

## People Services Restructure

Summary: Following the Management Restructure a new 'People Services' service grouping was formed which brings together the Benefits, Housing Options, Housing Adaptation and Health and Wellbeing teams under an Assistant Director.

The Assistant Director has identified a number of challenges and opportunities for the service and has proposed changes to the structure which are supported by additional posts to provide capacity to deliver an enhanced service in support of the Corporate Plan objectives and maximise the opportunities to lever in external funding and income to expand the offering further.

This paper sets out the basis for these additional fixed term posts and the use of uncommitted fee income and relevant reserves to fund them over the two-year period.

Recommendations: It is recommended that Cabinet agree the use of uncommitted fee income and reserves to fund the proposed additional posts within for the revised 'People Services' service grouping and to earmark the uncommitted fee income and the required level of reserves to support the funding of the structure for the next 2 years.

### LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

*(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)*

none
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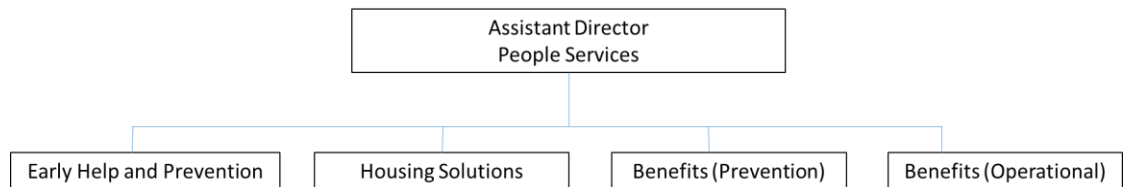
Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected – all
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This reports sets out the budget position in relation to a revised structure for the People Services following the Management Restructure which resulted in the realignment of a number services, previously sitting under different areas, into one service grouping. A high level structure is below.



- 1.2 The structural proposal seeks to:
- equalise the size of the teams managed by the 4 services managers
  - create capacity for Service Managers to undertake development and change to meet the Corporate Plan objectives
  - maintain posts which generate income
  - extend the tenure of posts for which further external funding is anticipated
  - provide opportunity to lever in additional funding
  - address short term pressures created through the response to COVID within teams.
- 1.3 The proposal increases the staffing cohort over a two-year period using unspent reserves within the People Services budget area.
- 1.4 The service areas that make up People Services each have elements which are statutory in nature and highly regulated. Many have seen significant change in recent years; needing to adapt to changes in legislation and regulation for which additional burdens funding has been made available. Whilst extremely welcome, this funding has tended to be in the form of grants determined on an annual ad hoc basis which has made longer term service planning extremely challenging. In a number of cases additional resources have been bought in to deliver service but no additional provision has been made at the management level. The people management burden has eroded the ability for Managers to undertake the required level of strategic work.
- 1.5 The sustained period of response to the COVID19 pandemic over the last 15 months has added to these pressures and sustained and potentially increased demand can be expected throughout the recovery phase.
- 1.6 To realise the benefits expected through the bringing together of People Services areas it is necessary to provide capacity for change to be delivered.
- 1.7 The proposed structure is for two years and will be funded through:
- unspent reserves within the People Services budgets
  - income from already established chargeable service income
  - recovered COVID19 expenditure from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF)
- 1.8 It is expected that some of the temporary posts within the current structure will have their funding extended directly. The funding for these posts has

been included in the proposal as it provides certainty for the existing staff, who might be lost to the Council if we waited for the funding announcement. Not only do we potentially lose members of the team who are valued but results in additional recruitment and training resource being required.

- 1.9 By joining up those services delivered by People Services there is the potential to reduce the burden on other statutory services in particular Health and Social Care and therefore opportunities exist to attract additional funding from other sources to sustain the current structure and fund further investment in services to deliver at an enhanced level.
- 1.10 There is also opportunity within the proposed structure to increase the level of income generated through chargeable services in some areas which could result in a surplus to assist in other service provision.

## 2. **Proposed changes**

- 2.1 This report has not included those structural changes which do not require additional funding to be made available as these are within the delegation to the Assistant Director, in consultation with the Director from Communities.

- 2.2 A proposed structure for the Early Help and Prevention Operational Unit is included in Appendix 1. The structure includes the following posts beyond base budget in full or part:

### 2.2.1 Team Leader Early Help

This post will provide line management support to the Living Well/Social Prescribing officers thereby freeing the Early Help and Prevention Manager to concentrate on more strategic activity, including the interface with key partners and service development design.

