

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING

4 March 2014

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**CARRY FORWARD OF BUDGET TO ESTABLISH A ‘YEAR-OUT’
ARCHAEOLOGY UNDER-GRADUATE PLACEMENT (JOBS,
ECONOMY AND TRANSPORT)**

(1) **Purpose of the Report** To seek Cabinet Member approval to carry forward the balance of funding available relating to the Historic Environment Record Assistant (HERA) Officer post and for the change of its use to enable the appointment of ‘year-out’ archaeology ‘under-graduate Placement’ to undertake Historic Environment Record (HER) enhancement work.

(2) **Information and Analysis** In September 2009, a 3 year post for a HERA was created in the Conservation and Design Section. On 16 October 2012, the Cabinet Member - Leadership and Culture approved the extension of the post until 31 August 2014 to ensure the completion of the Historic Landscape Character Assessment (HLCA) and to continue the necessary updating of the core HER (Minute No 39/12 refers). The post was funded from monies accrued from various, but mainly, English Heritage (EH) projects, particularly the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund projects previously undertaken by the Conservation and Design Section. EH has indicated that it would not seek to recoup this money but would expect it to be used for appropriate HER enhancement work.

The development of local authority HERs is an identified EH priority in the National Heritage Protection Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework identifies HERs as the essential source of information on the historic environment. The post of HER Officer is an established post in the Conservation and Design Section. In May 2013, the then incumbent retired and after the due recruitment process, the HERA was appointed to the HER Officer post. This left the post of HERA vacant. As the work on the HLCA was essentially complete, it was decided to investigate the possibility of using the remaining budget more effectively by developing an in-service training programme with a University Department of Archaeology. The University of Bradford, for example, has a long established programme of in-service

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training requiring a student to spend at least 160 days with an employer. This would have the benefit of getting continuing input into the development of the HER whilst providing valuable training in the field of Local Government historic environment services. Such a programme could not begin until September 2014 to fit with the universities' academic year. As a result of this, and due to the monies being largely accrued from external sources, this report seeks that the residual balance in the budget is carried forward to fund an archaeology 'under-graduate placement' in future years, hopefully beginning in 2014.

It is not clear at present what the annual costs of appointing a 'year-out' archaeology 'under-graduate placement' will be but it is thought that the remaining monies are at least sufficient to cover two one-year placements and possibly more.

The 'year-out' archaeological 'under-graduate placement' is being pursued for the following reasons:

- A year placement would provide sufficient time to develop an individual to be able to undertake consistent valuable enhancement work to the HER and for the HER to substantially benefit from that training.
- Previously, when individuals have been sourced through agencies to enhance the HER, there has been considerable inconsistency in the inputting of information and it has taken considerable time for the HER Officer to review the work undertaken.
- It will give the 'placement' an excellent understanding of archaeology in the development control process and equip them with knowledge and skills to gain employment after graduating.

This post would not be included in any national or County Council placement scheme. However, the in post training and development of an 'under-graduate year out' placement is akin to an placement.

(3) **Financial Considerations** The balance of the funding of £43,301 is currently held on the HERs revenue cost centre. This is believed to be sufficient to fund a year-out 'under-graduate placement' for two years. It is proposed that this funding is transferred to an earmarked reserve to fund the programme outlined in the report.

(4) **Human Resources Considerations** If the Cabinet Member agrees to the monies being rolled forward to fund a year-out 'under-graduate placement', then a job and person profile will be developed for evaluation. Once the grade and costs of the position have been established, authorisation to appoint a 'year-out' archaeology 'under-graduate placement' will be sought from the Economy, Transport and Environment Departmental Management

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Team before a report is brought to the Cabinet Member for final approval to recruit.

(5) **Environmental and Health Considerations** As contained in the report.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, property and transport considerations.

(6) **Key Decision** No.

(7) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(8) **Background Papers** None. Officer contact details – Adam Lathbury, extension 39791.

(9) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That approval be given to:

9.1 Transfer funding of £43,301 currently held on the Historic Environment Record revenue cost centre, to an earmarked reserve to fund a year-out 'under-graduate placement' for a period of two years on the terms outlined in the report.

9.2 Contact Universities with established archaeology under-graduate courses to see if they would be interested in promoting a 'year-out' archaeology 'under-graduate placement' position with their students.

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Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment