

Appointments and Staffing Committee

15 January 2020

Report of the Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration

Planning Services Re-organisation

Exempt Information

Not applicable.

Purpose of the Report

- To agree a revised staffing structure and new approach to the delivery of the Planning Service.

Recommendations

That the Committee-

1. Approves the deletion from the Council's staffing establishment of the following roles:
 - Senior Development Management Officer – Grade G
 - Senior Policy and Delivery Officer – Grade G
2. Approves the permanent addition to the Council's staffing establishment of the following roles:
 - Head of Planning – Grade I
 - Planning Information and Monitoring Officer – Grade E
3. Authorise the Head of Paid Service to implement the changes.

Executive Summary.

A review of senior posts within the planning team has been undertaken following the emergence of a number of vacancies.

It is proposed to delete the two senior planning officer posts, both of which are vacant, and establish a Head of Planning post and a Planning Information and Monitoring Officer post.

The proposed changes will provide stability across the service and the technical expertise at the appropriate level within the structure.

Background Information

The previous AD of Growth and Regeneration (AD G&R) in 2018/19 re-organised both Environmental Health and Planning Services. Following the re-organisation a number of unintended consequences have ensued leaving vacancies in senior positions across both service areas. Whilst creating short terms issues for the current AD G&R the number of vacancies creates an opportunity to revisit the re-organisation and determine if it remains fit for purpose.

Post 1: Head of Planning

The current structure includes a Head of Regulatory Services role which oversees, leads and manages the work of the Environmental Health Team and the Planning Development Management team. The Senior Policy and Delivery officer reports directly into the AD G&R post (Appendix A).

On the one hand delivering Environmental Health and Development Management via one service head has benefits. Both services are process driven, regulatory in their nature and have parent committees for additional scrutiny in decision making. However, the legislation governing Environmental Health and Planning is diverse and different and will separately require a high level of knowledge, technical expertise and a significant level of experience. The amalgamation of these two different disciplines into one service head role creates a problem either on the Environmental Health side or the Development Management side simply because any individual in that role would never be in a position to have the required and relevant experience of both. Re-organisation therefore at the Head of service level will better reflect the different legislative frameworks and align posts more accurately to these complex, contentious and often controversial service areas.

It is therefore proposed to split the Head of Regulatory Services post into two. The Head of Environmental Health role has already been advertised and successfully filled. It was felt that because this job reflected the previous post, prior to the re-organisation, that it did not require further sign off through the Appointments and Staffing Committee. A Job Evaluation of this post resulted in the same salary band as before. Therefore there are no financial implications from this post.

It is proposed to create a new post titled 'Head of Planning' which will oversee the work of the Development Management team and the Planning Policy team. This new post has been through Job Evaluation and the resulting salary band determined to be an I, which is consistent with the other Head of Service positions within the G & R directorate.

To facilitate a new Head of Planning role it is proposed to remove permanently from the structure the two senior planning officer posts. This is regrettable because the previous post holders, both of whom left following the reorganisation, were both very skilled in their respective specialist areas and had a lot to contribute. That said, the AD G&R is herself a Chartered Town Planner with almost 25 years of planning experience mostly in Local Government. That experience includes leading on and preparing a Local Plan from start to finish whilst at the same time managing an extremely busy and dynamic development management service. Whoever is

successful in being appointed as the Head of Planning will have the experience and support from the AD of Growth and Regeneration, which over time will be transferred.

It is anticipated that the Head of Planning will have a strategic role to play to ensure that the Borough Council continues to operate its planning service within the legislation that governs it. It is not expected that the Head of Service will themselves have a development management caseload of applications. They would however be expected to be the lead Council officer with a Section 78 appeal or Local Plan Examination. A role that requires skill, experience and the utmost professionalism, when representing the Borough Council.

At present the Development Management team has one senior planner and two planners, with a workload of approximately 50 applications between them. This work rate is considered to be low by the AD G&R based on her experiences elsewhere. The consequence of the removal of the Senior Development Management Planner will be that only two planners will transact the workload. Whilst this is considered acceptable in terms of capacity there is an issue of experience within the team. It will therefore be the case that the new Head of Planning and the AD G&R will have to support for the foreseeable future the two remaining planners within the team. As experience grows work rate will improve.

One of the two Development Management Planner posts whilst permanent and on the establishment, is actually filled on a temporary basis. To support the proposed changes at the head of service level it is necessary to permanently fill the post. This process has been completed.

