

SUBJECT: Collaborative Heritage Services Provision

MEETING: Individual Cabinet Member Decision (Enterprise)

DATE: 10th October 2018

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 This report seeks the Cabinet Member for Enterprise's approval to engage in a collaborative approach to the delivery of Built Heritage Services between Monmouthshire County Council and Torfaen County Borough Council.
- 1.2 The proposals seek to maximise the benefits of collaborative working regarding the delivery of a specialist topic area benefitting from the opportunities of collaborative working can bring in terms of resilience, skills building and experience sharing across the both Authorities.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To authorise the following:
- The shared working practices as set out in Appendix A;
 - The creation of a new post hosted by MCC but funded directly by TCBC for a minimum of a two year period.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Monmouthshire has an established Heritage Team within the wider Development Management Team who are responsible for advising and managing all aspects of the historic environment. An opportunity has arisen where Monmouthshire County Council can work in partnership with Torfaen County Borough Council in providing a joint built heritage service. Currently TCBC only have one conservation officer who provides assistance with regeneration initiatives and advice on all conservation issues and planning applications, compared to a team based approach in MCC. It is anticipated that the proposed joint service will improve consistency of decisions across the two boroughs and improve on the offer that MCC and TCBC can provide by sharing a greater variety of skills and experience from within the heritage sector.
- 3.2 Collaborative services has for some time been on the agenda for Local Government Services in Wales. The issues were first considered in a report dated 2012, The Simpson Compact, which suggested a series of options recommending voluntary arrangements given funding demands. A further report in May 2013 by Hyder entitled 'Options for the Delivery of Local Authority Historic Environment Conservation Services in Wales' - identified regional collaboration on a formal, constituted basis as having the most support. Up until recently progress on this area had stalled however concerns about the resilience and capacity of local conservation services were a strong theme throughout the scrutiny of the Historic Environment (Wales) Bill/Act. In 2017 a Task and Finish Group was set up by Welsh Government with MCC as a panel member,

specifically looking at delivering Heritage Services through collaborative models. In addition specific work streams have also be established in North Wales looking at a series of options to improve Heritage Services delivery underlining the concern and wider review of delivering suitable models to manage the historic environment in Wales.

- 3.3 The delivery of services through a combined approach offers many benefits, such as improved resilience, opportunity to increase skills sharing and build a stronger knowledge base within the team and improved officer morale offering constructive peer review. Despite a team approach already being established in Monmouthshire, it is considered that initiating collaborative services, managed by Monmouthshire and on terms that are suitable for both MCC and TCBC (see attached Memorandum Of Understanding) is the best approach to collaborative working and delivers a more robust and responsive service.
- 3.4 The Heritage team includes a Heritage Manager (post A), Senior Heritage Officer (post B), Heritage Monitoring Officer (post C), Tree officer (post F) and a Senior Landscape and Urban Design Officer (post G) (currently vacant but subject to advertising at the time of writing). This team would be maintained as existing and supplemented by the addition of two posts, both at a senior level funded by TCBC. Post D is a 2yr fixed term posts that will be directly funded by TCBC, this post would be recruited and employed by MCC providing the posts holder with the same terms and conditions as posts A-C. Post E is currently employed by TCBC and will remain so for the duration of the initial 2 year agreement. Posts F and G will continue to deliver services to MCC only.

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 4.1 The collaborative arrangement as proposed is a voluntary arrangement initially for a minimum of two years. The current service provision, in terms of meeting the needs of MCC services will be maintained. The inclusion of two further specialists, one with considerable experience of grant work and regeneration will enhance the skills base available to continue to deliver the current services. It is fully acknowledged that TCBC will have greater access to a wider team, at present only having one heritage officer, however the collaboration is not considered to have detrimental impact on service delivery for MCC. A level of increased management will be required for the current Heritage Manager which will be partly offset by the additional post (D). This impact, together with the quality of service delivery will be subject to regular review.
- 4.2 There is the option to reject the proposed collaborative arrangement, in which TCBC will continue to deliver the service independently. There would be no detriment to current service delivery should this happen. However, this would be considered a missed opportunity given the increasing agenda for collaboration in many areas of service delivery at a local level from Welsh Government.
- 4.3 As stated the offer will be under regular review with data collated relating to key performance indicators, for example number of applications and time taken to determine, as well as qualitative data and feedback from managers and customers as to the quality of advice provided. All efforts will be made to address problems quickly should they arise, however if the service cannot be delivered to TCBC any longer, and

MCC withdraw subject to the MoU (see attached) TCBC will be released from funding post D.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 5.1 A successful collaboration will be the provision of an enhanced and more resilient heritage service for both Councils. An evaluation assessment has been included at Appendix B for future evaluation of whether the decision has been successfully implemented. The evaluation of success will be reported to the Economy and Development Select Committee each September/October as part of the Planning Service's Annual Performance Report. Planning Committee members are invited to that meeting.

