

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 temporary increase in hours of the Assistant Housing Officer post (M160) by 37 hours per week from 1st October 2020 to 31st March 2021.

To approve the use of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Flexible Homelessness Support Grant for the costs associated with this request.

Reason

An additional temporary resource is required within the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team to assist with the assessment of Housing Register applications and a procedural change that is being introduced in relation to the nomination of Housing Register applicants to Registered Providers.

Authority for Decision

Section 8.2 of the Constitution gives delegated authority to Heads of Service, (following consultation with the Council's Human Resources team and subject to the decision complying with the Council's existing policies) to make temporary appointments to be held against existing permanent posts or within the overall budget;
[Item 2 (vii) on page 8 - 3].

Decision and Date



Alison Simmons
Head of Strategic
and Private Sector
Housing

29th September 2020

Background

The Housing Allocations and Lettings Team currently consists of 0.7 x permanent Housing Allocations Officers, 2 x permanent Lettings Officers, 2.4 x permanent Assistant Housing Officers and 1 x temporary Assistant Housing Officer posts.

The Council introduced a new online Housing Register and Choice Based Lettings system on 18th March 2019 and a new Housing Allocations Policy on 1st April 2019. An additional temporary Assistant Housing Officer post was approved to assist with additional workloads associated with the implementation of the new system and policy and to assist with procedural changes relating to the assessment of Housing Register applications.

A procedural change is being introduced in relation to the nomination of Housing Register applicants to Registered Providers. An additional temporary Assistant Housing Officer post was approved to assist with additional workloads associated with the implementation of the new system and policy and to assist with procedural changes relating to the assessment of Housing Register applications.

Due to increased pressures on the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team relating to Covid-19, there has been a delay in the implementation of this procedural change.

1 x FTE Assistant Housing Officer within the Allocations and Lettings Team from 1st October 2020 to 31st March 2021 will ensure that there are sufficient front-line resources to manage any temporary increases in workloads that could potentially arise whilst this procedural change is being embedded.

This will help to minimize delays in the assessment of Housing Register applications and nominations of Housing Register applicants to Registered providers, and therefore support activities that assist with the prevention and relief of homelessness within Charnwood.

Comments from HR

HR Adviser: Anna Cairns (22/9/20)

Normal recruitment processes should be followed.

Financial Implications

Approximately £14,000 is required for the cost of 1 x FTE Scale C officer for a period of 6 months.

£525,159 Flexible Homelessness Support Grant was awarded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to Charnwood Borough Council between 2017/18 and 2020/21. This is a sufficient amount of this grant still available to cover all of the costs relating to 1 x FTE Scale C officer for a period of 6 months.

Risk Management

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

Key Decision:

No

Background Papers:

DD067 2019/2020
DD157 2019/2020
DD037 2020/2021