

Decision under Delegated Powers

Officer Requesting Decision

Katie Moore – Housing Needs Manager

Officer Making the Decision

Alison Simmons – Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing

Recommendation

To approve the extension of the temporary increase of 37 hours on the Assistant Housing Officer (M160) post for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

To approve the use of the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities Homelessness Prevention Grant for the costs associated with this request.


Reason

The additional temporary resource is required within the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team to assist with the assessment of Housing Register applications.

Authority for Decision

Under section 8 of the constitution the head of paid service (chief executive) has delegated authority to agree changes to the establishment, within budget and without major operational disruption or interruption or services or involving a change from direct to indirect provision or vice versa or other policy implications. This has been further sub-delegated by the chief executive to strategic directors/heads of service in certain circumstances (DD 002 021 refers). These proposals fall within the limit of the authority of the relevant head of service.

Decision and Date



Alison Simmons
Head of Strategic and
Private Sector Housing

21st February 2022

Background

The main roles of the Housing Allocations Team are to assess and determine applications for the council's Housing Register and to allocate available council and Registered Provider properties.

Due to increased pressures on the Housing Allocations Team relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is currently a backlog of assessments of Housing Register applications and property allocations. Approval was given for the creation of 3.6 additional temporary Assistant Housing Officer posts during 2021-2022 in order to address this backlog.

It is anticipated that the council will continue to see increases in Housing Register applications / change of circumstance notifications for existing applications during 2022-2023.

1 x additional FTE Assistant Housing Officer for a period of 12 months will ensure that there are sufficient resources within the Housing Allocations Team to assess these applications.

The Housing Allocations Team currently consists of:

- 1 x FTE Housing Allocations Team Leader (permanent post)
- 0.6 FTE Allocations Officer (permanent post)
- 2.4 x FTE Assistant Housing Officers (permanent posts)
- 1 x FTE Assistant Housing Officers (temporary post funded using the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant)
- 3.6 x FTE Assistant Housing Officers (temporary post funded using the COVID Contain Grant).

This request is for the extension of the following temporary post:

- 1 x FTE Assistant Housing Officer (funded using the Homelessness Prevention Grant) up until 31st March 2023.

Comments from HR, Assistant HR Advisor, Carolyn Knapp 15/02/22

This position is currently covered by agency staff therefore HR and recruitment forms are not required to be completed although MATRIX process will need to be followed.

Agency worker regulations to be considered.

Financial Implications

Approximately £32,000 is required for the cost of 1 x FTE Scale C Housing Options Officer for a period of 12 months.

£577,784 Homelessness Prevention Grant was awarded to Charnwood Borough Council by the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities between 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. A sufficient amount of this grant is still available to cover the costs associated with this request.

Risk Management

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
This DD is not agreed and there is insufficient capacity within the Housing Allocations service. This could result in increased homelessness, temporary accommodation spend, complaints and legal challenges.	Medium	Medium	Offer over-time to existing staff within the Housing Allocations Team (this may have cost implications, but the budget available is likely to be sufficient to cover this).

Key Decision:

No

Background Papers:

DD061 2018
DD157 2019
DD067 2019
DD037 2020
DD146 2020
DD171 2020
DD183 2020