6. REASONS:

- 6.1 The recommendations propose to enter into a suitable collaborative arrangement in fulfilling the need to provide specialist advice to management of the historic environment. This will ensure that the terms and conditions of any arrangement are able to be negotiated by the service providers rather than being imposed on the Local Authority should formal collaboration be enforced.
- 6.2 To provide the opportunity for the department to enter into voluntary arrangement in order to identify opportunities and challenges to service delivery and adapt accordingly ensuring that the service can be most effective in the future.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 Providing a collaborative approach will be cost neutral to MCC as current staffing levels are maintained and are within budget. The additional post created for a period of two years will be fully funded by TCBC, including any salary increments and national joint council negotiated pay awards.
- 7.2 TCBC will commit to payment for post D for a period of two years for the service delivery identified above. Should the service be withdrawn by MCC on the basis that MCC are unable to provide the service as set out above, TCBC shall be released from payment. MCC shall invoice for the post at the beginning of the two year term of £88,923, plus any NJC increase or associated pay adjustment, ensuring commitment of the funding.

8. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 8.1 There are no significant equality impacts identified in the assessment (Appendix C).
- 8.2 There may be beneficial impacts economically or to quality of life from quicker decisions in some instances given the wider pool of staff.
- 8.3 The actual impacts from this report's recommendations will be reviewed regularly with programmed periodic evaluations. The criteria for monitoring and review will include: collating data on numbers of applications, time taken to determine, types of applications/work area pressures and general managerial feedback.

9. CONSULTEES:

- MCC Development Services Manager - responded stating that approach to collaboration is sensible and allows MCC to prescribe terms that maintain and protect current service delivery in order to future proof the service.
- Heritage Team – responded that they were excited about the potential opportunities that collaboration could bring.
- TCBC, Senior officers have been a key stakeholder in developing and writing the MoU and are in full support of the collaborative approach.
- Legal responded confirming that the informal collaborative approach would be a trial and any issues that arise will be addressed as and when. In addition the financial exposure was considered acceptable given TCBC's commitment to finance the post for two years.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

