

Decision under Delegated Powers

Officer Requesting Decision

Head of Housing

Officer Making the Decision

Chief Executive

Recommendations

1. That a new full time permanent post of Senior Allocations and Lettings Officer on scale SO2 plus casual car user allowance be created on the establishment of the Housing Needs Team, with a reporting line to the Housing Needs Manager (H373).
2. That the job description and person specification for the Senior Allocations and Lettings Officer (appended to this decision) be approved.
3. That a new additional full time permanent post of Assistant Housing Officer (M160) on Sc 4 be created on the establishment of the Housing Needs Team, with a reporting line to the post of Senior Allocations and Lettings Officer (new post number).
4. That the revised job description and person specification for the Assistant Housing Officer (appended to this decision) be approved.
5. That a new full time permanent post of Administrative Officer on Sc 3 be created on the establishment of the Housing Needs Team, with a reporting line to the Senior Allocations and Lettings Officer
6. That the job description and person specification for the Administrative Officer (appended to this decision) be approved

Reasons

- 1,2&3, To deliver the re- structuring proposals for the Allocations and Lettings Team as set out in the consultation document of 8th April 2013.
- 4 To more accurately reflect the job role of the postholder (previously titled Administrative and Allocations Support Officer)

5&6. To deliver the re- structuring proposals for the Allocations and Lettings Team as set out in the consultation document of 8th April 2013.and to respond to the consultation outcomes concerning capacity, as this post was originally proposed to be 0.5 FTE due to budgetary constraints

Authority for Decision

Authorisation of changes to the establishment, within budget and without major service or policy implications, is delegated to the Chief Executive (Item 6 on page 2-25 of the Constitution).

Decision and Date

Background

In November 2011 CBL went live and the decision was taken not to restructure the Housing Allocations team prior to this date to enable managers to review the impact of CBL and then put a business case forward once the resources needed had been identified. An approved ongoing budget was established in the J009 cost centre to enable recruitment to both temporary and permanent posts.

At the same time the Housing Allocations Scrutiny Panel was established and the view was taken that it would be inappropriate to develop permanent proposals pending the recommendations of the Panel being made to Cabinet.

The Scrutiny Panel subsequently reported to Cabinet in March 2013.

In June 2012 Cabinet resolved to bring the housing landlord services delivered by CNH back in house and that decision was enacted in November 2012 when the ALMO was terminated. As a result the 2 Housing Assistants employed by CNH in the Lettings & Income Team were transferred to the Housing Allocations Team under a delegated decision approved on 11th February 2013.

The Housing Needs Manager has now established a structure to meet the requirements of CBL and waiting list services. The requirements of the service have identified that the most effective use of staff resources would be to engage dedicated and trained staff within the lettings and allocations team. This will lead to a level of resilience, particularly in relation to the knowledge and expertise of the allocations team and provide a platform for the future, to take account of proposed legislation changes affecting the allocations work. New and revised job descriptions have been prepared and jobs evaluated.

The changes to existing post titles and job descriptions in the Allocations and Lettings Team have been subject to a delegated decision request from the Housing Needs Manager to the Head of Housing but approval of these new posts

is through a Delegated Decision request from the Head of Housing to the Chief Executive.

Comments from HR

HR Advisor: Anna Cairns

All new Job descriptions have been evaluated. During the restructuring process Anna Cairns has met with management regarding this and can confirm that the Organisational Change policy has been followed. No further comments.

Responses to Consultation

In response to the consultation document 2 officers took up the opportunity to discuss the proposals verbally. There were also 3 written submissions and these officers have been interviewed and their concerns dealt with accordingly and to their satisfaction.

Concerns around capacity and workloads have also been considered and we have replied to Unison's concerns in this respect as follows:

In terms of the capacity issue you have raised we propose to increase the new 0.5 FTE Administration Officer post to 1 full-time equivalent by making a virement to cover the budget shortfall from one of the Division's HRA budgets.

Subject to there being a business case we propose to submit a service pressure for the 2014/15 budget round commencing this autumn if it is proven that the restructure levels are inadequate.

In addition we will appoint temporary resources to assist with the re-registration exercise.

Financial Implications

There is an on-going approved budget service pressure in the J009 cost centre of £68,800 for the implementation of choice based lettings going back to 2008 that stated "Consultancy and additional costs relating to the introduction of a Choice Based Lettings system of housing allocation".

The table below shows the costs, including on –costs for the proposed new posts, based on the maximum of the grades. It should be noted that recruitment to new posts is generally at the bottom SCP of the grade however so costs in year one will be lower.

