivered a significant improvement in the ability of the Council to adequately monitor this contractor and as a result the general service has improved on the Grounds Maintenance contract. We anticipate this additional post providing local support on GIS to mitigate against an anticipated ongoing shortage of personnel with experience of working with GIS

3.0 Background relating to requirements specific to the Dog Ambassador Programme at Twywell Hills and Dales

- 3.1 Twywell Hills and Dales is a former ironstone quarry recognised as being an important area for nature conservation, heritage, amenity value and a site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site was purchased from British Steel in 1994 and is wholly owned by ENC. Areas of this site have been difficult to manage due to ongoing conflicting requirements of the dog owners.
- 3.2 As part of the overall work to be conducted on this site, there is a proposal by The Land Trust to undertake a 'Dog Ambassador Programme'. It is their proposal that the Council make provision for a dedicated officer for a minimum of two days a week to be deployed to the site to promote responsible behaviours for all of the various user groups to the site, but in particular dog walkers to ensure that any livestock grazing on the site are not disturbed. It is anticipated that the site will require this level of resource for at least the first year due to the current issues on site.
- 3.3 Funding identified by the Head of Customer & Community Services indicates that there are only sufficient resources to dedicate one to two hours additional hours per week to the site.

4.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

4.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

5.0 Privacy Impact Implications

5.1 There are no privacy implications as part of this proposal.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 There are legal implications placed on the Council with respect to the SSSI element of the Twywell site and the placement of grazing livestock is a requirement to discharging these requirements. Without the deployment of officers to the site to ensure responsible behaviours from users with dogs at this location site, it is not possible to allow livestock to graze.

6.2 Section 168 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 –
(1) An employer shall permit an employee of his who is an official of an independent trade union recognised by his employer to take time of during his working hours for the purposes of carrying out any duties of his, as such an official with regards to matters relating to collective bargaining, employee issues, consultations relating to contractual changes or transfers undertaken in line with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) and other relevant workplace representation matters.

7.0 Risk Management

7.1 Failure to adequately manage and protect a site that is designated as an SSSI can lead to enforcement action being taken by Natural England.

7.2 Lack of in house expertise with regard to the use of the GIS system has an impact for all areas of the Council as there are ongoing requirements for spatial mapping across most departments. In addition this post provides additional resilience to the IT team who are currently experiences extreme staff shortages.

8.0 Resource and Financial Implications

8.1 The additional post has been undergone a job evaluation and has been evaluated at a Grade 6, an officer at the top of the grade is at a cost of £39,478 to include all on costs. A contribution of £2,000 will be made from the Community Safety budget with respect of the Dog Ambassador element.

A contribution of £24,000 will be made from the Corporate support budget with respect of the Union backfill arrangements

The remaining £14,000 will be met from within the existing waste services budgets.

9.0 Constitutional Implications

9.1 The proposal does not have any constitutional implications.

10.0 Implications for our Customers

10.1 The additional resources deployed will improve the general response times for the waste management team and will ensure ongoing high level service delivery and customer complaint resolution with regard to the waste management service and the responsible behaviours the team promotes.

11.0 Corporate Outcomes

- 11.1 This proposal contributes to the following corporate outcomes;
- Good Quality of Life – All of the services provided by the Waste team contribute to improving environmental quality and additional resilience in the team will ensure the council can respond to issues which affect that.
 - Effective Partnership Working – The Dog Ambassador programme will be provided in partnership with all stakeholders for the Twywell Site.
 - Effective Management – Optimised route planning to minimise unnecessary labour and travelling costs for cleansing, waste collection and patrol activities.

12.0 Recommendation

12.1 The Committee is recommended to approve the request for an additional Waste Management Officer to undertake the tasks as described.

(Reason – The Council and customers will receive the maximum benefit from the option proposed)

Legal	Power: <i>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981</i>				
	Other considerations:				
Background Papers:	Finance Sub-Committee - 18 Dec 17 – Agenda Item 8 – Future Vision for Twywell Hills and Dales				
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