



Report to: Place and Economic Development Committee, 1st November 2021

Report of: Managing Director

Subject: ALLOCATION OF FUNDING FOR POST EP4116 (SKILLS OFFICER)

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 **That the Committee notes the proposal to fund the post of Skills Officer from 1 April 2022.**
- 1.2 **That the Committee recommends to the Policy and Resources Committee that the post is funded from reserves for 2022-23.**

2. Background

- 2.1 The Skills Officer post was created in a temporary capacity in July 2017. The role delivers a range of support to local businesses and employees and has a current work plan agreed at the July PED Committee Meeting.
- 2.2 At the March 2021 PED committee meeting, this committee agreed to recommend that the Policy & Resources Committee approve the allocation of £50,000 from the Additional Restrictions Grant fund to temporarily cover the costs of this role in light of the key role played in Covid-recovery efforts.
- 2.3 The recommendation was supported at the Policy & Resources Committee March 2021 meeting where it was identified that further funding would be required from 1 April 2022.

3. Preferred Option

- 3.1 The preferred option is to fund the post from reserves in line with the above recommendation. This is a one-year solution, pending the appointment of the new Head of Service for Economic Development and the review of the current Employment and Skills Strategy.
- 3.2 The Skills Officer is responsible for the delivery of the objectives of the Employment and Skills Strategy, supporting jobs and business growth in the city through business engagement, as well as facilitating local employment, training, and education for residents.
- 3.3 The current priorities for the role are to:
 - Support ongoing implementation of the Worcestershire Coronavirus Economic Recovery Plan (Employment & Skills) including the DWP Youth Hub

- Support development of the business case for the Town Investment Plan Community Skills and Enterprise project with specific regard to matching external revenue funding
- Establish a standard process for securing economic benefits from development and the Council's Capital Programmes such as the Future High Streets Improvement scheme
- Deliver the final year of the skills enabling budget programme.
- Review the current Employment and Skills Strategy

3.4 In 2022-23, the Skills Officer priorities will be to:

- Seek and support bids for external funding particularly in regard to revenue match for the Towns Fund Community Skills and Enterprise project
- Work on projects related to the ongoing recovery of the economy from the impacts of Covid-19, including supporting the training and development of young people and those communities most impacted
- Work with Council officers, partners and the construction industry to maximise social value and economic benefits from the Council's capital programme
- Launch and Year 1 delivery of the refreshed Employment and Skills Strategy 2022 – 2026 (due at PED Committee in March 2022)

4. Alternative Options Considered

4.1 The alternative option is not to fund this post. This is not recommended as it would require the reallocation of other staff members to deliver the outputs currently required of this role and lead to a reduction in the services delivered by the Economic Development team towards the objectives of the City Plan and key regeneration projects. It will also minimise the positive economic impacts delivered by this role.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial and Budgetary Implications

The post is identified on the 2020-21 Pay Chart as being PTC grade which has a salary range of £32,555 to £36,524. The annual cost for the post is £47,960, including on-costs.

The post is required to support the development of businesses within the city by helping to ensure that skilled employees are able to engage with the businesses that need them. The role also currently forms part of the Covid recovery programme and will help to secure the economic prosperity of the city in the coming year. It is therefore appropriate to fund the post from the Business Rates Risk Reserve as the work will reduce the risk of loss of business rates income which would otherwise fall to that reserve.

The reserve has an estimated balance of £3.392m at 31 March 2022, of which £1.4m is required to be retained under existing policies and the remainder is required to mitigate risk of business rates appeals and loss of income.

5.2 Legal and Governance Implications

There are no legal or governance implications arising from this report.

5.3 Risk Implications

If resources are not allocated, this will impact on the ability of the Council to deliver the objectives of the City Plan and other priorities within the Economic Development Service.

5.4 Corporate/Policy Implications

The role funded by the proposed resource allocation will supports delivery of emerging City Plan outcomes including:

Prosperous City

- A highly skilled workforce, with the experience and the right type of qualifications that city employers need
- Increase in high value and better paid jobs in the city
- Increase in number of graduates remaining in the city to live and work
- Increase in number of disabled people able to work

Stronger and Connected Communities

- Increased use of technology by all communities
- Sustainable neighbourhood infrastructure (facilities)

5.5 Equality Implications

An equality impact assessment will form part of the delivery plan for the role in 2022-23 to ensure accessibility for training and skills development.

5.6 Human Resources Implications

The postholder has been in the role since July 2017

5.7 Health and Safety Implications

There are no health and safety implications directly arising from this report.

5.8 Social, Environmental and Economic Implications

The delivery of the Employment and Skills Strategy and action plans directly supports jobs and business growth in the city through business engagement, as well as facilitating local employment, training, and education for residents.

