

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL – SERVICE UPDATE

FUNCTION	Place
CLUSTER	City Growth and Resources
DATE	25 th January 2019
TITLE OF UPDATE	Update on Recruitment of Developer Obligations Officer and Asset Plans
CHIEF OFFICER	Gale Beattie
REPORT AUTHOR	David Dunne

1. UPDATE - RECRUITMENT OF DEVELOPER OBLIGATIONS OFFICER

- 1.1 At City Growth and Resources Committee on 24/04/2018, committee instructed the Interim Chief Officer of Strategic Place Planning to report back to Committee in 9 months on recruitment and operation of the Developer Obligation Service. As the Developer Obligations officer is now in place and there are no recommendations to seek approval for, it was determined that a Service Update would be the appropriate route to update committee.
- 1.2 An initial round of internal recruitment was undertaken following the committee decision in early 2018 however this did not yield a preferred candidate. Subsequently an external recruitment process was put in place that included advertising with both the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. On the completion of that process a preferred candidate was selected and an offer has been made and accepted. The preferred candidate, David Berry started on the 28th of January 2019
- 1.3 With the DO officer now in place the Chief Officer of Strategic Place Planning instructed that transitional arrangements with Aberdeenshire Council be put in place. These will lead up to the termination of the Service Level Agreement for the provision of Developer Obligations Services on the 31st of March 2019. These arrangements are necessary to:-
- a) Ensure continuity in the provision of DO Services in the hand over period,
 - b) To agree a process in relation to ongoing applications,
 - c) To agree the handover of any necessary background information, and
 - d) To allow Aberdeenshire Council time to manage the operation of their own case load.
- 1.4 As part of these transitional arrangements it is also proposed to set up a DO forum with Aberdeenshire Council to maintain regular communication particularly on regional matters and any cross-border applications.

2. UPDATE - COMMUNITY ASSET PLANS

- 2.1 In advance of the appointment of the DO officer work began on two pilot Community Asset Plans in Mid 2018 using Academy catchment areas as geographic boundaries. Initially these pilots have been focused on Council services to ascertain what “off the shelf” projects are available. A particular focus for this work was contributions sought for improvements in the natural environment, where identifying, scoping and costing projects in the timeframe available can be difficult. Work was undertaken with the Environmental Services team who were able to provide a significant amount of information on current and future project proposals within the catchment areas.
- 2.2 A number of challenges were also identified as part of these pilots. For example areas where Academy catchments do not include significant areas or open space or parklands, or where the existing parks or open space already have significant programs of improvement works. Other topic areas such as Core Paths also present some challenges however it was agreed that improvements to paths would likely remain based on the Core Path network rather than the catchment areas. It was also agreed by the services that the pilots were extremely labour intensive as none of the services have projects based on academy catchment boundaries. As such there was a significant element of work in overlaying the catchments with the relevant services work plans. Care would also have to be taken to separate out projects which would and would not be suitable for Developer Obligations.
- 2.3 Next Steps.
Now that a DO officer has been appointed it is proposed to progress these two pilot areas to a point where they could be discussed with members and the public on a trial basis. This is expected toward the middle of 2019 dependant on resources available from the relevant services.

3. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

4. APPENDICES (if applicable)

N/A

5. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name:- David Dunne – Interim Planning & Environmental Policy Manager
Email Address:- ddunne@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel:- 01224 523329