

OFFICER DECISION RECORD 1 FORM

This form should be used to record Officer Decisions in Excess of £100k (but below the key decision threshold), or where required by Financial, Contract or other Procedure Rules or following formal delegation from Cabinet or a Cabinet Member or a Council Committee.

Decision Reference No: PLACE24 0941

BOX 1

DIRECTORATE: PLACE

DATE: 31.1.24

Contact Name: Roy Sykes

Tel. No.: 01302 734555

Subject Matter: To accept £100k grant funding from DLUHC as part of the Planning Skills Delivery Fund ('PSDF') award for dealing with CDC's backlog planning applications.

DECISION TAKEN

To accept £100k from DLUHC under the PSDF to help deal with historic backlog applications and to commit to spending this money before end of March 2024.

REASON FOR THE DECISION

This will help to deal with our 'backlog' planning applications ensuring that they are prioritised on criteria such as age, transformational benefits and planning fee at risk of return. Staff are busy with current planning applications so this affords a 'one-off' opportunity to tackle the backlog that has built up since COVID and during periods of staffing reductions. This will be done via the temporary employment of 3 x agency Planning Officers (2 x for 6 months and 1 x 3 months with an option to extend by a further 3 months). These agency staff are due to begin with CDC from the w/c 5th February 2024 and as such, given the terms of the MOU received on 31.1.24 (see attached), CDC will have committed the spend of the £100k – as required by the MOU.

The project team will be led by Roy Sykes, Emma Keefe and Jenna Rumley who will manage the 3 x agency staff to ensure backlog applications are driven the forward to determination and in doing so, wherever possible, utilising extension of time agreements to ensure our planning performance is not adversely impacted.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

1. Not to accept the external funding awarded to numerous Local Planning Authorities in England to deal with the recognised concern – REJECTED.

BOX 5**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides the Council with a general power of competence, allowing the Council to do anything that individuals generally may do. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council the power to purchase goods and services. Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council the power to appoint staff.

The Council are receiving monies from DLUHC and those monies should be spent as agreed by DLUHC.

Name: S.R. Fawcus **Date:** 01.02.24

Name of Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services (or representative)

BOX 6**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

It is proposed to accept £100k funding from DLUHC as part of the Planning Skills Delivery Fund ('PSDF') for temporary employment of 3 x agency Planning Officers to alleviate CDC's backlog planning applications. The intending start date for the agency workers is the w/c 5th February 2024. The MOU states that the plans for the Project must be complete and they must be committed to spend the grant funding by the 31st March 2024.

The acceptance and proposed use of the grant will be subject to the S151 officer signing the Memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the DLUHC, on completion of this a Grant determination letter will be issued which sets out the financial terms and conditions under Section 31 grants. This will set out the terms and conditions of the grant and cover issues such as eligibility, claims, risks, claw back, exit strategies etc. The proposed grant is ring fenced to revenue which should be used for support with clearing planning applications backlogs or support with addressing skills gaps. Any expenditure incurred before all of these requirements are in place will be spent at risk.

FPR's also require that Directors are responsible for ensuring that action plans are in place (including exit strategies) for all external funding within the Directorate, including ensuring that all expenditure is in line with the agreement and identifying alternative funding for any associated costs, which cannot be recovered from the project funding, as per FPRs E9 to E15. The relevant director is also responsible for producing any necessary grant claims or returns required.

The proposed grant will need to be approved by CFO and relevant director in line with financial procedure rules below E.12 Any external funding received by the Council after the budget for the year has been approved, outside of rule E.9, E.10 and E.11, will be classed as a corporate resource unless otherwise determined by the CFO.,

Name: Cheryl Slade **Date:** 01/02/2024

Name of Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Director of Finance (or representative)

BOX 7

HR – have assisted with the procurement of agency staff via Reeds.

ICT – the need for ICT equipment and training during the 6 month duration of this project.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Name of Assistant Director (or representative)

ANY IMPLICATIONS SENT TO DEPARTMENTS SHOULD GENERALLY BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST 5 WORKING DAYS IN ADVANCE TO ENSURE THESE CAN BE GIVEN THE RELEVANT CONSIDERATION.

BOX 8

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS: Recruitment to the temporary positions have been carried out with HR assistance via our agency supplier – Reeds. A full induction and training will be provided.

BOX 9

RISK IMPLICATIONS: The main risk is the use of agency staff in terms of their ongoing commitment to the project, especially as the project draws to a close at the 6 month date. The money is external money from government and is being utilized via CDC’s contractual agreement with Reeds to get the best agency staff we can.

In addition, if Extensions of Time cannot be agreed between the Council and the applicant/agent - this may impact our performance figures as applications are determined (which is needed). This will need to be carefully managed through regular management and performance meetings as we approach the end of the FY reporting to government. However, seeing positive traction of the stalled backlog is likely to be positively welcomed by all parties.

BOX 10

CONSULTATION

Cllr Phil Cole (Portfolio for planning) has been fully briefed throughout the process and is supportive.

CeX, Director and Assistant Director are also fully supportive of this opportunity.

BOX 11
INFORMATION NOT FOR PUBLICATION

This award is in the public domain on .GOV webpages: [Planning Skills Delivery Fund \(year 1\): successful local authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). Therefore, it is in the public's interest to be aware of this decision record under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, therefore this decision will be published in full redacting signatures under section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, as the information is personal and sensitive and exempt from publication.

Name: A J Rowbotham **Date: 5th Feb 23** _____

Name of FOI Lead Officer for service area where ODR originates

BOX 12
BACKGROUND PAPERS

Please confirm if any Background Papers are included with this ODR **YES/NO**

(If YES please list and submit these with this form)

1. CDC's application form to DLUHC for the PSDF bid.
2. MOU from DLUHC dated 31.1.24 re: terms of the spend of the grant

**BOX 13
AUTHORISATION**

Name: Scott Cardwell Date: 07/02/24

Assistant Director Economy and Development

Does this decision require authorisation by the Chief Financial Officer or other Officer

YES

If yes please authorise below:

Name: Faye Tyas Signature: _____ Date: 21/02/24

Assistant Director of Finance & Technology & Chief Financial Officer

Consultation with Relevant Member(s)

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Designation _____

(e.g. Mayor, Cabinet Member or Committee Chair/Vice-Chair)

Declaration of Interest YES/NO

If YES please give details below:

PLEASE NOTE THIS FORM WILL BE PUBLISHED ON THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE IN FULL UNLESS IT CONTAINS EXEMPT OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.

Once completed a PDF copy of this form and any relevant background papers should be forwarded to Governance Services at Ladem@doncaster.gov.uk who will arrange publication.

It is the responsibility of the decision taker to clearly identify any information that is confidential or exempt and should be redacted before publication.