Ward(s): All
Contact Officer: Nick Kay, 01905 722560, nick.kay@worcester.gov.uk
Background Papers: Worcester City Employment and Skills Strategy
Worcester City Plan
PED Committee Report, 8 March 2021
P&R Committee Report, 23 March 2021
PED Committee Report, 26 July 2021



Report to: Place and Economic Development Committee, 1st November 2021

Report of: Managing Director

Subject: ALLOCATION OF FUNDING FOR POST EP4118 (TOURISM AND EVENTS OFFICER)

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 **That the Committee notes the proposal to fund the post of Tourism and Events Officer from 1 April 2022.**
- 1.2 **That the Committee recommends to the Policy and Resources Committee that the post is funded from reserves for 2022-23.**

2. Background

- 2.1 The Tourism and Events Officer post was created in a temporary capacity in 2016. The role works with local businesses and event organisers, as well as delivering the objectives of the Tourism Strategy and managing key projects for the Council including the Victorian Christmas Fayre and Christmas lights contract.
- 2.2 At the March 2021 meeting, this committee agreed to recommend that the Policy & Resources Committee approve the allocation of £50,000 from the Additional Restrictions Grant fund to temporarily cover the costs of this role in light of the key role played in Covid-recovery efforts.
- 2.3 The recommendation was supported at the Policy & Resources Committee of 23 March 2021 meeting where it was identified that further funding would be required from 1 April 2022.

3. Preferred Option

- 3.1 The preferred option is to fund the post from reserves in line with the above recommendation. This is a one-year solution, pending the appointment of the new Head of Service for Economic Development, the review of the Tourism Strategy and the development of the forthcoming Cultural Strategy.
- 3.2 The role of the Tourism and Events Officer is pivotal to the success of a series of projects to encourage and enable people to visit the city, including the organisation of major events for the city and the facilitation of events organised by external parties.
- 3.3 The Victorian Fayre, in particular, has been highlighted as a key priority for the city and forms a large part of the responsibilities of this post. In addition to this, a busy programme of events is scheduled for the city in 2022, with events related to the Commonwealth Games, the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations, summer festivals, and the return of Worcester Carnival, Worcester Music Festival and more.

4. Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The alternative option is not to fund this post. This is not recommended as it would require the reallocation of other staff members to deliver the outputs currently required of this role and lead to a reduction in the services delivered by the Economic Development team towards the objectives of the City Plan and key regeneration projects. It will remove the significant economic benefits generated by this role in the development and delivery of cultural activity for the city. The Victorian Christmas Fayre alone generates over £7m for the economy each year.
- 4.2 Another option is to engage with partners or other agencies to take the lead role in the coordination of events in the city centre and the management of the Victorian Fayre. This is not recommended due to identified issues with quality and control of these key events and the high-profile nature of major events and projects in the city.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial and Budgetary Implications

The post is identified on the 2020-21 Pay Chart as being PTC grade which has a salary range of £32,555 to £36,524. The annual cost for the post is £45,040, including on-costs.

The post is required to support the development of the city as a destination for businesses and tourists. The role currently forms part of the Covid recovery programme and will help to secure the economic prosperity of the city in the coming year. It is therefore appropriate to fund the post from the Business Rates Risk Reserve as the work will reduce the risk of loss of business rates income which would otherwise fall to that reserve. The reserve has an estimated balance of £3.392m at 31 March 2022, of which £1.4m is required to be retained under existing policies and the remainder is required to mitigate risk of business rates appeals and loss of income.

5.2 Legal and Governance Implications

There are no legal or governance implications arising from this report.

5.3 Risk Implications

If resources are not allocated, this will impact on the ability of the Council to deliver the objectives of the City Plan, Tourism Strategy and forthcoming Cultural Strategy.

5.4 Corporate/Policy Implications

The proposed resource allocation will contribute to the delivery of the Tourism Strategy and the forthcoming Cultural Strategy by.

It will also impact on the following priorities as identified in the forthcoming update of the City Plan:

- A Prosperous City, through the positive economic impacts associated with effective tourism delivery and the management of high-profile events such as the Victorian Christmas Fayre and Worcester City Run.
- A Heritage City with a 21st Century Culture, through a vibrant events programme and an engaged cultural sector, chairing the City Events Forum,

5.5 Equality Implications

An equality impact assessment will form part of the delivery plan for the role in 2022-23 to ensure accessibility for events and cultural activities.

5.6 Human Resources Implications

The postholder is currently seconded from another team.

5.7 Health and Safety Implications

The role works on projects which focus on health and safety, in particular supporting the safety of events in the city.

5.8 Social, Environmental and Economic Implications

The vitality and vibrancy of the city centre is key in attracting visitors to the city, boosting the economy, creating jobs and supporting businesses and residents.

