

Report

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Report to:	Community Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	1 April 2014
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Temporary Landscape Development Officer
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:

- seek Committee approval to extend the post of temporary Landscape Development Officer, Ground Services

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):

- (1) that the post of Landscape Development Officer at Grade 3, Level 2 (£25,676 to £29,819) is extended until March 2016.

3. Background

- 3.1 Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services is one of six services within Community and Enterprise Resources. There are three functional areas within the service including Facilities Management, Waste Services and Grounds Services. This report relates to Grounds Services which covers the maintenance of public, neighbourhood and country parks, fixed play areas, amenity open spaces, the management of cemeteries and the crematorium, provision of landscape design and arboricultural services and street cleansing activities such as mechanical sweeping, litter collection and graffiti removal.
- 3.2 Due to increased workloads within the landscape design team, an additional post was created for 12 months to assist in meeting strict deadlines governed by external funders. This was approved at the Community Services Committee on 19 March 2013. Additionally, as this is the only remaining landscape design function within the Council, the team are now undertaking design jobs for other Services/Resources including Housing and Technical Resources, Social Work, South Lanarkshire Leisure, Education, Roads and Transportation Services .
- 3.3 There are also legal obligations that affect the landscape development team in the longer term including burial ground provision as well as the proposed change in allotment legislation which could lead to the creation of new sites across South Lanarkshire.
- 3.4 Additionally, if the Community Empowerment Bill is passed then there would be an increased demand on the team to provide support to groups willing to take management responsibilities.

4. Proposed Change

- 4.1 Community and Enterprise Resources are the only directorate in the Council with a landscape design service, with Housing and Technical Services discontinuing provision over 3 years ago. Currently, through the use of a small team of 2 landscape development officers, support is provided both internally and externally to Council and Community organisations respectively.

The volume of work is such that the design team are currently dealing with 22 community projects at various stages (8 of which have received funding awards totalling £426,500), 9 internal projects and 33 capital projects covering investment in public parks, cemeteries, fixed play areas, pitch provision, property infrastructure, landscaped areas and the temporary appointment requires to be extended until March 2016 to meet this current demand.

- 4.2 The range of services provided by a landscape development officer when supporting an external funding submission by the local community includes:
- Creation of an outline design
 - Consultation with the group and wider community
 - Finalise designs and create outline budget costings
 - Prepare all tender documentation once funding award is confirmed
 - Select successful tenderer and agree programme of work
 - Manage delivery of contract including regular site visits, ensuring contractor compliance, manage budget and delivery timescales
- 4.3 On average, it is estimated that a community led project can call on the services of a landscape development officer for a full three to four week period over a period of one year.

The proposal under consideration is to extend the contract of the landscape development officer on a temporary basis until March 2016 to enable community organisations to maximise external funding opportunities and to ensure the delivery of the Council's capital programme.

5. Employee Implications

- 5.1. This proposal focuses on meeting service delivery outcomes and community aspirations. It is, therefore, proposed to extend the current temporary Landscape Development Officer contract within Grounds Services until March 2016:

Post title	Grade/ Level	SCP	Hourly Rate	Annual Pay	Total (inc on costs)
Landscape Development Officer	Grade 3, Level 2	55 - 65	£14.07 – £16.34	£25,676- £29,819	£32,788 - £38,079

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. Funding for this post will be provided through additional income raised from design fees. The agreed capital programme has also been extended and, therefore, funding is available until March 2016.

7. Other Implications

- 7.1. As well as having a key role in liaising with community groups and in applying for external funding the Landscape Officer's duties extend to the design of landscaped areas and play facilities. This involves considering risk management and sustainable development implications associated with specific projects.

8. Equality Impact and Consultation Arrangements

- 8.1 This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy and therefore no impact assessment is required.
- 8.2 Consultation has been undertaken with the relevant trades unions.

Colin McDowall

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

28 February 2014

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Values

- Support the local economy by providing the right condition for growth, improving skills and employability.

Previous References

- Community Services Committee 19 March 2013

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:- Stephen Kelly, Head of Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services

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