Post 2: Planning Information and Monitoring Officer

The creation of a new post which has the title 'Planning Information and Monitoring Officer' is proposed to underpin and support the planning team generally and specifically to ensure that the policy team has the information required to support Local Plan production and ongoing delivery. Appendix B provides an outline of the current known monitoring tasks undertaken across a number of officers which will be pulled into the new post. The positive impact of this will be the ability of the two Planning policy and delivery officers to have more time to undertake duties associated with an impending Local Plan review. It also provides more capacity given that the senior post is proposed for deletion.

Job Profiles for each role in the proposed structure are shown at Appendix C.

Risks

The proposals above do not result in the need for the redundancy of any team members.

The planning service currently does not have any senior experienced planners within it nor a manager to oversee workload at a strategic level to deal with corporate matters, improvements to the service and to work with members of its parent planning committee. The existing structure would not necessarily result in a

head of service with any planning knowledge. The two senior planner roles when benchmarked against similar positions in neighbouring authorities are not competitive. Both of the senior planners that left the authority did so to positions with less responsibility yet higher salaries. It is felt that it would be unlikely that those positions would be filled if advertised. To ensure that the Planning Service can continue to function it would be necessary, at least on the Development Management side, to continue with an interim planning consultant. The cost of which would be £34 per hour.