The Team Leader duties will be in addition to normal casework and so the post will come from a secondment opportunity from within the current Living Well Officers and there will be no backfill. This is a development opportunity from within the team.

The additional cost comes from the likely increase in grade associated with the increase in responsibilities, subject to the job evaluation outcome.

### 2.2.2 Team Leader Housing Adaptations

This post will provide line management support to the officers within the IHAT team thereby freeing the Early Help and Prevention Manager to concentrate on more strategic activity, including service development design.

There is a potential for a secondment from within the IHAT Team which would provide a development opportunity or for external recruitment. If the post is filled through secondment, then backfill recruitment would take place.

This post supports the income generating element of the service through the fees charged to the Disabled Facilities Grants budget for additional support to applicants beyond processing the grant application. This post creates further capacity to widen the scope of the support offered and therefore open up further income generating options whilst enhancing the service offered to residents.

### 2.2.3 Housing Adaptations Admin Officer

The post supports the delivery of the Disabled Facilities Grant scheme with administrative activity and provides capacity within the team to generate the level of fee income. It is proposed to extend the contract for a further period of time as, based on previous years the post is fully funded by the fee income generated.

#### 2.2.4 Service Development Officer

This post will work across the Early Help and Prevention Operational Unit to develop the service offer, assist in implementing new ways of working, tap into external funding sources and deliver opportunities for enhancing the fee earning potential.

The main areas of focus for the Service Development Officer will be;

##### Housing Adaptations

- Waiting times
- Customer pathways
- Consistent service delivery across the county
- Enhanced management of contractors
- Operating costs
- Maximising fee income to support service delivery
- New income generation opportunities
- Partnership working with Health and Social Care

##### Early Help

- Securing ongoing funding for the Living Well service and horizon scanning to take advantage of other opportunities to fund services on behalf of others
- Relaunch of the Help Hub
- Development of an Equal, Diverse and Inclusive district
- Review of support to vulnerable and marginalised groups including safeguarding, domestic abuse services
- Partnership working with Health and Social Care
- COVID recovery and sustaining/building on community capacity developed
- Contract monitoring/service level agreement for commissioned services and grant programmes
- Income generation opportunities
- Intergenerational promotion

2.3 A proposed structure for the Housing Options Operational Unit is included in Appendix 2. The structure includes the following posts beyond establishment:

#### 2.3.1 Team Leader Housing Solutions

At present the Housing Solutions Manager has direct line management responsibility for a significant number of staff. This post will provide line management support to the officers within the Housing solutions team thereby freeing the Housing Solutions Manager to concentrate on more strategic activity, interface with key partners, horizon scanning, securing external funding, service development design.

The Team Leader duties will be in addition to normal casework and so the

post will come from a secondment opportunity from within the current Living Well Officers and there will be no backfill. This is a development opportunity from within the team.

The additional cost comes from the likely increase in grade associated with the increase in responsibilities, subject to the job evaluation outcome.

### 2.3.2 Team Leader Accommodation and Support

This post will provide direct line management responsibility for a cohort of staff within the Housing Solutions Team thereby freeing the Housing Solutions Manager to concentrate on more strategic activity, interface with key partners, horizon scanning, securing external funding, service development design.

The Team Leader will also deal with more complex casework in addition to the line management activity. The post will be offered as a secondment as a development opportunity within the team or external recruitment. If a secondment the vacant post will be backfilled externally.

The post creates capacity focused on developing new area of the team's work requiring a specific focus giving support to the officers employed to develop the accommodation and support options for those who are homeless and those threatened with homelessness. The role will have a specific focus on managing spend on temporary accommodation options with invest to save options being a potential focus.

### 2.3.3 Accommodation Solutions Officer – Private Sector

One of the Housing Options Officers has previously been seconded into a similar role to assist in the selection, purchase and ongoing management of units of accommodation for use as temporary accommodation. This previous post was temporary but with the increase in the Council's portfolio of temporary accommodation there is a need to continue the additional tenancy management support and provide links into other teams such as Property Services, around maintenance and repairs.

In addition, this role will also focus on identifying solutions in the wider housing market for the prevention of homelessness which could include private sector leasing and Homeshare initiatives. These will provide an additional route to the owned portfolio and enables a mix of housing types and locations to be considered.