Post title	Salary cost inc on costs £
1 FTE Senior Allocations and Lettings Officer @SO2	37,700
1 FTE Assistant Housing Officer @Sc 4	24,900
1 FTE Administrative Officer @Sc 3	21,800
Total additional salary costs	84,400

It is proposed that the budget shortfall of £15,600 will be met by a virement of £15,600 from the tenant participation budget J200 D0558 into J009 D1063. It will then be necessary to vire the total budget in J009 D1063 into J009 A0101 which is the salary budget for the Allocations Team.

Financial procedure rule 4.2.10 in respect of this proposal states that non-salary budgets cannot be vired to salaries to pay for permanent members of the establishment so this proposal therefore requires the consent of the Council's Sec 151 officer.

This consent has been obtained as part of the signing off process for this delegated decision request.

Risk Management

There are risks associated with this proposal in that if the new posts are not approved one of the council's key services to vulnerable households will not be delivered effectively, with the consequential loss of housing rental revenue.

Anticipated performance gains through moving to a weekly CBL bidding cycle will also be compromised by inadequate staffing resources.

Key Decision:

No

Background Papers: Consultation Document for Housing Allocations Team dated 8th April 2013

CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Senior Allocations and Lettings Officer	Grade: SO2 – Casual Car User
Division: Housing Needs	Accountable to: Housing Needs Manager
Current Postholder: New Post	Responsible for: Allocations and Lettings Team
Post Number:	

Purpose of Job:

- Responsible for the day to day management of the Allocations and Lettings Team dealing with operational issues as they arise and to support, mentor and coach team members by validating their decisions, dealing with complex cases, ensuring performance targets are met and resolving first line management service user complaints. To ensure the needs of housing applicants are assessed, determine priorities, and ensure the effective implementation of the Council's Choice Based Lettings scheme and associated allocations and tenancy policies. To ensure that prospective and new tenants and customers are at the heart of all services and that all staff demonstrate a commitment to the development and implementation of the Council's customer frameworks.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Responsible for the efficient and effective delivery of the Council's Choice Based Lettings scheme and housing register, and assist the Housing Needs Manager in the development, review and implementation of relevant policies and procedures.
2. Responsible for the efficient and effective delivery of the Council's voids and lettings function and assist the Housing Needs Manager in the development, review and implementation of relevant policies and procedures.
3. Deputise for the Housing Needs Manager in their absence. Work closely with the Senior Housing Options Officer and provide support and cover as required in their absence.

4. Through regular liaison with the Ready to Let Inspector and the Voids Repairs Team, ensure that empty properties are terminated and available for re-let as soon as possible with accurate property details and within target times (c.600 properties per year).
5. Take full responsibility for the letting of all vacant council properties within the borough, including garages.
6. Be responsible for the administration and promotion of Home Swapper.
7. Represent the Allocations function at the CBL sub-regional allocations sub-group
8. Responsible for regular monitoring, collation and timely submission of reports. Ensuring local and statutory returns, CORE returns, performance indicators and customer service standards are met. Assist the Housing Needs Manager in identifying corrective action where necessary.
9. Liaise with the Senior Housing Options Officer to ensure the effective management of temporary accommodation, to keep the use and costs to the Council of B&B to a minimum.
10. Assist the Housing Needs Manager in carrying out the Annual Affordability Assessment for the Council.
11. Develop procedures to ensure consistency of service delivery and respond to changing national and local strategies.
12. Resolve first line management customer complaints and issues.
13. Responsible for the day to day management of staff, including: training, development, coaching and mentoring to ensure performance indicators are met and the provision of the highest quality in service delivery.
14. Work in partnership with other council departments, RPs, voluntary organisations and other agencies to ensure the council's strategies and policies are delivered, providing advice and training as required.,
15. Ensure that staff within the Allocations and Lettings Team are properly trained and regularly briefed so that Council Policy and procedural guidance is followed and ensure, by random checks, that there is consistency of service delivery and decision making.

16. Assist the Housing Strategy and Support Manager in ensuring effective development and improvement of IT systems to enable accurate delivery of services.
17. Monitor RP's short-listing and outcomes and regularly review service level agreements.
18. Undertake complex cases as directed by the Housing Needs Manager, and validate/countersign decisions made by housing staff.
19. Manage, develop and support staff within the Allocations and Lettings Team. Provide clear leadership and motivation to the team and ensure effective cross team working, both within Housing Needs and the wider council.
20. Maintain and update computer records and paper files on all aspects of the section's activities. Take a pro-active approach to the development of computerised systems and other new technology.
21. Ensure continuous improvement and value for money in service delivery by obtaining feedback from customers and other agencies and benchmarking services to ensure reflective of best practice.
22. Identify and assist the Housing Needs Manager in managing budgetary requirements to ensure that expenditure is within approved limits and value for money is achieved.
23. Delivery of an effective and appropriate service to service users, fairly and without discrimination.
24. As a term of your employment you can be required to undertake such other duties commensurate with your grade, and/or hours of work, as may reasonably be required of you at your initial place of work or at any other of the Authority's establishments.

