



## **Report to Cabinet and Personnel & Resources Committee**

**Subject** Homelessness and Housing Allocations

**Date** 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008

**Author** Chief Executive

### 1. Purpose of the Report

To consider where in the departmental structure of the Council the responsibility for the future delivery of the Council's homelessness and allocations functions should be placed following the recent decision of the Cabinet that these functions should be retained in-house.

### 2. Background

At its meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2008, the Cabinet decided, following a review undertaken by Tribal consultants, that it should retain in-house the responsibility for dealing with homelessness applications, the management of the Council's allocations scheme and the referring of clients to registered social landlords for housing pursuant to that scheme. When the housing stock transfer is completed, the Council will no longer have a separate housing department as such and it will therefore be necessary to decide which of the remaining departments should have responsibility for those functions.

The current departmental structure of the Council was agreed by the Personnel & Resources Committee at its meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2007 in order to bring about an enhanced strategic planning capability and a greater focus on customer services and community leadership. Appendix 1 sets out a list of the departments and an indication of their principal functions at present.

### 3. Proposal

The homelessness and allocations functions essentially contain two broad elements. The first is that of formulating the homelessness strategy and the allocations policy and the second is that of implementing this and dealing with the individual clients who present themselves to the Council for assistance.

This being the case, I believe that the strategy and policy formulation role will best sit with the housing strategy responsibilities of the Strategy and Performance department and I propose placing this function in that department accordingly. With regard to the matter of dealing with individual clients who present for assistance, I believe that this “personal” service would best fit with the Customer Services responsibilities of the Customer Services and Organisation Development department. I propose accordingly that this department be given responsibility for dealing with the individual clients and applying the homelessness and allocations policies of the Council.

If Members agree with this proposal then I will ask the Head of Customer Services and Organisational Development, the Head of Strategy and Performance and the Interim Head of Housing Services to work together on detailed proposals, which will be reported to the Personnel and Resources Committee at its meeting in September. It is important that we are able to make any appointments as soon as practically possible bearing in mind the relationship between this process and the stock transfer process, which will be proceeding apace with the identification of staff who will be transferring to Gedling Homes. I am also concerned that staff should not face prolonged uncertainties about their future, so I propose that the Committee delegate to me the authority to agree and implement the detailed proposals over the summer, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

#### 4. Recommendation

- i) That responsibility for homelessness strategy and the allocations policies be transferred to the Strategy and Performance Department and the responsibility for dealing with individual applicants for assistance under the Council’s homelessness and allocations responsibilities be transferred to the Customer Services and Organisational Development Department with effect from the completion of the Housing Stock Transfer.
- ii) That the Chief Executive be given authority, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to agree and implement detailed proposals giving effect to this decision.

## Appendix 1

### Democratic & Community Services

- Legal services
- Member services and support
- Electoral services
- Neighbourhood governance and community development
- Town centre management
- Committees, including Scrutiny
- Civic and Mayoral support

### Customer Services & Organisational Development

- Personnel
- Customer services
- One stop Shop
- Telephone call handling
- Training and staff development and welfare

### Corporate Services

- Financial services
- ICT
- Procurement
- Print room
- Payroll
- Strategic estates and property management
- Revenues and benefits “back office”
- Corporate health and safety
- Audit

### Strategy & Performance

- Strategic policy and planning
- Research
- Communications
- Strategic partnerships
- Crime and disorder strategy
- Housing strategy
- Local Development Framework
- Performance management

### Housing Services

- Housing Landlord
- Homelessness

### Planning and Environment

- Development Control
- Building Control
- Licensing
- Environmental protection
- Wardens and anti-social behaviour co-ordination
- CCTV
- Food health and safety
- Private sector housing
- Local land charges

### Direct Services

- Waste services
- Cleansing services
- Grounds maintenance
- Fleet Management
- Building maintenance and caretaking
- Public toilets
- Land drainage
- Emergency planning
- Car parks

### Leisure Services

- Leisure and community centres
- Allotments
- Park and leisure development
- Sports development
- Tourism and twinning
- Arts
- Cemetery administration and burials
- Youth
- Events
- Health & Wellbeing