

## Joint report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Asset Management

### Creation of a Permanent Project Surveyor

#### 1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval for the creation of a permanent Project Surveyor (Capital Works) post within the Asset Management and Development service to provide technical surveying support, project management and quality assurance across the Capital Works and Development teams (30%), including responsibility for managing the 12-month defects liability period for all new-build schemes.

#### 2. Recommendation

**Cabinet asked to RESOLVE that the creation of a permanent Project Surveyor (Capital Works) post in Asset Management and Development at Grade 8 be approved. The maximum cost of the Grade 8 post at £46,500 will be funded through capital salaries with the net cost being met by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).**

#### 3. Detail

The Council delivers significant capital, compliance and improvement projects that require structured technical oversight, monitoring and quality assurance. The Project team in Asset Management and Development currently has no dedicated surveying capacity, resulting in delivery constraints, compliance risks and increased dependency on external consultancy.

Furthermore, there is no dedicated resource to oversee the defects liability period for new-build developments. This creates inconsistent performance, delays, and unnecessary outsourcing costs.

Key technical gaps include:

- Professional building surveying
- CDM compliance and client duties
- Contractor management
- Quality inspections
- Defects resolution
- Technical project delivery and monitoring.

Without strengthening internal capacity, the Council faces increased operational, safety and statutory risk.

There is a significant risk that capital and compliance projects will not be completed or sufficiently progressed before Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). A lack of technical staffing increases the likelihood of programme delays,

non-compliance, and continuity issues. A dedicated Project Surveyor strengthens resilience ahead of transition.

It is therefore proposed to create a permanent Project Surveyor (Capital Works) post within Asset Management and Development, allocated as 70% to Capital Works and 30% to the Development team (with a specific focus on managing defects liability). The post will deliver technical surveying; project and contractor management; CDM compliance; quality inspections; cost control; defects resolution; and programme monitoring.

### Risk Register

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Insufficient defects management	Increased long-term liabilities; unresolved defects; customer dissatisfaction	Allocate 30% of Development team capacity to defects management
Compliance gaps due to insufficient technical capacity	H&S breaches; statutory non-compliance; regulatory challenge	Strengthen technical oversight and embed enhanced QA processes
Programme delays or cost overruns	Financial pressure; contractor claims; reduced programme efficiency	Introduce in-house project control and reduce reliance on consultants
Capital/compliance schemes not delivered before LGR	Failure to meet statutory obligations; reputational risk; handover issues	Establish Project Surveyor post to increase capacity
Resource shortages requiring reprioritisation	Reduced programme output; delayed timescales; stakeholder dissatisfaction	Prioritise based on statutory need and risk; reallocate resources

### Options Appraisal

Option 1 – Do Nothing – Not recommended. This maintains existing capacity gaps, increases compliance risk, delays programme delivery, and increases reliance on consultancy.

Option 2 – Use External Consultants – Not recommended. Consultancy costs are significantly higher, with fees up to 20% of project value (i.e. £200k on £1m works) and defects management outsourcing also adds £10k annually.

Option 3 – Create an in-house Project Surveyor post – Recommended. Provides best value, improves delivery, strengthens compliance, and supports readiness for LGR.

The financial appraisal summary includes:

- Agency staff costs around £90,000 per year (market rate £350 per day)
- Consultancy fees up to 20% of project value (i.e. £200k per £1m works)
- Outsourced defects management around £10,000 per annum
- Proposed salary around £35,000 plus oncosts.

The expected annual savings is therefore around £130,000 with net savings delivered through reduced consultancy spend and improved project management efficiency.

The Asset Management Project team does not currently have the technical capacity required to deliver the Council's major capital, compliance, and improvement programmes. The annual programme value is around £8 million, with an additional £1 million of projects sitting outside the managed capital programme requiring professional oversight.

The Development team also has no in house resource to manage the defects liability period for new build housing schemes, resulting in inconsistent outcomes and consultancy costs of around £10,000 per year.

Creating an in-house Project Surveyor offers improved delivery, greater control, and a cost neutral or cost saving alternative to reliance on consultants.

A job description and persons specification for the new role is provided in the **Appendix**.

#### 4. Key Decision

This report is not a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

#### 5. Updates from Scrutiny

Not applicable.

#### 6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Interim Deputy Chief Executive were as follows:

The cost of the proposed Project Surveyor (Capital Works) post in Asset Management and Development at Grade 8 is up to £46,500 including oncosts. The post would be largely funded by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), through the 'capital salaries' recharge to the Capital Programme. Any of the cost which is not supported by external funding would require an increase in prudential borrowing for the Housing Capital Programme the cost of which will ultimately be met by the HRA.

7. Legal Implications

Not applicable.

8. Human Resources Implications

HR comments will be updated as necessary at the meeting.

9. Union Comments

Union comments will be updated as necessary at the meeting.

10. Climate Change Implications

Any climate change implications are contained within the report.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

13. Background Papers

Nil.