

(Informal Joint) Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

Title of Report:	Building Control Resourcing	
Report No:	CAB/FH/18/028	
Report to and date:	FHDC/SEBC (Informal Joint) Cabinets	22 May 2018
Portfolio holder:	Councillor Lance Stanbury Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth Tel: 07970 947704 Email: lance.stanbury@forest-heath.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	David Collinson Assistant Director (Planning and Regulatory) Tel: 01284 757306 Email: david.collinson@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	To request Cabinet approval to increase the permanent resource within the Building Control Service by 1 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) with the necessary budget adjustments of £57,000 to support this.	
Recommendation:	<p>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that:</p> <p>(1) approval be given to increase the permanent establishment of the Building Control Service by one Full-Time Equivalent (FTE); and</p> <p>(2) Subject to the agreement of Recommendation (1), that an additional £57,000 corporate savings/income target is added to the revenue budgets in order to create the funding required to support the additional post.</p>	
<p>Key Decision:</p> <p><i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i></p>	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

	<p>(a) A key decision means an executive decision which, pending any further guidance from the Secretary of State, is likely to:</p> <p>(i) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area in the Borough/District; or</p> <p>(ii) result in any new expenditure, income or savings of more than £50,000 in relation to the Council's revenue budget or capital programme;</p>
<p><i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>	
Consultation:	N/A
Alternative option(s):	Not to increase the establishment. This will restrict capacity to meet growth demand and not address resilience of the team.
Implications:	
<p>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to £57,000 salary and training costs for additional staff. Cost shared between the two Councils, Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) 35%, St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) 65%. Funded within the revenue budget, however in order to continue to deliver a balanced medium term position further savings or income proposals will be suggested by Leadership Team for Members' consideration in due course.
<p>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent increase of establishment
<p>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional ICT equipment allowed for within costing.
<p>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Resilience of team to respond effectively to market demands and statutory response areas. Further loss of market share could result with service being left with mainly non fee earning statutory work.	High	Development plan to support maintaining/ increasing market share, including joint working across Suffolk; Implementation of a quality control procedure; Increase capacity of team; Apprentice development to support workforce planning. Further review on effectiveness of measures.	Medium
Ward(s) affected:		All Wards	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		None	
Documents attached:		None	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Role of the Building Control Service

1.1.1 The purpose of the local authority building control service is to provide essential protection for the public in and around buildings. The majority of this work involves ensuring that new building works meet the minimum standards laid down in the national Building Regulations. However the local authority is also solely responsible for:

- Enforcing the regulations
- Dangerous structures
- Disabled adaptations/extensions
- Demolition notifications
- Maintaining a register of all works carried out
- Advice and support for Safety Advisory Groups/Sports grounds

1.1.2 Building Control is a statutory service provided by all local authorities to enforce the Building Regulations within their area. Only the local authority has the obligation to take enforcement action over non-compliance with Building Regulations, and this cannot be delegated to a private sector provider. As a statutory service, it remains a core function of an authority's responsibilities.

1.1.3 Building approvals for new build is a fee earning function and we are in competition with Approved Inspectors for the share of the available market.

1.2 Service Development Plan

1.2.1 Our objective is to provide a modern, resilient, commercial building control service meeting the growth needs of West Suffolk and assuring public protection. Working in collaboration with the LA Building Control services in Suffolk we have established a development plan of joint work.

Success outcomes for our development plan include:

- Trusted 'go-to' brand with a strong visible presence
- Resilient and financially sustainable (income supporting team growth in line with demand)
- Commercially aware with a strong and growing customer base and quick to grasp opportunities
- Strong professional relationships with trades - flexible and responsive
- Collaborative, sharing resource, skills and experience
- Employers of choice – with a highly skilled and motivated workforce

1.2.2 The development priorities for West Suffolk Building Control Service include:

1. Marketing/Commerciality to retain and increase market share
2. Systems development to improve efficiency
3. Workforce development - skills
4. Shared model/working practices across Suffolk LA's
5. Implementation of a Quality Assurance framework

A service action plan, delivered jointly with other LA's across Suffolk details the delivery of these areas

1.3 **Capacity Review**

- 1.3.1 Emerging from our service development review, we have identified that current service demand for the West Suffolk Building Control team is exceeding capacity and greater resilience is required in the team to ensure business as usual and to support service improvement and growth including:
- Capacity to respond to statutory functions;
 - Maintaining and recovering market share;
 - Increasing income in a targeted manner;
 - Implementing the Local Authority Building Control Quality Management System (ISO 9001 based implementation Toolkit). We are in the first tranche of authorities implementing this in response to the Hackitt review, following Grenfell;
 - Building capacity to respond to West Suffolk Growth/key projects.
- 1.3.2 We have secured the work to oversee Mildenhall Hub and West Suffolk Operational Hub and aim to be a crucial part in any future Growth investments and developments. These projects will also have significant impacts on resourcing within the team but are seen as a key opportunity to provide a high quality and integrated service for such projects.
- 1.3.3 The service is at a crucial point in its future development and would benefit significantly from specific additional resource for 2018/19 namely:
- An additional surveyor at either trainee or qualified level – estimated cost range for 1 FTE Band E to G – currently up to £57,000 (on costed) for mid-scale appointment. This would be a new additional permanent post for West Suffolk.
- 1.3.4 This investment would increase the resilience and capacity of the West Suffolk service and supporting maintaining and penetration of existing market.
- 1.3.5 If approved by Cabinet, the additional permanent post (up to £57,000) will be funded within the revenue budget and in order to continue to deliver a balanced medium term position further savings or income proposals will be suggested by Leadership Team for Members' consideration in due course.