Note:

This job description outlines the main duties and responsibilities of the position and is designed for the benefit of both the postholder and the Council in understanding the prime functions of the post. It should not be regarded as exclusive nor exhaustive as there may be other duties and requirements associated with and covered by the grading of the post.

This job description is current at December 2012.

Management have the right to vary the duties after consultation with you.

Agreed

Human Resources Advisor.

CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

PERSON SPECIFICATION

POST: Senior Allocations and Lettings Officer DIRECTORATE: Housing Services

GRADE: S02

DIVISION: Housing Needs

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	HOW IDENTIFIED
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in, and understanding of the choice based lettings allocations processes and the lettings processes, with the ability to initiate change and develop policies and procedures to reflect this. • Experience of performance and quality control management in a results orientated environment. • Experience of complaint management and resolution • Experience of managing staff • Experience of managing budgets • Experience of analysing data and preparing reports identifying trends and improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of responding to investigations and requests for information from elected members, MPs and the Local Government Ombudsman. 	<p>Interview</p> <p>Application Form.</p> <p>Presentation</p>

Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of education sufficient to meet the requirements of this post 	Corporate member of the Chartered Institute of Housing	Application form
Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be able to communicate effectively with customers with differing needs, colleagues and Council Members. • Dealing with vulnerable people in complex situations. • Develop Partnership working with key agencies 	Mediation Skills.	Interview Application Form Presentation
Disposition/ Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to deal with enquires and complaints in an assertive but sympathetic manner. • Willingness to attend regular meetings and on occasions out of office hours. • Must be highly motivated, have the ability to work under pressure and organise priorities without direct supervision, and be an excellent team player. • Able to meet performance targets and deadlines whilst ensuring quality of service and sensitivity.. • A commitment to equal opportunities and diversity 	Flexible approach to work and ability to meet challenges and adapt to change.	Interview Application Form Presentation

Personal Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobility around the Borough.• Flexibility to work additional hours when required, this also may include evenings and weekends	Own transport	Interview
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DATE: December 2012

Compiled by: David Harris

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Assistant Housing Officer	Grade: Scale 4
Division: Housing Needs	Accountable to: Senior Allocations & Lettings Officer
Current Postholder:	Responsible for: Nil staff
Post No: M160	

Purpose of Job:

To assist the Allocations and Lettings Team in the smooth running of the Councils Choice Based Lettings scheme, including: maintenance of records, advertising properties, liaison with partners and Registered Providers (RP's), selection of applicants for allocation and to assess and investigate Housing Register and Housing Transfer applications. To provide support to the Housing Needs Team, and deal with enquiries from the public and other agencies regarding housing register applications and allocations, in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Assist in delivering the Councils Choice Based Lettings scheme and carry out associated administrative tasks, such as: creating adverts, producing relevant literature, providing assistance in the bidding process, shortlisting and making offers.
2. Assist in the short-listing to RP's and monitoring of outcomes from them.
3. Responsible for recording all refusals of offers and updating IT systems and files accordingly.
4. To carry out all functions associated with Waiting List and Transfer List processes including: assessment of applications and change of circumstances following the Councils procedures and accurately updating associated IT systems and files.
5. Conducting face to face interviews with waiting list and transfer applicants to obtain all necessary information to process their applications.
6. Deal with enquiries and advise clients regarding the housing register, transfers, and allocations. Giving appropriate advice and/or referring clients to Housing Officers where necessary.

7. Monitor housing register annual re-registration forms.
8. Amend, cancel and register new applications when necessary.
9. Dealing with routine correspondence in relation to housing applications and the choice based lettings scheme.
10. Assist the Housing Allocations Officer in compiling, monitoring and reporting service performance indicators and customer service standards
11. To work with and protect at all times confidential and sensitive information held in and produced by Housing Needs and other parts of the Council.
12. Delivery of an effective and appropriate service to all service users, fairly and without discrimination.
13. As a term of your employment you can be required to undertake such other duties commensurate with your grade, and/or hours of works, as may reasonably be required of you at your initial place of work or at any other of the Authority's establishments.

Note:

This job description outlines the main duties and responsibilities of the position and is designed for the benefit of both the postholder and the Council in understanding the prime functions of the post. It should not be regarded as exclusive nor exhaustive as there may be other duties and requirements associated with and covered by the grading of the post.

This job description is current at 05 April 2012.

Management have the right to vary the duties after consultation with you.