Financial Impact

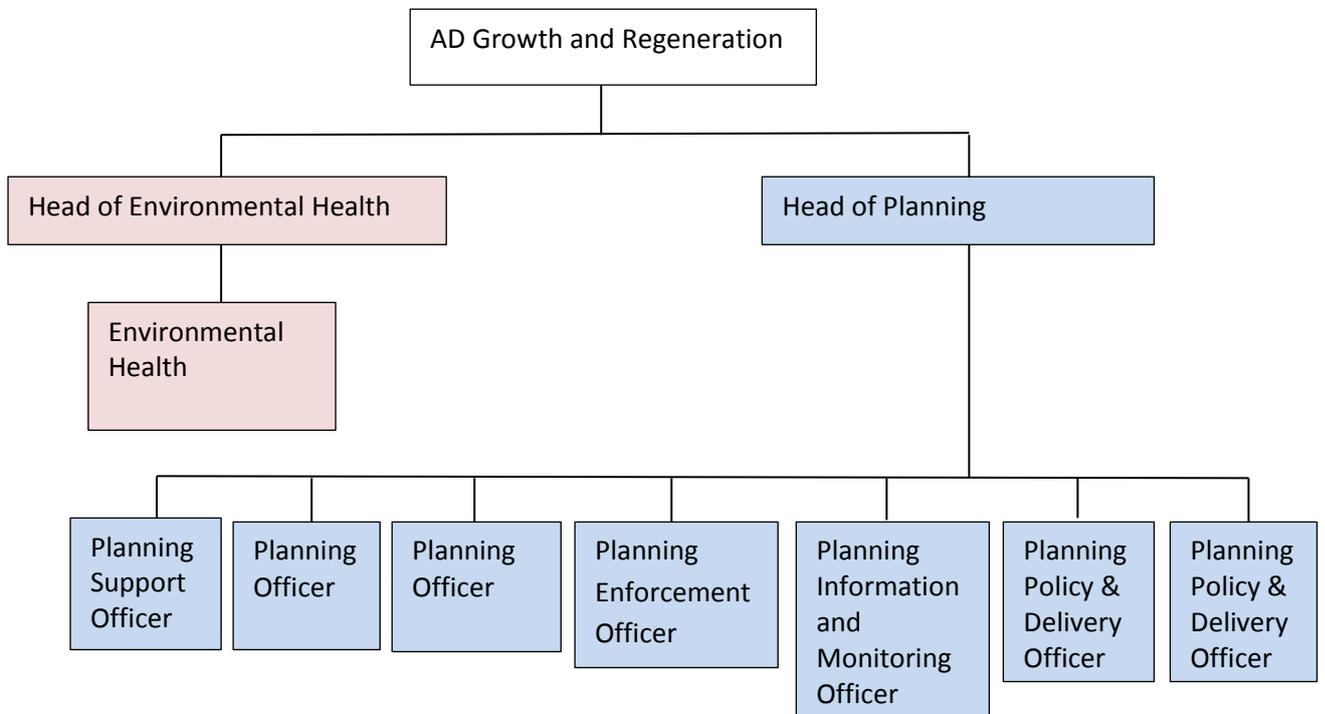
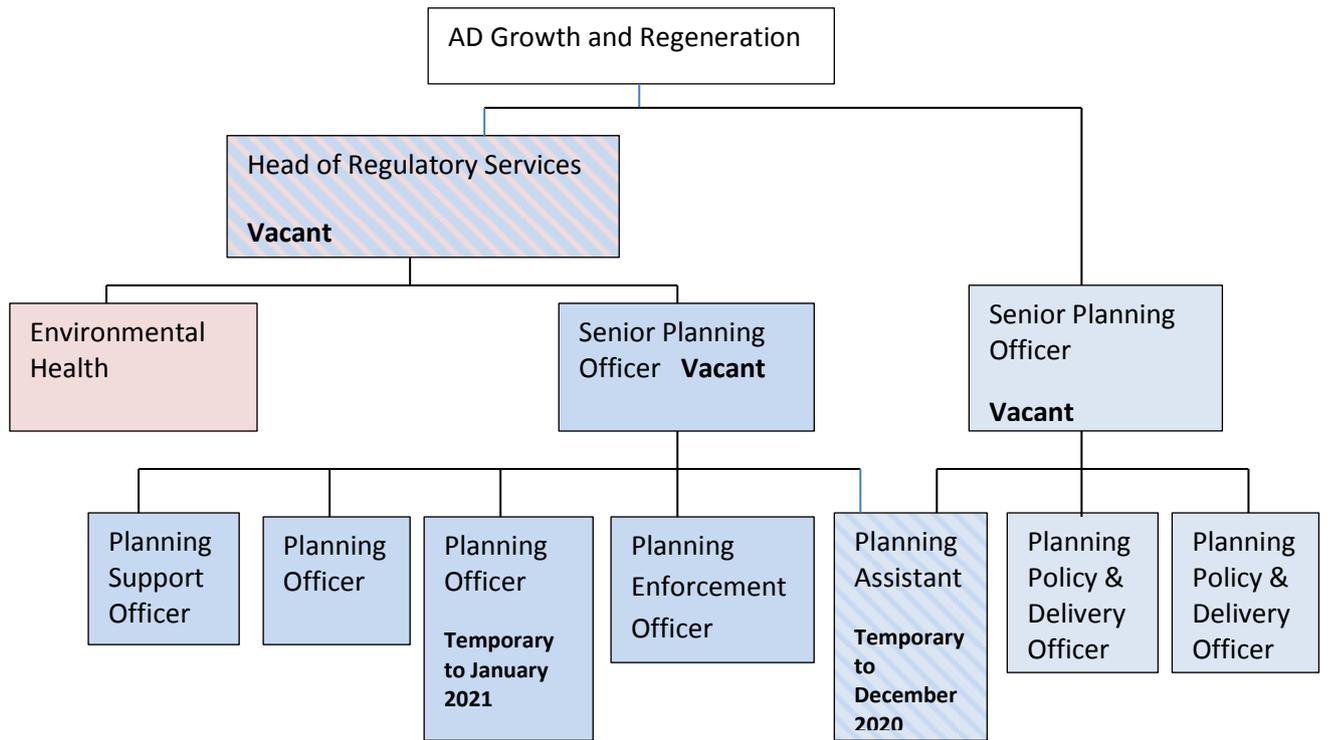
Appendix D sets out the proposed financial position when compared to the existing structure.

The existing structure has a total salary cost of £307,022.94. The proposed new structure has a total salary cost of £306,835.20 which represents a decrease in the budget of £187.74 in the first year. At Grade Maximums the existing structure has a salary cost of £319,292.00 when compared to the new structure which has a salary cost of £323,059.00 representing an increase in the budget of £3,767.40. This increase could be funded from within other existing budgets.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Current and Proposed New Structure
Appendix B: Monitoring Tasks
Appendix C: Job Profiles
Appendix D: Finance

