

Decision under Delegated Powers

Officer Requesting Decision:

Katie Moore – Head of Strategic Housing

Officer Making Decision:

Rob Mitchell – Chief Executive

Recommendation:

To approve the following proposed changes to the job roles and structure for the Housing Needs Team and implementation of the proposed changes on 1st April 2023:

Current job title / reference	Proposed changes
Housing Options Officer (H150)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to job profile Reduction from 333 x permanent hours (9.0 x FTEs) to 296 x permanent hours (8.0 x FTEs).
Housing Options Assistant (M434)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to job profile Change from 74 x fixed-term hours (2.0 x FTEs) to 74 x permanent hours (2.0 x FTEs).
Housing Allocations Officer (H379)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to job profile Increase from 62 x permanent hours (1.6 x FTEs) to 148 permanent hours (4.0 x FTEs).
Lettings Officer (Q051)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to job profile Change to job title (from Lettings Officer to Housing Allocations Assistant).
Lettings Coordinator (M334)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change to job profile. Change to job title (from CBC Lettings Coordinator to Lettings Coordinator) Change from 37 x fixed-term hours (1.0 x FTEs) to 37 x permanent hours (1.0 x FTEs).
Temporary Accommodation Coordinator (reference TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of new post / profile at salary grade SO2 Creation of 37 x permanent hours (1.0 x FTEs).
Assistant Housing Officer (M160)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post deleted (currently vacant / covered by agency staff members).
CBC Lettings Officer (M385)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post deleted (currently vacant / covered by agency staff members).
CBC Landlords Officer (M403)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post deleted (currently vacant / covered by agency staff members).

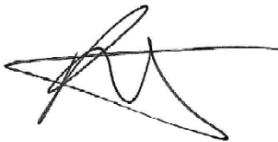
Reason

To improve resilience across the Housing Needs Team, assist with the recruitment and retention of staff, support the delivery of efficient and effective housing services, and contribute to reduced temporary accommodation expenditure and increased rental income.

Authority for Decision

Section 8 of the Council Constitution contains authority for the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) to agree changes to the establishment, within budget and without major operational disruption or interruption of services or involving a change from direct to indirect provision or vice-versa or other policy implications.

Decision and Date

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R Mitchell', written over a horizontal line.

Robert Mitchell (he, him, his)
Chief Executive

14/03/2023

Background

Over the last five years multiple additional fixed-term / temporary posts have been created within the Housing Needs Team in order to support the delivery of the service or address backlogs of work. Most of these additional fixed-term / temporary posts have been funded through short-term government grants or underspends in other parts of the housing service.

There have been difficulties with recruitment / retention to most of the fixed-term / temporary posts, which are believed to relate to their short-term nature. There have also been difficulties with recruitment / retention to some of the permanent posts within the team, which are believed to relate to a high demand for / lack of availability of experienced and skilled officers in the market.

This has contributed to high case levels and backlogs of work relating to multiple aspects of the housing options and housing allocations services, which have resulted in delays for customers and contributed to increases in temporary accommodation spend, void property relet times and void rent loss.

A review of posts within the Housing Needs Team has been carried out. Changes to job profiles / job titles / allocated hours for multiple existing permanent posts, creation

of multiple new permanent posts and the deletion of one existing permanent post and three existing fixed-term posts are recommended.

The aims of the recommended changes include:

- To assist with the recruitment and retention of staff.
- To assist with development of existing staff by clarifying routes for succession
- To improve resilience across the Housing Needs Team by increasing the level of collaboration and support between similarly grades posts
- To support the delivery of more efficient and effective housing services
- To assist with the achievement of service performance targets, such as reduced temporary accommodation expenditure and increased rental income.

The changes will not result in any redundancies or redeployments for any existing permanent or fixed-term employees, as there will be several permanent vacancies within the team.

