

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 (M160) post by 74 hours per week for a period of 3 months.

To approve the use of underspends on the salary budget for the Housing Needs Team for the costs associated with this request.

Reason

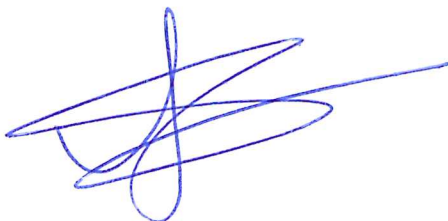
An additional temporary resource is required within the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team to assist with a backlog of assessments of Housing Register applications.

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 on page 8 - 3].

Decision and Date



Alison Simmons
Head of Strategic and
Private Sector Housing

17th November 2020

Background

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

On 23rd March 2020 there were 783 households on the Council's Housing Register. Between 23rd March 2020 and 31st October 2020 1,242 new Housing Register applications were received.

Due to increased pressures on the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a backlog of assessments of Housing Register applications. As at 2nd November 2020 there are 451 assessments outstanding. This figure includes the assessment of new Housing Register applications and the re-assessment of existing Housing Register applications.

2 x additional FTE Assistant Housing Officers for a period of 3 months will ensure that there are sufficient resources within the Housing Allocations and Lettings Team to address this backlog.

Comments from HR

HR Adviser: Anna Cairns (4/11/20)

The normal recruitment process should be followed. Please note that any temporary contracts that exceed two years in duration will be eligible for a redundancy payment at the end of their contract. This is unless they are CBC employees on secondments.

Financial Implications

Approximately £14,000 is required for the cost of 2 x FTE Scale C Assistant Housing Officers for a period of 3 months.

There is due to be underspend of more than £14,000 on the Housing Needs salaries budget between 1st September 2020 and 31st December 2020 due to vacancies on posts within the team, including the Senior Allocations and Lettings Officer (M237) post and Housing Option Officer (H150) post.

There is due to be a sufficient amount available to fund 2 x additional FTE Scale C Assistant Housing Officers for a period of 3 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 address the backlog of assessments. 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 would 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
DD146 2020/2021