See appendix A – Team and Reporting Structure

See appendix B - Future Evaluation of Implementation

See appendix C - Future Generations Evaluation

11. AUTHOR:

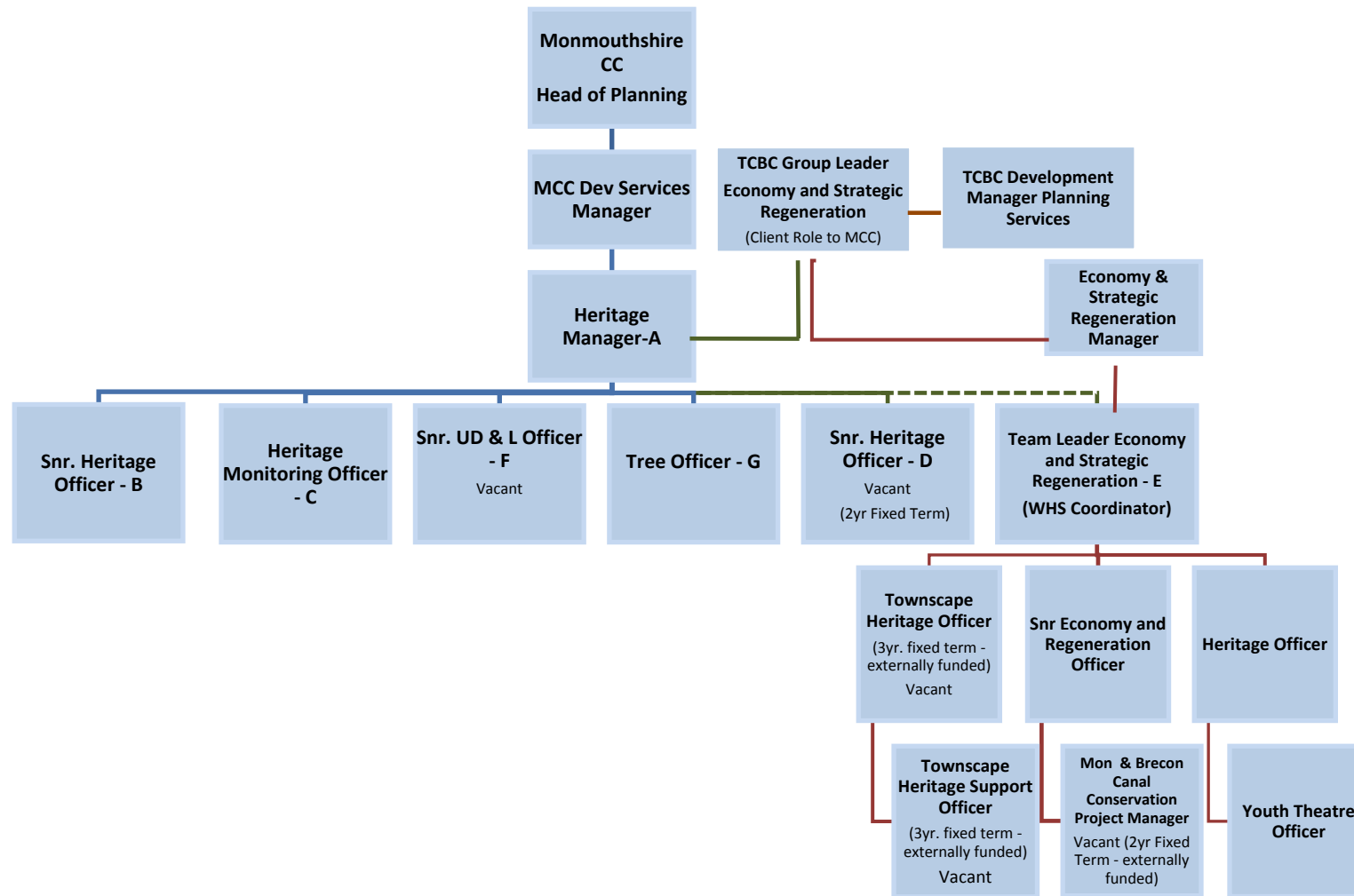
Mark Hand, Head of Planning, Housing and Place Shaping

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

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Appendix A – (2yr. collaboration 2018/19 to 2019/20-21)



— Conservation Management
— Regeneration Management

Appendix B Evaluation Criteria – Cabinet, Individual Cabinet Member Decisions & Council

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Title of Report: | Collaborative Heritage Services |
| Date decision was made: | |
| Report Author: | Mark Hand |

What will happen as a result of this decision being approved by Cabinet or Council?

The desired outcome is to see an established and responsive collaborative approach to service delivery with the development of a larger multi-disciplinary team.

The decision will offer an enhanced level of service meeting customer needs.

To be completed at 12 month appraisal

Was the desired outcome achieved? What has changed as a result of the decision? Have things improved overall as a result of the decision being taken?

What benchmarks and/or criteria will you use to determine whether the decision has been successfully implemented?

Criteria will include:

Number of applications

Time taken to determine

Types of applications/work pressures

Effective and responsive advice provided in a timely manner through Managerial Review/Evaluation.

On-going monitoring of standard service provision to ensure that timescales and service is not detrimentally affected beyond the normal parameters as identified in current monthly reviews of data by DM Management.

To be completed at 12 month appraisal

Paint a picture of what has happened since the decision was implemented. Give an overview of how you fared against the criteria. What worked well, what didn't work well. The reasons why you might not have achieved the desired level of outcome. Detail the positive outcomes as a direct result of the decision. If something didn't work, why didn't it work and how has that effected implementation.

What is the estimate cost of implementing this decision or, if the decision is designed to save money, what is the proposed saving that the decision will achieve?

There is no proposed immediate resource requirements or savings. The proposals are cost neutral. Any costs associated with extending beyond the tw year trial period would be discussed at that time, and a decision made on whether or not to proceed.

To be completed at 12 month appraisal

Give an overview of whether the decision was implemented within the budget set out in the report or whether the desired amount of savings was realised. If not, give a brief overview of the reasons why and what the actual costs/savings were.

Any other comments