Appendix A: Current Structure and Proposed New Structure



Appendix B: Monitoring tasks

- Maintain the monitoring database for permissions and s106 info and Exacom for CIL information
- Update the monitoring database with relevant info for new permissions on a weekly basis
- Respond to requests for information from other internal and external sources
- Respond to FoI requests within the appropriate timescales
- Liaise with Staffs County Council in relation to monitoring of developments where they are a signatory on the s106 agreement
- Carry out site visits for the purposes of monitoring development progress
- Monitor the delivery of housing across the Borough against Local Plan targets
- Monitor the delivery of affordable housing across the Borough against Local Plan targets for both number and tenure
- Monitor the delivery of employment development across the Borough against Local Plan targets
- Monitor the delivery of town centre uses within the relevant centres against Local Plan targets
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with the larger developers to assist in the monitoring of the larger sites across the Borough
- Monitor development progress on the three sustainable urban extension sites
- Carry out town centre vacancy rate survey on a quarterly basis
- Carry out periodic health checks on the local and neighbourhood centres
- Produce an Authority's Monitoring Report on an annual basis
- Produce a Housing Delivery Paper on an annual basis
- Establish and monitor the five year housing land supply figure
- Monitor the collection of s106 planning obligations and request payments as necessary
- Ensure s106 obligations are allocated appropriately
- Monitor spending of s106 income
- Send relevant letters and notices related to CIL within the necessary timescales
- Monitor collection of CIL income
- Contribute to the appropriate allocation on CIL funds
- Monitor spending of CIL income
- Contribute to the writing of the Infrastructure Funding Statement (not sure where the responsibility for this one is going to lie going forward?)
- Respond to landcharges search requests related to CIL (hopefully they will be able to find this info themselves from exacom going forward)
- Collect and report information required by MHCLG through DELTA including:
 - Housing Delivery Test
 - Green Belt Statistics
 - Housing Flow Reconciliation
- Maintain and update the Council's brownfield land register
- Maintain and update the Council's custom and self-build register and monitor permissions to ensure the appropriate number of permissions are being granted
- Contribute to the preparation of the local plan evidence base
- Contribute to the periodic review of the local plan in line with Government policy
- Contribute to the production of the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Monitor the progress of works for which conservation area grants have been applied
- Monitor the spending of the annual conservation areas grant budget

Appendix C: Job Profiles

JOB PROFILE HEAD OF PLANNING	
<p>Job Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting to the Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration to oversee the Planning service ensuring alignment with business goals and the delivery of statutory and non-statutory functions. • To effectively and efficiently manage staff and financial resources to maximum advantage. • To foster a collaborative culture that leads to working closely with other services and external organisations to ensure operational service delivery. 	<p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in either a town planning or an environmental health environment. • Experience of service transformation • Experience of managing and developing individuals and teams.
<p>Functional Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line manage the Planning Policy, Planning Enforcement and Development Management teams including carrying out annual appraisals of direct reports and ensuring the wider application of the appraisal process across teams, setting objectives and identifying training and development needs that support the development of highly skilled and motivated staff. • Lead the development of the Council's Local Plan including Local Plan examination. • Lead the identification, development and improvement of working practices, processes / procedures and systems to ensure consistency, effectiveness, quality and high customer care standards in the delivery of the Planning Service. • Document and update the relevant systems, processes and protocols for the Planning Service. • Maintain, develop and administer relevant IT systems. • Prepare briefs, written instructions, commission and ensure delivery of specialist advice to assist the delivery of Planning in relation to planning policy and development management. • Ensure the statutory requirements are performed to the highest standards. • Work with other colleagues and external partners to ensure that the work of the Planning Service contribute to the implementation of the objectives of the Corporate Plan and other relevant plans and strategies. • Provide advice to elected Members, senior officers and service users on areas of specialist / professional knowledge in a timely manner and to a high standard • Ensure that work is undertaken across service areas and the organisation to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of services and corporate projects • Ensure agenda and reports for relevant 	<p>Knowledge, Skills and Abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant degree or professional qualification in Town Planning or Environmental Health • A detailed knowledge of town planning or environmental health legislation and policy • A detailed knowledge of relevant processes and procedures • Budget management skills and an ability to balance resources • Knowledge of document management systems and environment and planning software • Strong leadership skills, with an ability to ensure the delivery of high levels of performance • Ability to create a climate where employees are involved, empowered and committed • Presentation skills to wide range of audiences • Skilful negotiator and ability to positively influence the perceptions of people internally and externally • Excellent organisational and interpersonal skills • Excellent attention to detail • Ability to work on own initiative • Skilled in managing time whilst balancing conflicting demands • Able to analyse data, solve problems and apply creative solutions, new concepts and untried ideas, including those untried in a Local Government setting • Full driving licence – this post attracts an Essential Car User Allowance