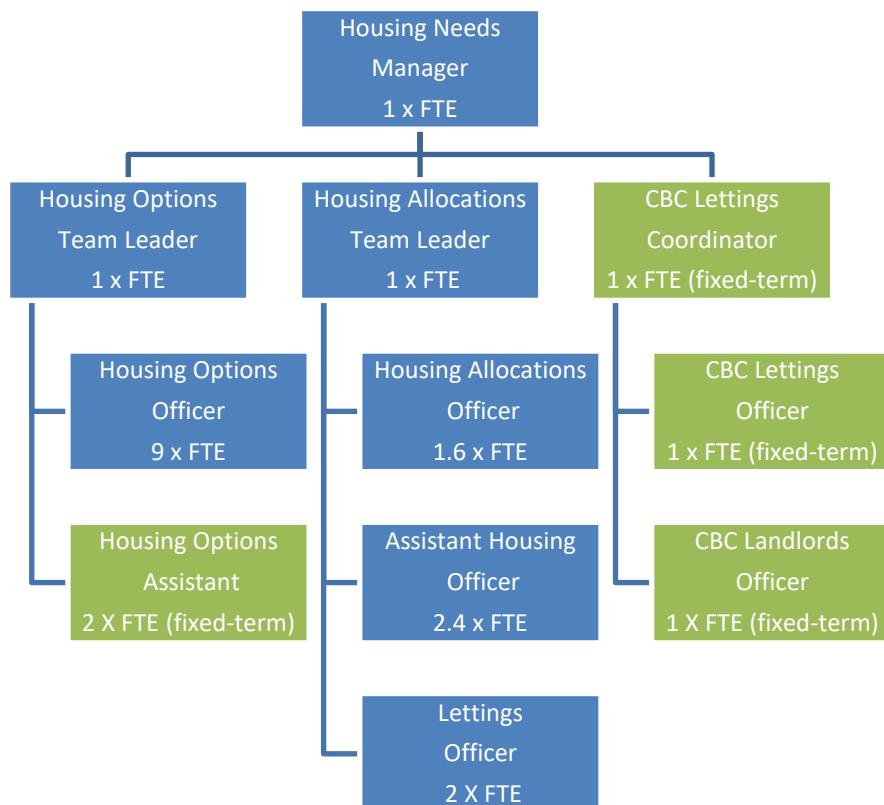
The changes will not result in any salary reductions or salary increases for any existing permanent or fixed-term employees.

An Organisational Change consultation exercise was carried out with affected employees. The consultation period closed on 9th February 2023. No comments were received in relation to the proposed changes to the structure, job titles, reductions or increases in hours for existing permanent posts, deletion of existing permanent posts or creation of new permanent posts. Some comments were received in relation to the wording of the proposed job profiles and changes were subsequently made to the profiles.

The current Housing Needs Team structure consists of 18 x FTE permanent positions:

