

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 17 NOVEMBER 2015

Title of report	SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE
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Purpose of report	To propose that the Interim Director of Housing post should be made a permanent role in the Council's management structure.
Council Priorities	Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	Contained within existing budgets in 2015/16. The costs of a permanent post will need to be included in the 2016/17 Revenue Budgets
Link to relevant CAT	All
Risk Management	Creating this post will reduce the risk to the Council of not having strategic knowledge and leadership within a significant service area
Equalities Impact Screening	No direct implications
Human Rights	No direct implications
Transformational Government	No direct implications
Comments of Head of Paid Service	As author of the report, this report is satisfactory

Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	This report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	This report is satisfactory
Consultees	A copy of the report was provided to the Trade Unions, but no comments have been received.
Background papers	External Health check report 2014 (commercially sensitive) Located in room 127 (HR Manager's office)
Recommendations	THAT A PERMANENT POST OF DIRECTOR OF HOUSING BE APPROVED.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council commissioned a report in 2014 by an independent external consultant (Richard Sorenson) to review the following areas of the in-house Housing service – Internal Governance and information flows, Value for money, Contract management and the staffing structure and levels.
- 1.2 The report recommended the creation of a director level role to oversee the housing management function and the development of the housing function at a strategic level. Following consideration of the report at the Councils Corporate Leadership Team and consultations with the political leadership and key shadow members, the Chief Executive decided to use her delegated powers to create an 18 month contract role as Interim Director of Housing.
- 1.3 The current incumbent was appointed to the role in late September 2014.

2.0 RATIONALE TO CREATE A PERMANENT POST

The creation of the Interim post was fundamentally to achieve the following:

Tenants

- To strengthen the tenant and resident engagement to examine and challenge the Housing service.

Strategic

- To provide strategic leadership to the service particularly in light of the dynamically changing national policy changes.
- To create strategic policies and plans to lay the foundations for a council new build programme to go ahead, and for the council to acquire new properties and sites.
- To complete an Asset Management Strategy which will guide around £160m of investment in the housing stock over the next 30 years.

Capital investment

- To successfully complete of the Decent Homes Programme by 31 March 2015 to the satisfaction of the Homes and Communities Agency.

Service Improvements

- To challenge the performance of the housing service. This includes the development of a framework through which the Housing Service can deliver best practice by introducing a Value for Money Strategy, Procurement Strategy, Acquisitions Policy, Disposals Policy, Annual Housing Business Plan, Annual Lettings Plan and an Asset Management Strategy.
- To re-model the Older Persons Service to address funding reductions and enable continuation of service to vulnerable client group.
- To create and get a Green and Decent pilot programme for renewable technologies in the housing stock up and running.
- To procure an asset performance tool to examine and track the financial performance of our housing assets.

In assessing whether the role should be made permanent, consideration has been given to the changing national and local perspectives i.e.

- The rapidly evolving and developing National policy changes which require local interpretation and expert advice on the options available to the Council and its housing partners (Registered Social Providers). Examples are the end to lifetime tenancies and the requirement to sell high value empty properties to fund housing association Right to Buys.
- Social Housing is a key policy area for the current Government and is likely to be so for future Governments.
- Strategies have been put into place which will now need to be implemented in order to achieve the Council's set outcomes e.g. the New Build programme
- The need to oversee the implementation of the Asset Management Strategy (recognising the links between housing and wider Council assets) in maintaining decency of the housing stock and the selective disposal of housing assets, including future use for all garage sites.
- Embed the new service model for the Older Persons Service
- Make a significant contribution to the Council's commercial agenda and identify where the Housing Service, and other parts of the Council, can deliver services to external clients to earn additional income.

In summary the Council requires a housing expert who can provide strategic leadership to address the above issues for the long term. Hence it is a recommendation within this report to create this post on a permanent footing.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Director salary scale is a range between £72,816 and £81,585 per annum. With the usual associated on-costs the annual cost to Council of making the post permanent would be a maximum of £109,894. This would be funded from the Housing Revenue Account with a recharge of approximately 10% to the General Fund to reflect the functions funded by the Council Tax Payer. The costs of a permanent post will need to be included in the 2016/17 Revenue Budgets.

4.0 APPOINTMENT TO THE PERMANENT ROLE

- 4.1 Should members approve this report, an internal recruitment process will be followed.
- 4.2 Permanent appointments to posts of this level (Chief Officer) are reserved for the Appointments Committee. If approved as a permanent post the post would be advertised internally to the Council and a meeting of the Committee would be convened accordingly.