

Report of:	Head of Housing and Partnerships
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Key Decision:	No
Report Track:	Cabinet: 16/07/20

CABINET
16 JULY 2020
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT – CREATION OF NEW POSTS

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the creation of two posts within the Housing Property Services Team and the Neighbourhoods Team.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To approve the creation of two new posts funded within the budgetary provision for the Housing Revenue Account:-
- Compliance Officer – Salary Grade H; 37 hours per week (£42,780 – including on costs)
 - Special Complex Case Officer – Salary Grade F; 18.5 hours per week (£16,400 - including on costs).

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations

Key Issues

- 3.1 The Housing department currently manage 5,115 properties across our district (as at 31 March 2020). Of these there are 35 blocks of flats with communal areas and 4 sheltered schemes.
- 3.2 A review of the compliance requirements has been undertaken by the Interim Housing Property Services Manager. He has identified that the key compliance tasks are dispersed into various posts across the wider Housing Team.
- 3.3 In recent history, the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017 evoked 'The Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety' Report (May 2018) highlighting recommendations from Dame Judith Hackett. Particular recommendations with regard to the responsibilities of the duty holder and on producing a reformed

building safety regulatory system add further depth to the Council's role in complying.

- 3.4 The Tenancy Services Team has seen how tenants with complex needs can have a negative impact on resources, neighbourhoods, communities and frontline Council Services because of the high levels of demand generated the tenants. This is demand is also impacting on locality, other public sector providers and wider Council services.
- 3.5 The current pandemic has highlighted that we have several Council Tenants who are challenging because of behavioural issues, complex support needs, mental health or are aggressive to staff. The individuals monopolise the patch based Officer's time, Council Services and other organisations times. According to our records there are currently 10 Council Tenants that fall within this category.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.6 The Housing Property Services Team is currently understaffed to deliver compliance across the board. To maintain and further develop the processes it is essential to recruit to a new Compliance Officer position so that focus on all areas can be retained.
- 3.7 The new post holder (Special Complex Case Officer) will ensure that services and teams are able to build resilience by tackling the individuals demand for services and will achieve this by providing a resident centred housing services and link in with other partners to ensure service delivery is coordinated.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:
- (i) The Council has a responsibility to ensure the wellbeing of its community. A role sustaining safe homes and providing a healthy environment to live will assist in contributing to community wellbeing.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The Housing department currently manage 5,115 properties across our district (as at 31 March 2020). Of these:
- c.95% have asbestos containing materials (ACMs) which need to be managed and removed when damaged in accordance with The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012;
 - c.25% have communal areas and all properties have a party wall requiring fire safety measures and regular risk assessments in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005; and
 - All void and communal facilities will require risk assessments with regard to water hygiene.

5.2 As a landlord Cannock Chase District Council has a responsibility to ensure all the above is adhered to inline with H&S at Work etc. Act 1974.

5.3 **Compliance Officer** - the creation of this role will ensure:-

- Centralised management, focus and engagement of health and safety risks;
- The coordination of cyclical testing and risk assessments for Asbestos management, fire safety and legionella risk;
- Recommendations are addressed in order to prepare and implement relevant work streams and remedial work, to remove and mitigate any risks;
- Expertise in Asbestos Management, with the ability to offer advise on corporate stock;
- Accurate, housing stock records relating to compliance;
- All remedial work and relevant work streams are monitored and therefore compliant.

5.4 **Special Complex Case Officer** - the creation of this role will aim to:-

- Provide an effective and efficient service; giving advice and assistance in relation to all matters concerning anti-social behaviour;
- Prevent homelessness by promoting sustainable communities and neighbourhoods and take a proactive role in the Council neighbourhood initiatives and regeneration activities by working closely with colleagues, tenants, the local community, and other agencies;
- Receive complex case referrals for casework from Line Manager within Tenancy Services and or external agencies;
- Cases be will investigated and appropriate action taken against perpetrators of anti-social behaviour, or challenging behaviour;
- Take a proactive approach to resolving tenant and neighbourhood disputes, and ensuring effective liaison with Police other services , Community partnership, Independent Mediation Service and other agencies;
- Build a rapport with the Council's Housing Needs team and work alongside partners from across the statutory and voluntary sectors to ensure each individual's support needs are identified and addressed effectively.

5.5 There is insufficient budget within the HRA Staffing Budget to fund the creation of these two posts. Cabinet are requested to approve an additional budget allocation of £59,180 to fund these two key posts within the Housing Section.

6 Implications

6.1 **Financial**

As set out in the report above there is insufficient staffing budget to accommodate these posts. The principal on which the HRA budgets are based is that any amount above the minimum working balance is contributed as a Revenue Contribution to Capital Outturn (RCCO). This is then used to fund

capital works to dwellings. Therefore any additional staffing cost will reduce the amount contributed to fund capital works.

6.2 Legal

The legal implications are set out in the body of the report.

6.3 Human Resources

The posts of Compliance Officer and Special Complex Case Officer have been evaluated in line with the Council's Job Evaluation Scheme but at the time of writing these evaluations are subject to the outcome of final moderation. It is not anticipated however that the grades of these roles will be subject to change.

6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

None.

6.5 Human Rights Act

None.

6.6 Data Protection

None.

6.7 Risk Management

The council is responsible for compliance within the housing stock, the risk if funding is rejected for the role is non-compliance.

6.8 Equality & Diversity

None.

6.9 Best Value

None.

7 Appendices to the Report

None

Previous Consideration

None.

Background Papers

None.