<p>Committees are prepared in a timely manner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget responsibility for all Planning Services budgets including expenditure. • Lead the development and implementation of annual service plans. • Identify and manage risks including the use of the corporate risk management system • Undertake all corporate requirements on health & safety, equal opportunities, data protection, safeguarding, risk management and financial regulations • Represent the council at external meetings as required • Attend and public enquiries as an expert witness • Deputise for the Assistant Director as required. 	
<p>Strategy/Policy Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming and Numbering • Validation criteria • Local Plan and associated evidence documents 	<p>Attributes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal credibility with a high degree of integrity • Resilient and resourceful in the face of conflict and uncertainty • Commands the confidence of members, staff and partners
<p>Additional Duties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as project manager on corporate projects 	
<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any other reasonable duties commensurate with the grade and general nature of the post. • Essential Car Users Allowance 	

JOB PROFILE – PLANNING INFORMATION AND MONITORING OFFICER	Scale E
<p>Job Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver the aims and objectives of Tamworth Borough Council and the Growth and Regeneration Business Plan. • To support and assist in delivering the Planning Service. 	<p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of and experience in demographics, economic, environment, housing or other planning research fields. • An interest in and a working knowledge of spatial planning policy. • Excellent IT skills.
<p>Functional Responsibilities</p> <p>Key responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish and maintain monitoring systems for the Planning Policy Team through the review and monitoring of relevant social, environmental and economic matters that will effect the development of robust sustainable land use policies and projects. Main duties include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identify and research key land-use and economic trends that will affect the sustainable development of the Borough. b) Monitor and analyse the development and demographic trends of the Borough, including use of national datasets and sources. c) Undertake relevant surveys of land use in the Borough and contribute to the formulation of related policy outcomes. d) Undertake site surveys and primary data collection and analysis, including a lead role in preparing reports or presentations as required. e) Liaise with other service areas across the Council and partner organisations engaged in research and information to contribute and ensure efficient planning data systems and research are developed. f) Establish, review and maintain a monitoring framework for Local Plan policies and the Sustainability Appraisal g) Establish, review and maintain the Council’s requirement to deliver a Local Authorities monitoring report. h) Update the Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment annually. i) Update and maintain a system for monitoring the Council’s housing land supply. j) Monitor, prepare and submit returns for national, regional and Borough requirements using information technology as appropriate. k) Monitor collection and spending of s.106 and CIL income 	<p>Knowledge, Skills and Abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sound basis of practical town planning skills • Knowledge of the Microsoft Office suite and other IT systems • Ability to use a variety of presentation and display equipment. • Keyboard/IT skills and systems. • Knowledge of GIS systems • Ability to drive with a full, clean Driving Licence. • Ability to interpret complex data; high level literacy and numeracy; good report writing and presentation skills. • Ability to lead and contribute effectively at meetings. • Able to organise workload effectively • Project management • Research skills and interpretation of data • To communicate effectively with members of the public • Ability to keep accurate records according to agreed systems • Strong listening skills • Ability to demonstrate consistent attention to detail. • Ability to operate effectively as a team member and on own initiative • Ability to work in partnership with other officers from the Council and external organisations.

<p>l) Contribute to the appropriate allocation of S.106 and CIL funds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To coordinate consultation associated with the preparation of planning documents. Main duties include the following: <p>m) Development of consultation/participation exercises.</p> <p>n) Maintenance and coordination of the Council's electronic consultations database.</p> <p>o) To desktop publish the Local Plan and other planning documents as necessary OR liaise with the Authority's mapping consultants as appropriate and assist in the management of document production.</p> <p>p) To produce draft documents and reports.</p> <p>q) To maintain service delivery to the highest standards.</p> <p>r) To undertake all corporate requirements on health and safety, equal opportunities, data protection, risk management and financial regulations.</p>	
<p>Strategy/Policy Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of planning related guidance and policy 	<p>Attributes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional attitude to work
<p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any other reasonable duties commensurate with the grade and general nature of the post. • Access to a car • Essential Car Users Allowance 	

Appendix D: Finance

Current Structure	Total Budget	At Max Grade
	£307,022.94	£319,292.00

New Structure	Total Budget	At Max Grade
	£306,835.20	£323,059.00

	(£187.74)	£3767.40
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