Agreed

Human Resources Advisor

**CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL
PERSON SPECIFICATION**

POST: Assistant Housing
Officer

DIRECTORATE Housing Services

GRADE: 4

DIVISION: Housing Needs

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	HOW IDENTIFIED
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of general office duties, including: filing, data inputting, dealing with telephone enquiries, post, faxing, keeping accurate records, and typing. • Experience of Internet Technology / E-Mail. • Experience of working with choice based lettings schemes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in a public sector housing organisation 	Application Form Interview
Specialist Knowledge/ Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent knowledge of Microsoft suite. Including: Outlook Office, Power Point, Excel and word. • Knowledge of spreadsheets and databases. • Good organisational skills including monitoring service delivery performance. • Must be able to communicate effectively both in written and verbal form. • Must be able to adopt a methodical and logical approach to tasks. 		Application Form. Interview.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be able to work in a pressured environment and achieve stretching targets. • Ability to work both as part of a team and own initiative. • Ability to prioritise workload to deliver deadlines. 		
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of education sufficient to meet the requirements of this post. 		Application Form.
Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good communication skills and the ability to adjust your approach to when dealing with peoples differing needs • Ability to liaise with external organisations • Able to work as part of a team • Able to work on own initiative to develop new works areas and opportunities 		Application Form Interview
Disposition/ Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention to detail. • Commitment to team work. • Must be self motivated and well organised so that agreed deadlines and standards are met. • Flexibility to work additional hours when required. 		Application Form Interview

DATE: ...5th April 2012Compiled by: S Bignell

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Administration Officer	Grade: Scale 3
Division: Housing Needs	Accountable to: Senior Allocations & Lettings Officer
Current Postholder:	Responsible for: Nil staff
Post No.	

Purpose of Job:

To provide administrative and clerical support to all staff within the Housing Needs Team.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. To deliver a full range of administrative support in the provision of an efficient and effective Housing Service.
2. To input and record information on the Councils Housing Management System and associated systems including updating and recording information on QL, XP, Abritas, Lagan, spreadsheets and databases ensuring at all times accuracy of information. Setting up files for new applications.
3. To carry out administrative functions, including word processing, filing and recording systems. and dealing with telephone enquiries/complaints
4. To take accurate minutes at meetings as required.
5. Assist the Housing Allocations Officer in compiling, monitoring and reporting service performance indicators and customer service standards
6. To maintain adequate stocks of advisory leaflets and housing application forms and ensure they are available to customer services so that a high quality advisory service is afforded to all service users.
7. Amend, cancel and register new applications and transfer applications, when necessary.
8. To work with and protect at all times confidential and sensitive information held in and produced by Housing Needs and other parts of the Authority.
9. Responsible for monitoring, administration and payment of choice based lettings invoices and bed and breakfast invoices. Maintaining accurate records to ensure correct payments.

10. Delivery of an effective and appropriate service to all service users, fairly and without discrimination.
11. As a term of your employment you can be required to undertake such other duties commensurate with your grade, and/or hours of works, as may reasonably be required of you at your initial place of work or at any other of the Authority's establishments.

Note:

This job description outlines the main duties and responsibilities of the position and is designed for the benefit of both the post holder and the Council in understanding the prime functions of the post. It should not be regarded as exclusive nor exhaustive as there may be other duties and requirements associated with and covered by the grading of the post.

This job description is current at 05 April 2012.

Management have the right to vary the duties after consultation with you.

Agreed

Senior Employee Service Centre Officer

CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

PERSON SPECIFICATION

POST: Admin Officer
GRADE: Scale 3

DIRECTORATE: Housing
DIVISION: Housing Needs

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	HOW IDENTIFIED
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of general office duties, including: filing, data inputting, dealing with telephone enquiries, post, faxing, keeping accurate records, and typing • Experience of Internet Technology / E-Mail • Experience of organising meetings and taking minutes 	Experience of working in a social housing environment	Application form Interview
Specialist Knowledge/ Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent knowledge of Microsoft suite. Including: Outlook Office, Power Point, Excel and word • Good organisational skills including co-ordination of team diaries • Good communication skills both written and verbal • Able to work in a structured and organised manner to achieve tight deadlines in a highly pressurised environment, using own initiative or as part of a team 	Awareness of choice based lettings schemes	Application form Interview
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of education sufficient to meet the requirements of this post. 		Application Form
Interpersonal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to communicate 		Interview

Skills	<p>clearly and sensitively with members of the general public on the phone or in person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to liaise with external organisations • Able to work as part of a team • Able to work on own initiative to develop new works areas and opportunities • Prioritise own workloads to deliver deadlines 		
Disposition/Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive and flexible attitude to work • Ability to work on own initiative and under pressure to achieve strict deadlines • Ability to work as part of a team 		Interview
Personal Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility to work additional hours when required 		Interview

Date: April 2012

Compiled by: Sharon Bignell