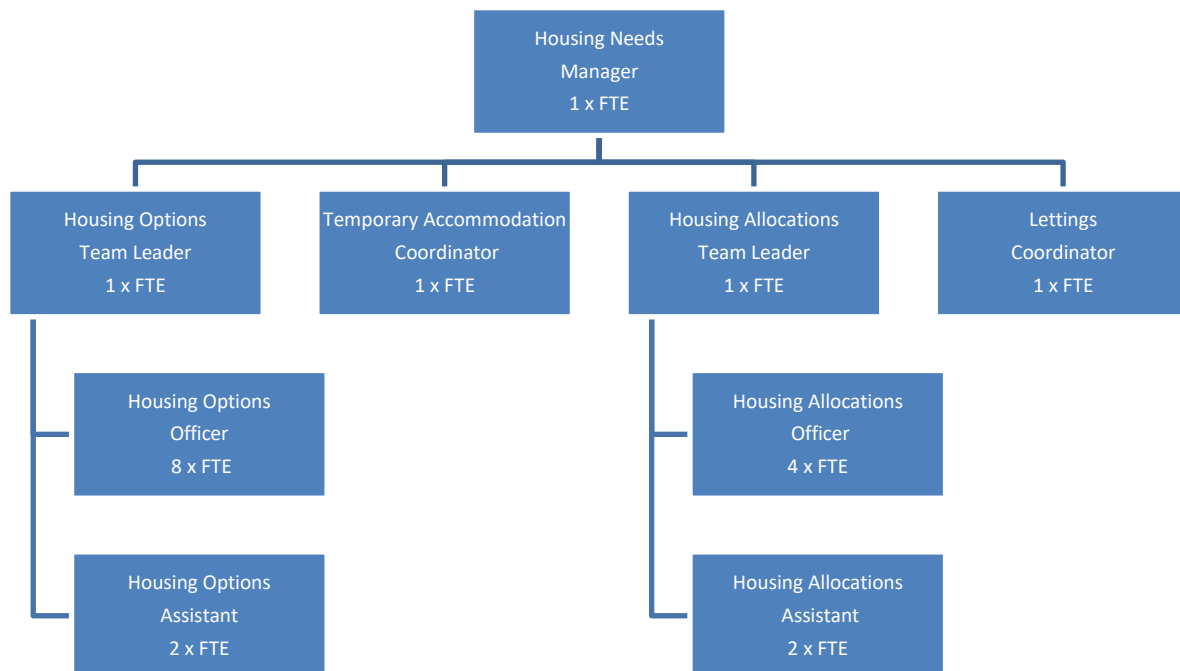
- 1.0 x FTE H373 Housing Needs Manager (grade PO2)
- 1.0 x FTE M090 Housing Options Team Leader (grade SO2)
- 9.0 x FTE H150 Housing Options Officer (grade E)
- 1.0 x FTE M237 Housing Allocations Team Leader (grade SO2)
- 1.6 x FTE H379 Housing Allocations Officer (grade E)
- 2.4 x FTE M160 Assistant Housing Officer (grade C)
- 2.0 x FTE Q051 Lettings Officer (grade C).

The current Housing Needs Team structure also includes multiple additional fixed-term positions that are due to end on 31st March 2023.



The recommended Housing Needs Team structure consists of 21 x FTE permanent positions:

- 1.0 x FTE H373 Housing Needs Manager (grade PO2)
- 1.0 x FTE M090 Housing Options Team Leader (grade SO2)
- 8.0 x FTE H150 Housing Options Officer (grade E)
- 2.0 x FTE M434 Housing Options Assistants (grade C)
- 1.0 x FTE M237 Housing Allocations Team Leader (grade SO2)
- 4.0 x FTE H379 Housing Allocations Officer (grade E)
- 2.0 x FTE Q051 Housing Allocations Assistant Officer (grade C)
- 1.0 x FTE M334 Lettings Coordinator (grade SO2)
- 1.0 x FTE Temporary Accommodation Coordinator (grade SO2).



Comments from Human Resources

HR Advisor: Nicola Ward (8/3/23) & Anna Cairns (9/3/23)

The correct Organisation Change process and new or amended job profiles have been through a Job Evaluation process. Following the consultation, the implementation date for the proposed structure is 1st April 2023. Please ensure all required variation e-forms are completed in relation to the amendments made.

Financial Implications

The 2023/24 J009 salary costs (including on-costs) relating to permanent posts within the current structure equate to approximately £814,600.

The salary costs (including on-costs) relating permanent posts within the recommended structure equate to approximately £982,666. This is inclusive of a market premia applied to the H150 Housing Options Officer post (see DD033 2023).

The increase will be funded from the housing revenue account (50%) via a service pressure and the general fund (50%) via reallocation of homelessness prevention service funding. The service pressure was approved by Cabinet on 9th February 2023.

It is anticipated that in the long-term the increased salary costs will be offset by an overall reduction in spend relating to temporary accommodation (general fund) and an overall increase in rental income (housing revenue account) due to service improvements resulting from the changes.

Risk Management

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions
This recommendation is not approved and the service may continue to have difficulty recruiting / retaining staff members, may continue to see high case levels, backlogs of work and related delays, which may result in increased temporary accommodation spend, void rent loss, customer complaints and reviews.	High	High	Increase budgets for agency staff costs, temporary accommodation costs, legal costs relating to reviews and appeals

Key Decision

No.

Background Papers

DD033 2023.