### 2.3.4 Service Development Officer

To support the Housing Solutions Manager to develop the service offer and assist the Housing Solutions and Accommodation and Support Team Leaders to implement new ways of working to support service development

Main areas of focus will be;

- Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy development and implementation
- Housing Register, management of partners, policy review, data collection and analysis
- Domestic Abuse accommodation and support offer, data collection and analysis, strategy development and implementation, new duty to co-operate following enactment of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, joint procurement of Domestic Abuse Services by the Office for the Police

- and Crime Commissioner
- Rough Sleeper initiatives
- Overview/performance of the SHPS – Single Homelessness Prevention Service
- Procurement of accommodation for temporary accommodation
- Supporting joint working with partner agencies and other Councils
- Benchmarking

2.4 A proposed structure for the Benefits Operational Unit is included in Appendix 3. The structure includes the following posts beyond establishment:

2.4.1 Benefits Team Leader (Fraud)

The structure refocuses on the two Housing Benefits Managers into more defined responsibilities around Operational Delivery and Prevention Streams. The current structure contains three Team Leader posts with a Senior Housing Benefits Officer supporting the Team Leader roles on a temporary basis.

Creating a fourth Team Leader post brings additional capacity at this level, provides an appropriate balance to the structure and reduces the number of direct reports to each Team Leader to a manageable number. This post will be recruited from the existing team and the post will not be back filled.

2.5 A high level summary of the impact of these requests and the reserve funding required to support the delivery of the new structure can be found within Appendix 4. The total forecast cost is c£486k over the period in question.

2.6 The proposal contains 5 new posts over the existing establishment, 1 post which is an extension of an existing temporary post, 2 posts which uplift the level of an existing post to include line management responsibility and 2 posts which uplift the level of an existing post to include additional line management responsibility.

**3. Corporate Plan Objectives**

3.1 The restructure proposal supports directly or indirectly all of the Corporate Plan objectives;

- Local Homes for Local Need – assisting people to sustain their housing or secure alternative or more suitable housing
- Boosting Business Sustainability and Growth – supporting local businesses through the provision of grant funding to fund adaptations (£1.3m)
- Customer Focus – the People Services service grouping support some of the most vulnerable residents in the districts through the provision of information, advice and guidance; applications for benefits, grants and social housing; and signposting and case work in normal times and assistance with food, prescriptions and other daily essentials during the COVID pandemic
- Climate, Coast and the Environment - supporting residents with energy advice and reducing carbon footprints
- Financial Sustainability and Growth – delivering services efficiently to reduce spend, invest to save options, prevention and income generation to offset costs, efficient and effective use of burdens

monies

- Quality of life – impacting on the health and wellbeing of residents and reducing inequalities

3.2 Through the Team Planning process the Assistant Director of People Services will, in conjunction with the relevant Operational Unit Managers and Portfolio Holders, develop a number of success criteria, performance measures and targets. Regular monitoring will be undertaken to check and report performance and outcomes against these measures and targets. Prior to the end of the 2 year period evaluation will be undertaken of the outcomes of implementing the proposal against the success criteria and identified Corporate Plan Objectives.

#### **4. Medium Term Financial Strategy**

4.1 The proposal utilises reserves of uncommitted income and unspent grant alongside some COMF funding and ongoing fee income to fund a structure with an exit strategy at two years, through the use of fixed term contracts.

4.2 Unspent income has been generated through the chargeable element of DFG work. This money was put into a reserve to support future service delivery and therefore the proposals meet the purpose for which the reserve was created.

4.3 Ongoing income is generated through fees charged to the Disabled Facilities Grant budget for support provided by the council to applicants in respect of progressing the application to approval and overseeing works. It is proposed to use this income to fund posts which enable this additional work to be undertaken.

4.4 The Council has received a number of grants from Central Government in respect of initiatives, particularly around reducing homelessness. The Council supports these initiatives but there is some unspent grant money which has been placed in reserves. In many cases this money is ring-fenced to housing purposes with a time limited period to spend the allocated monies. There is a potential that Government could claw back unspent or uncommitted grant funding in the future.

