

## Decision under Delegated Powers

### Officers Requesting Decision

Alison Simmons - Head of Strategic & Private Sector Housing

### Officer Making the Decision

Geoff Parker- Chief Executive

### Recommendations

1. To approve an increase in hours for the vacant S01 Housing Standards Officer post (post no. L235) from 22 hours per week to 37 hours per week. With effect from the date of recruitment to the new full time position.
2. To fund the 15 hours increase in hours of the Housing Standards Officer post through the removal from the establishment of the vacant part time (22 hours per week) SO1 Housing Adaptations and Renewals Officer (post no.L232) and subsequent transfer of the associated salary budget from F320 to F300.
3. To transfer the remaining 7hours salary budget in respect of the Housing Adaptations and Renewals Officer from F320 to J200, to partially fund the proposed Housing Projects Officer which will form part of a separate Delegated Decision for approval.

### Reasons

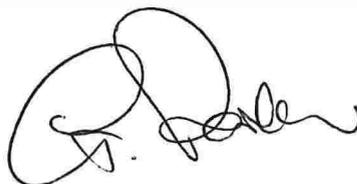
- 1 & 2. To refocus available resources within the Private Sector Housing Team following the implementation of the Lightbulb Programme.
3. To facilitate the creation of a Housing Projects Officer within the Strategic and Private Sector Housing Service to work across the Service on specific projects.

### Authority for Decision

Section 8.1 of the Constitution gives the Chief Executive delegated authority to agree changes to the establishment, within budget and without major service or policy implications, affecting no more than five posts (irrespective of their post number) in any single case. This has been further sub-delegated to Heads of Service in certain instances, which this decision falls within.

### Decision and Date

APPROVED



15 DECEMBER 2017

Note: Savings on post L232 are in the General Fund and therefore not available to fund a Housing Adaptations Officer in the HRA. Further any G.F. costs must be covered by the HRA.

## Background

The Private Sector Housing Team provides two main services, the provision of private sector housing assistance in the form of mandatory and discretionary grants and the inspection and enforcement of housing standards in the private rented sector. Within the team, some Officers cover both areas of work, whilst some are focussed on one or the other.

In May 2017, Cabinet approved the Council's participation in the Lightbulb Service Model on a locality team basis (Minute 113:2017). As such, the Council has directly employed a locality based Lightbulb team to deliver the service directly across the Borough (linking to the central hub to ensure consistency of operating procedures and resilience in the overall system). Work is being undertaken to move towards implementation of the model across Charnwood in line with the rest of the County and included in this model will be the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants.

The locality team consists of 3 FTE Housing Support Coordinators, 1 FTE Technical Officer, 1 FTE Occupational Therapist (OT) and administrative support.

Prior to the implementation of the Lightbulb Service Model, Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) were delivered by the Housing Adaptations and Renewal Officer (0.6 FTE) and the the Housing Standards and Renewal Officers (0.6FTE).

Within the Locality Team Model, complex DFGs will be delivered by the Technical Officer (1 FTE – a seconded Housing Standards and Renewal Officer) and non-complex DFGs will be delivered by the Housing Support Co-ordinators.

The vacant Housing Adaptations and Renewals Officer post will no longer have a role in respect of DFGs and the remaining discretionary grants will be administered by the Housing Standards and Renewal Officer role (1FTE).

A further significant role of the Private Sector Housing Team is housing standards and the enforcement of standards in the private rented sector. Charnwood Borough Council is the largest Council in Leicestershire other than the City Authority. The Private rented sector has expanded rapidly in recent years making up an estimated 20% of all households in 2015/16 (14,400 in Charnwood) – this is estimated to rise to 24% by 2021. (Knight Frank, Multihousing 2017: PRS Research, June 2017). In addition the team is responsible for the licensing of and enforcement of standards and management regulations in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across the Borough.

Currently there are 2.6 FTE officers working on Housing Standards within the team, including the Housing Standards Officer (0.6FTE).

Workloads are high in this area and with the increasing private rental sector, demands on the service are likely to increase further in the future. As such it is proposed that the Housing Standards Officer post be increased from 0.6 FTE to 1 FTE. Taking the total number of officers focused on Housing Standards, including enforcement and mandatory HMO licensing work, to 3 FTE.

The Housing Strategy and Support Manager has recently recruited to the vacant Housing Policy and Projects Officer (M062) post for 30 hours, resulting in a vacancy of 7 hours which will now need to be filled. Therefore, to make the best use of the resources and to attract suitable experienced candidates, the intention is

to create a new permanent Housing Projects Officer post of 14 hours by merging the remaining hours of posts M062 and L232. This new post will support the Housing Strategy and Support Manager with delivering housing related projects across the Strategic and Private Sector Service. This new post will form part of a separate Delegated Decision pending approval of this Decision.

### Comments from HR

HR Adviser: Anna Cairns (12/12/17)

The normal recruitment process should be followed and the relevant eforms completed.

### Financial Implications

- 1) The post of L232 currently has a budget of 22 hours per week which is £20,800 in 2017/18 and budgeted at the bottom of the scale on point 029. Increasing this to 37 hours will mean a £15,000 budget increase to £35,800 for a 37 hours per week.
- 2) In 2017/18 due to the circumstances of the post holder when the budget was set, the post is budgeted with an on-cost of no pension contributions from the council at the top of the scale. The budget is £17,600 leaving a monetary difference in 2017/18 of £2,600 and an FTE equivalent of 7 hours which in 2017/18 is £5,200 excluding pension and £6,700 including pension where the post is budgeted at the top of the scale.
- 3) In 2017/18 if the 7 hours (£5,200) is transferred to J200 to partially fund a new Housing Projects Officer; note that this gross cost will be a transfer of planned budgeted expenditure from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account. The costs to the bottom line of both these funds will be a direct decrease of one and increase in the other, which does not equate to a transfer of budget as both are funded in separate ways. However, the net cost to the council's budgets will be dependent on recharges from the HRA back to the General Fund for any project work relating to that area.

### Risk Management

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
Not applicable			

Key Decision: No.

Background Papers:

