



To: Executive Councillor for Housing (and Deputy Leader): Councillor Catherine Smart
Report by: Robert Hollingsworth, Head of City Homes
Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing Management Board **URGENT DECISION**
Wards affected: All Wards

INCREASE IN TEMPORARY HOUSING STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT TO DELIVER ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION
Not a Key Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This decision is needed to enable the Temporary Housing Service to increase the provision of Temporary and Emergency Accommodation to a target level of 95 units from a position of 63 units at the start of 2013 as quickly as possible.
- 1.2 The costs of the additional post will be met from a combination of existing budget provision in the General Fund Homelessness Service Area, specifically identified for 10 of the additional units of accommodation combined with an increase in service charge income for the remaining additional units of accommodation in HRA ownership.
- 1.3 This decision, if approved, will enable recruitment to proceed.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- 2.1 To approve an increase in the Temporary Housing staffing establishment, allowing the appointment of one full time equivalent additional Assistant Housing Officer. This approval is being granted on the basis that this will have a neutral financial impact on the Housing Revenue Account, with the costs met by a combination of existing funding approved as part of the 2013/14 budget process for additional emergency accommodation provision and the increased service charge income that an increase in Temporary Housing units will generate.

3. Background

- 3.1 The City Council's use of Bed and Breakfast Accommodation has reached a long term high.
- 3.2 In an attempt to mitigate the increased costs of Bed & Breakfast, the Council needs to increase the number of temporary and emergency housing units available from the current 80 properties to a target of 95 during 2013/14.
- 3.3 As part of the 2013/14 General Fund budget process, approval was given to fund the costs of the authority providing additional emergency accommodation directly. To fulfil this obligation the authority has recently taken on a 3-year lease for a 10 bed unit of accommodation on Elizabeth Way. This unit will be used to deliver emergency accommodation to fulfil our homeless obligations, instead of using bed & breakfast. This housing provision will be delivered and managed by staff in the Temporary Housing service.
- 3.4 The Temporary Housing Service have also given a commitment to attempt to increase the supply of Temporary and Emergency accommodation to 95 in total, with the need to identify an additional 13 Housing Revenue Account dwellings that can also be used for dispersed temporary housing.
- 3.5 As a direct result of an increase of 15 units of accommodation, there is a need to increase the staffing establishment within the Temporary Housing Service to meet the additional premises, housing management and support needs of the additional clients.
- 3.6 The team has already reached saturation in workload as a result of increasing the temporary housing stock from 55 units in 2010, to 63 in 2013 to date, in addition to widening the role of the service to already deliver 9 units of emergency accommodation.
- 3.7 In order for delivery of services associated with the requirement for extra Temporary and Emergency Accommodation as soon as Elizabeth Way is ready to be let, approval to increase the staffing establishment is requested outside of the normal budget cycle.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

This proposal is being submitted for approval on the basis that it will be funded by a combination of existing General Fund budget identified for the additional accommodation at 1 Elizabeth Way and an increase in service charge income in respect of the increase in Housing Revenue Account dwellings being utilised for Temporary Housing purposes.

(b) Staffing Implications

An additional full-time Assistant Housing Officer will be recruited allowing the additional workload to be managed effectively.

(c) Equal Opportunities Implications

This proposal has no equal opportunities implication for Cambridge City Council and does not involve any change to existing policies or procedures.

(d) Environmental Implications

This proposal will have no environmental implications in Cambridge City.

(e) Procurement

There are no procurement implications associated with this report.

(f) Consultation and Communication

The proposal has been put forward in consultation with the Strategic Housing Service,

(g) Community Safety

This proposal will have no community safety implications in Cambridge City.

5. Background Papers

There were no specific background papers used in the preparation of this report:

6. Appendices

There are no appendices associated with this report

7. Inspection of Papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

Author's Name: Frances Swann
Author's Phone Number: 01223 – 462255
Author's Email: frances.swann@cambridge.gov.uk