4.5 During the Covid19 pandemic significant staff resources have been reallocated from within the People Services area to support the Council's response. The Council has received various funding streams to support the Covid19 response including the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF). The Council is able to allocate costs which support the response to Covid19 and its work is currently ongoing to maximise the allocation of this budget before unspent elements have to be returned to County. It is therefore proposed to allocate the appropriate post costs for the period to 31-03-2022.

#### **5. Financial and Resource Implications**

5.1 The financial costs of the proposed structure are met from reserves and fee income, supported through use of COMF budget. There is no adverse impact on the base budget.

5.2 The additional costs for the Early Help and Prevention Operational Unit posts,

including on costs, are set out below:

#### 5.2.1 Team Leader Early Help

The costs involved relate to an anticipated increase in grade of the seconded member of staff.

The cost per annum is £8,877 with a total cost for the two year fixed term contract of £17,754.

The cost will be split equally between the IHAT reserve and the Housing Options Reserve.

#### 5.2.2 Team Leader Housing Adaptations

The costs arise from the creation of a new fixed term contract post.

The cost per annum is £40,912 with a total cost for the two year fixed term contract of £81,824.

The cost will be funded through the IHAT uncommitted fee income.

#### 5.2.3 Housing Adaptations Admin Officer

The costs arise from the extension of an existing fixed term contract post for a further two years.

The cost per annum is £24,466 with a total cost for the two year fixed term contract of £48,932.

The cost will be funded through the IHAT uncommitted fee income.

#### 5.2.4 Service Development Officer

The costs arise from the creation of a new fixed term contract post.

The cost per annum is £38,905 with a total cost for the two year fixed term contract of £77,810.

The cost will be funded through the IHAT uncommitted fee income topped up from the IHAT reserve. Some funding from the Housing Options Reserve may be appropriate if required due to the scope of the post.

#### 5.3 The additional costs for the Housing Solutions Operational Unit posts, including on costs, are set out below:

##### 5.3.1 Housing Options Team Leader

The costs involved relate to an anticipated increase in grade of the seconded member of staff.

The cost per annum is £2,007 with a total cost for the two year fixed term contract of £4,014.

The cost will be met from the Housing Options Reserve.

##### 5.3.2 Accommodation and Support Team Leader

The costs arise from the creation of a new fixed term contract post.

The cost per annum is £40,912 with a total cost for the two year fixed term contract of £81,824.

The cost will be funded through the Housing Options Reserve.

##### 5.3.3 Accommodation Solutions Officer – Private Sector

The costs arise from the creation of a new fixed term contract post.

The cost per annum is £38,905 with a total cost for the two year fixed term contract of £77,810.

The funding for this post will be through the Housing Options Reserve.

##### 5.3.4 Service Development Officer

The costs arise from the creation of a new fixed term contract post.



The cost per annum is £38,905 with a total cost for the two year fixed term contract of £77,810.

The first year of funding will be met through the Domestic Abuse Bill funding with the balance coming from the Housing Options Reserve.

- 5.4 The additional costs for the Housing Benefits Operational Unit Solutions Operational Unit posts, including on costs, are set out below:

5.4.1 Benefits Team Leader (Fraud)

The costs involved relate to an anticipated increase in grade of the seconded member of staff.

The cost per annum is £8,877 with a total cost for the two year fixed term contract of £17,754.

The cost will be met from the Benefits Reserve.

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this although the Council is at risk of not meeting its statutory obligations if it does not resource these services to provide sufficient capacity to manage increased demand and resilience.

## **7. Communications issues**

- 7.1 There are no specific Communications issues associated with this proposal however there may be reputational risks if the Council did not the same level of service previously delivered or was not able to meet its statutory obligations around grant funded activities.
- 7.2 There is further reputational risk if unspent grant funding is clawed back by the Government at some point in the future. This proposal enables the spending of some of these reserves within the scope of this grant funding.

