

## Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

**ADDITIONAL POSTS TO DELIVER THE HOUSING DELIVERY PROGRAMME**1. Purpose of report

To seek committee approval for the appointment of 2 new fixed term posts in the Housing and Legal Services departments to assist in the delivery of the housing delivery programme.

2. Background and detail

The Housing Delivery Plan was approved by Housing Committee and the Finance and Resources Committee in the summer of 2019. A key component of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the housing delivery plan is the purchase of mainly ex-council houses for the HRA. The advantage of this approach is that it can provide additional affordable housing quickly and at reasonable cost. This is particularly important in the early years of the plan as new build developments take time to progress and therefore will mainly be delivered after year 2/3 of the programme.

To date 3 properties have been purchased for the HRA and a further 4 are in the process of being purchased with several others in the pipeline. Over £1.1 million has been allocated for buybacks in the 2019/20 capital programme with a further £1.5m allocated per annum from 2020/21 to 2022/23.

It has become clear that to deliver this programme effectively will require additional in-house legal and housing resources. This increase in resources is particularly required if the Council wants to accelerate the buybacks in the early years of the Housing Delivery Plan in order to deliver the annual target of 20 new homes for the HRA. The following additional resources would be required;

- a) Legal Officer – Full time (37 hours) fixed term contract for 2 years - Grade 7,
- b) Housing Acquisition Officer - Full time (37 hours) fixed term contract for 2 years – Grade 5,

Without these post the Council will not be able to process and identify sufficient opportunities for the acquisition of existing homes for the HRA as per the 2019-23 Capital Programme and the 2019-23 allocated budget will therefore be underspent. Without these posts the delivery of the adopted housing delivery programme (which in the early years is reliant on buybacks) will be adversely affected.

In addition to the RTB buyback programme, the Council's new build programme requires considerable administrative support. The legal work required for the new build programme is also considerable including undertaking the required due diligence work to ensure that the developments can proceed. Both these posts will work with the interim Housing Delivery Manager to progress the Council's new build programme.

3. Financial Implications

The financial implications are included in the appendix.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:**

- a) That a new post of legal officer (37 hours), comprising of a 2 year fixed term contract, be established in Legal Services,**
- b) That a new post of Housing Acquisition Officer (37 hours), comprising of a 2 year fixed term contract, be established in Housing Services.**

Background papers – Nil

## APPENDIX

Financial Implications

As both roles would be exclusively involved in the delivery of a scheme (acquisition of properties) within the HRA capital programme, it is envisaged that the salary and on costs (employer's national insurance and superannuation) would be charged to the HRA capital programme and be funded from receipts from the sale of right to buy properties.

Assuming a 2% pay award from April 2020, the estimated annual costs of the posts are as follows,

**1) Legal Officer**

1 FTE at bottom of grade 7 (SCP 31) £30,700\*

**2) Housing Acquisition Officer**

1 FTE at bottom of grade 5 (SCP 21) £25,700\*

\* Including employer's national insurance and superannuation.