Ward(s): All
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Background Papers: Worcester City Tourism Strategy
Worcester City Plan
PED Committee Report, 8 March 2021
P&R Committee Report, 23 March 2021



Report to: Place and Economic Development Committee, 1st November 2021

Report of: Managing Director

Subject: COMMONWEALTH GAMES AND QUEEN'S JUBILEE EVENTS IN 2022

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 That the Committee notes the proposed activities to celebrate the Commonwealth Games and the Queen's Jubilee in 2022.**
- 1.2 That the Committee recommends to the Policy and Resources Committee an allocation of £40,000 from reserves for 2022-23 as an enabling budget to support these initiatives.**

2. The Commonwealth Games

- 2.1 The 2022 Commonwealth Games are due to take place in Birmingham between 28 July and 8 August. The aim of the Games is to bring people together, improve health and wellbeing, act as a catalyst for change and help the West Midlands region to grow.
- 2.2 The Games have the capacity to deliver significant economic benefits for the West Midlands region through tourism, job creation, skills and business opportunities.
- 2.3 Officers across the Council are working with a range of organisations to help generate benefits from Worcester's proximity to the event, including:
- Promotion of opportunities to local businesses and tourism organisations
 - Encouraging the community to get involved with the Games' Cultural Programme
 - Engagement with the West Midlands Growth Hub to identify tourism opportunities for the city
 - Development of key messaging around active living, health and wellbeing and physical exercise in partnership with Freedom Leisure
 - Supporting sporting facilities in their application to become training venues for teams at the event.
- 2.4 To support and enhance the above activity and to deliver the programme of events associated with any activity there is a need for an enabling budget to help produce promotional materials, undertake engagement activities and work collaboratively with partners on specific tasks. This work will be supported by in-kind contributions from partners including Worcestershire County Council and will enable officers to offer small amounts of seed-corn or match funding to secure contributions for others. Advance scoping work has indicated that a budget of up to £30,000 would be necessary.

3. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

3.1 Next year, Her Majesty The Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee after 70 years of service. Places across the UK are being encouraged to get involved in celebrating this occasion.

3.2 Activities which are already planned include:

- Involvement with the national beacon lighting from Fort Royal Park
- The Community Engagement Team have secured funding to support Worcester residents to organise street parties
- The City will be encouraging communities to get involved in the the Queen's Green Canopy, a tree planting initiative inviting people from across the UK to "plant a tree for the Jubilee"
- Encouraging businesses to get involved through window displays and offers
- Creation and distribution of articles and campaigns highlighting royal links to the historic city of Worcester (e.g. Royal visits, charters)
- The team are working with event organisers to deliver events over the Jubilee weekend

3.3 £10,000 funding is requested to support and enhance the above activities, including entertainment at the beacon lighting, funding for trees as part of the Queen's Green Canopy, and promotion of events.

4. Preferred Option

4.1 To support a range of activities to maximise the potential benefits of major national events taking place in 2022 to the city, its residents, businesses and visitors.

5. Alternative Options Considered

5.1 To undertake the range of activities with no enabling budget. Aspects of the programme would continue but the Council may miss opportunities to maximise the potential community and economic impact through collaborative and partnership working and would have limited scope to engage on promotional and supportive activities.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial and Budgetary Implications

£30,000 is requested to cover activity related to the Commonwealth Games and £10,000 is requested for activity to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. As indicated in the report this is intended to be enabling funds to support specific initiatives and may not therefore be used in full. The activities are specific one-off events; therefore any under-used funds would be returned to reserves at 31 March 2023.

These activities are designed to maximise the impact of the social and economic benefits associated with these events, raising the profile of the city and encouraging inward investment. Such aims fall within the objectives of the City Plan Fund but this is currently fully committed. It is proposed therefore to transfer £40,000 from the risk reserves to the City Plan Fund. This will require approval of the Policy and Resources Committee as part of the budget-setting process.

6.2 Legal and Governance Implications

The Council will be required to enter into agreements with the organisers to ensure the event can be delivered safely. There will also be road closures to process, as well as contractual arrangements with suppliers to deliver the events.

6.3 Risk Implications

Other places within the region will be committing budget to celebrate the Jubilee and to maximise the impact of the Games on their area and the potential economic and social impacts may not be achieved if resources are not committed in Worcester.

6.4 Corporate/Policy Implications

The proposed resource allocation will contribute to the delivery of the Tourism Strategy and the forthcoming Cultural Strategy as well as supporting community engagement.

It will also impact on the following priorities as identified in the City Plan:

- A Prosperous City, through the positive economic impacts associated with effective tourism delivery and high-profile events
- A Heritage City with a 21st Century Culture, through a vibrant events programme and an engaged cultural sector

6.5 Equality Implications

The proposed activities will be reviewed for equality and inclusion implications. It is important to ensure that events and activities are accessible for all members of the community and an equality impact assessment will be carried out.

6.6 Human Resources Implications

There are no human resources implications arising as a direct result of this report.

6.7 Health and Safety Implications

All events and activities will be managed in a way which is compliant with health and safety requirements. Risk assessments will be carried out on events, in partnership with organisers and the emergency services.

6.8 Social, Environmental and Economic Implications

The vitality and vibrancy of the city centre is key in attracting visitors to the city, boosting the economy, encouraging inward investment, and supporting businesses and residents. Residents and businesses will have the opportunity to be involved with national celebrations of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, leading to enhanced social cohesion.

Ward(s):

All

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Background Papers:

None