## **8. Risks**

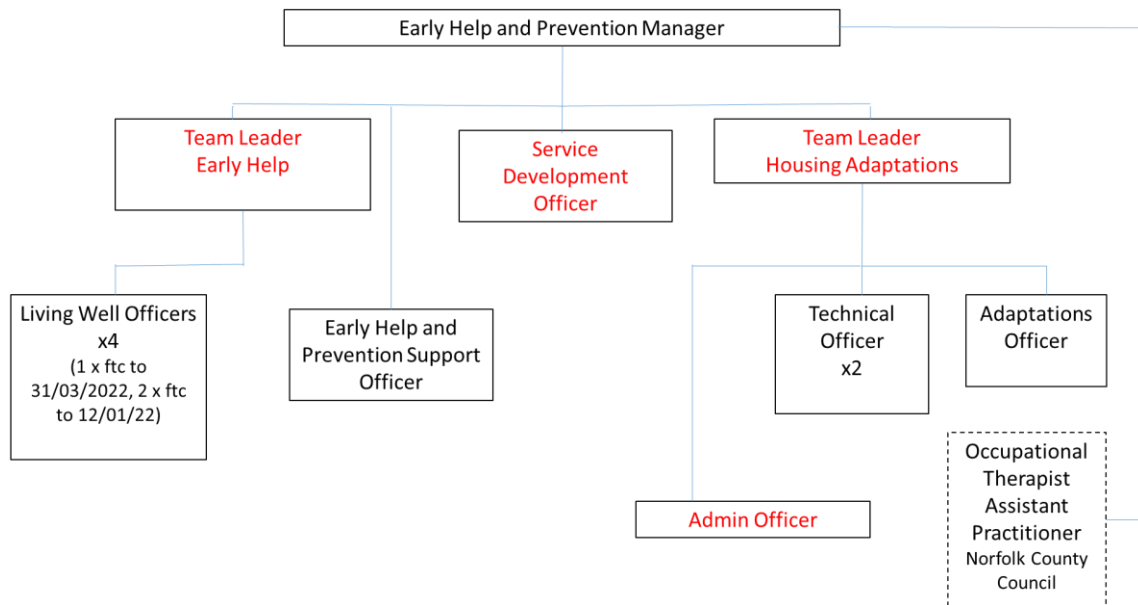
- 8.1 There are risks associated with this proposal. On one hand there is risk around the ability to deliver an increasing range and demand for services, in areas that support the Corporate Plan, without adequate staff resource to deliver these effectively; this is the reason for bringing the paper forward. There is a risk that unspent grant funding may be clawed back by Government, removing the benefit to residents in need. Conversely there are risks around increasing the cohort of staff and the additional financial burden; these risks are managed through the additional posts will be filled on a fixed term basis and supported by the secondment of staff.

## **9. Conclusions and Recommendations**

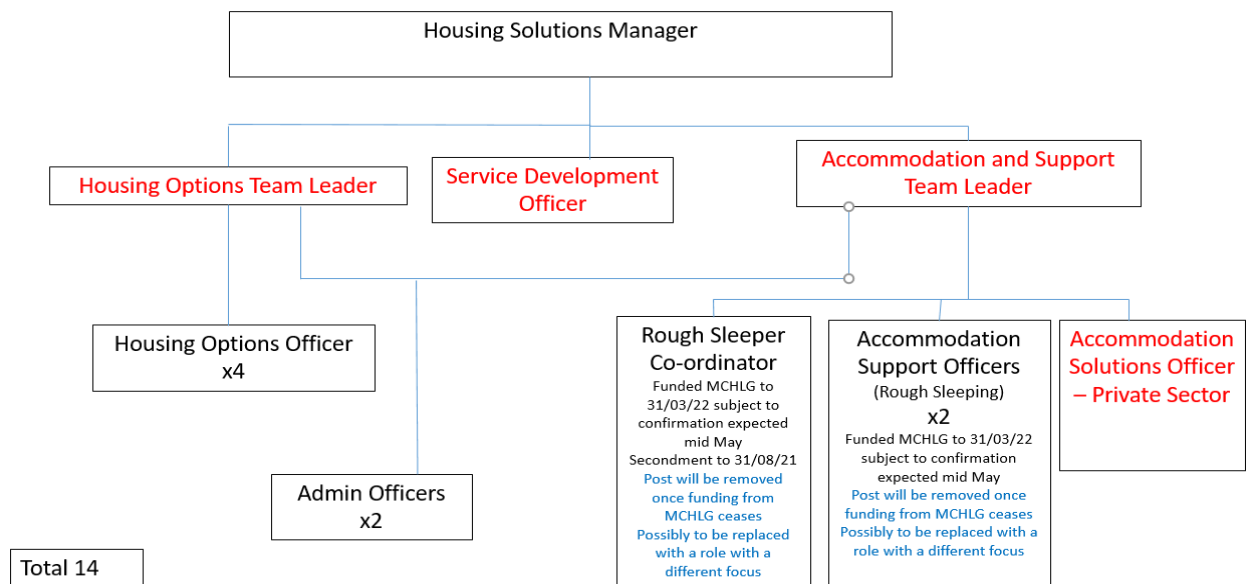
- 9.1 The report proposes a number of additional fixed term contract posts within the structure for People Services to provide capacity to deliver an enhanced service in support of the Corporate Plan objectives and maximise the opportunities to lever in external funding and income to expand the offering further.
- 9.2 It is recommended that Cabinet agree the use of uncommitted fee income and reserves to fund the proposed additional posts within for the revised

'People Services' service grouping and to earmark the uncommitted fee income and the required level of reserves to support the funding of the structure for the next 2 years.

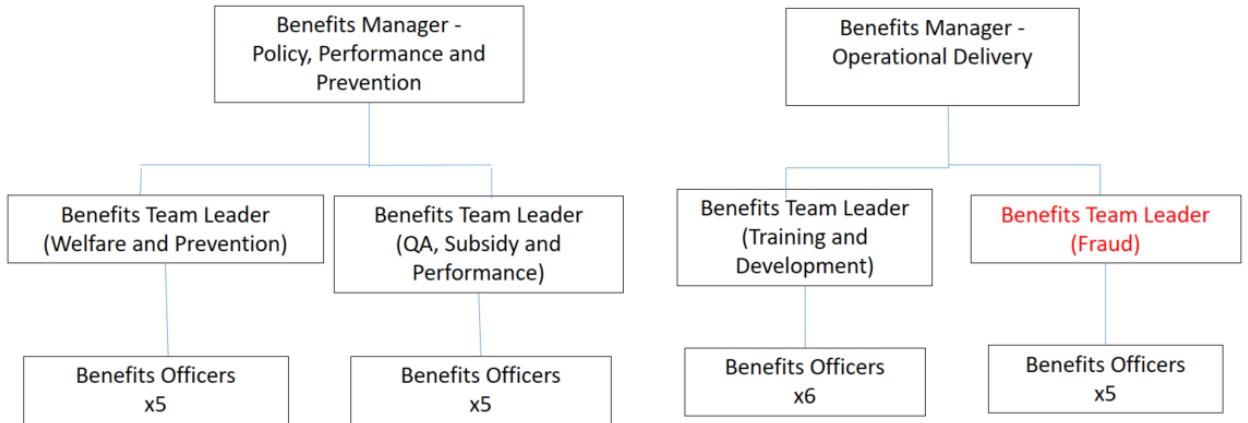
## Appendix 1



## Appendix 2



### Appendix 3



Total 25

## Appendix 4

Potential housing restructure - August 2021 Business Planning									
	Yr1	Yr2	Total			Funding			
						Housing Reserve			
				Domestic Abuse Bill	Benefits Reserve	IHAT	Housing Options	IHAT uncommitted fee income	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>Early Help and Prevention Operational Unit posts</b>									
Team Leader - Early Help Hub	8,877	8,877	17,754	0	0	8,877	8,877	0	
Team Leader Housing Adaptations	40,912	40,912	81,824	0	0	0	0	81,824	
Housing Adaptations Admin Officer	24,466	24,466	48,932	0	0	0	0	48,932	
Service Development Officer	38,905	38,905	77,810	0	0	0	38,905	38,905	
<b>Housing Solutions Operational Unit</b>									
Housing Options Team Leader (grade increase only)	2,007	2,007	4,014	0	0	0	4,014	0	
Accommodation and Support Team Leader	40,912	40,912	81,824	0	0	0	81,824	0	
Accommodation Solutions Officer – Private Sector	38,905	38,905	77,810	0	0	0	77,810	0	
Service Development Officer	38,905	38,905	77,810	32,138	0	0	45,672	0	
<b>Housing Benefits Operational Unit</b>									
Benefits Team Leader (Fraud) (grade increase only)	8,877	8,877	17,754	0	17,754	0	0	0	
<b>Total funding requirement</b>	<b>242,766</b>	<b>242,766</b>	<b>485,532</b>	<b>32,138</b>	<b>17,754</b>	<b>8,877</b>	<b>257,102</b>	<b>169,661</b>	
Please note - all projections include oncosts at 28.3%									