

**Report of:** Chief Officer Housing Management

**Report to** Director of Resources and Housing

**Date:** 23 October 2017

**Subject:** Appointment of Housing Apprentices

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

To obtain approval for the appointment of three Housing Assistant Apprentices and two Sheltered Housing Apprentices posts within Housing Leeds. The post holders will undertake training and gain work experience which will equip them with the knowledge and skills to secure posts within Housing Leeds or elsewhere in the Council service. Apprentices will be appointed for 12 - 18 months initially, with the option to extend where appropriate to ensure the completion of the qualification.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that the proposed appointment of five Housing Apprentices is agreed and approval for funding to the value of £123,682.00.

## 1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the appointment of five Apprentices to the Housing Leeds service.

## 2 Background information

- 2.1 The profile by age group of existing housing management staff shows an aging workforce. Only 1.18% of employees are aged between 16 and 20, with 15.05% being between 16 and 29.

Age range	Number	%age
16-20	7	1.18
21-25	37	5.76
26-29	56	8.12
30-44	220	33.51
45-59	305	45.42
60-64	41	5.37
65+	6	0.65

- 2.2 While apprenticeships are not restricted by age, they tend to be popular with younger people. With limited opportunities for younger people these posts would offer younger people the opportunity to secure a first job within the council. This would provide benefits in term of equality, succession planning, making the workforce representative of the community, and bringing new ideas and approaches into the service. Please see 4.2 for further equality considerations.
- 2.3 Developing succession planning through a range of means, including apprenticeship's, is a priority for the housing service.

## 3 Main issues

- 3.1 The Government is introducing changes to how Apprenticeships are funded after the 1 May 2017. The aim of these changes is to support an increase in the quality and quantity of apprenticeships so that more individuals have the chance to pursue a successful career. To achieve this aim the Government is introducing an apprenticeship levy from 6 April 2017. The levy will apply to employers with an annual pay bill of £3m. The levy is paid through the PAYE process in the same way as Income Tax or National Insurance. The levy is then topped up by 10% by Government and this can be drawn down to pay for Apprenticeship training. There is a 24 month time limit on spending the levy.
- 3.2 The levy is charged at 0.5% of the pay bill less an allowance of £15k. It is estimated that the levy for Leeds City Council will be £3.1m.
- 3.3 We can spend funds in your apprenticeship service account on training from a government-approved training provider. A training qualification such as those

provided by CIOH can be attached to the apprenticeship and funded by the levy. Each apprenticeship requires an end-point assessment to decide whether the apprentice has met the standard. You can only spend funds on assessment delivered by a government-approved assessment organisation. As a local authority public sector procurement rules apply when choosing a provider and assessor.

- 3.4 Leeds City Council is undertaking a procurement exercise to appoint training providers across a range of disciplines. Housing Leeds is participating in this tender exercise to ensure that a training provider is appointed who will be able to deliver the training element of these apprenticeships. The tender exercise is expected to be completed in September 2017.
- 3.5 There are currently three standards for housing management which have been developed through trailblazer groups led by housing providers. The housing standards are:
- Level 2 Housing/Property Management Assistant – for entry level roles which are customer facing and responsible for administration required to create and sustain tenancies. Typical roles include Housing Assistant and Lettings Assistant.
  - Level 3 Housing and Property Management – roles which are customer facing and primarily responsible for the creation and sustainment of tenancies. Typical roles include Housing Officer and specialist roles including Homelessness and Sheltered Housing.
  - Level 4 Senior Housing/Property Management – responsible for the delivery of housing services within their service areas. Typical roles include Housing Manager.
- 3.6 Based on the typical roles for the standards and the roles in our structure the 3 Housing Assistant Apprentices will work towards the level 2 standard and the 2 Sheltered Support Apprentices will work towards the level 3 standard.
- 3.7 These apprenticeships will create quality job and training opportunities supporting the post holders to secure entry level positions and embark on a career within the council. We purpose will be to recruit five apprentices who will undertake a range of experience opportunities and training which will equip them to secure a position at the next grade within Housing Leeds, or another area within the Authority following completion of their apprenticeship.
- 3.8 The Apprenticeships will be promoted through the usual LCC recruitment channels and on the National Apprenticeship website. It is expected that the appointed housing training provider will support us in recruiting and selecting suitable candidates. The Apprenticeships will last for 12 – 18 months during which time the apprentices will gain experience, training and support to equip them to secure permanent posts.
- 3.9 Apprentice level job descriptions have been developed which provide a distinct identity for the apprenticeship posts. These are attached in Appendix 1. Work will be undertaken to determine how the posts will be integrated into the existing

Housing Leeds structure across a range of services, with line management provided by existing team leaders.

- 3.10 This proposal supports the delivery of the best council plan by providing jobs and training for young people supporting the Child Friendly City objectives and by ensuring everyone in Leeds does well at all levels of learning and develops the skills they need. More detail is given in section 4.3.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.2 The Resourcing Team which leads on project work on apprenticeship schemes already works in partnership with Trade Union colleagues. Trade Union colleagues have previously been consulted on youth employment schemes within the Authority and help us to provide opportunities to those groups of the community who are currently under-represented within the Council.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 A Council wide EIA has not been done solely on apprenticeships. Offering apprenticeships formed part of the Equality screening process as part of the 250 opportunities programme. It also forms part of the vacancy control process conducted here in the Resourcing Team which had its own screening document.
- 4.2.2 The Council wishes to employ a workforce that is diverse and represents the population of Leeds. In particular, we want to focus on under-represented priority groups including 18 to 24 year olds not in employment education or employment, BME or disabled people.
- 4.2.3 To help achieve this, the Council will build a closer relationship with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to promote vacancies and opportunities within the Council to unemployed people. The Council encourages applications for entry level posts from under-represented groups through work with charitable and other partners. Housing Leeds has attended events organised by PATH promoting a career in housing to BME communities in Harehills, Beeston and Chapeltown.
- 4.2.4 In committing to these proposals, we are taking action to be proactive as an employer to reach these priority groups.
- 4.2.5 The screening form is attached in the background documents.

### **4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan**

- 4.3.1 The proposals contained in the report support the priorities and outcomes contained in the Best Council Plan, including to do well at all levels of learning and have the skills they need for life
- 4.3.2 The seven breakthrough projects include housing growth and jobs for young people as part of more jobs, better jobs.

- 4.3.3 The Best City KPI's includes the number of people supported to improve skills and Percentage of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training. The Best Council KPI's includes more apprentices employed by the council. The housing apprentices programme would make a positive contribution to these KPI's.
- 4.3.4 Our commitment to being the best city for children and young people is founded on the global movement of Child Friendly Cities initiated by UNICEF, and guided by the voices of children and young people here in Leeds. Thousands of children and young people have shared their top 12 wishes for a child friendly city. Their top wishes includes a greater number of better quality jobs, work experience opportunities and good quality careers advice for all.

#### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 The job descriptions have been job evaluated and apprentices would be appointed on pay grade A1-A3. Copies of the job description are included in the background documents section of this report. The proposal for five apprentices appointed for 18 months incurs salary costs including on-costs of £123,682.00 based on the top of the grade.

#### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 4.5.1 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information.
- 4.5.2 This report is not eligible for call in.

#### **4.6 Risk Management**

- 4.6.1 The proposal will mitigate risks associated with an aging workforce by increasing the staff profile of younger people within the service, including mitigating risks associated with workforce succession planning and equality.

### **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 The proposal offers the opportunity to provide quality work and training to young people within the city. This would give them the opportunity to develop skills and experience which could enable them to embark on a career within the council. The proposal would provide benefits for the individuals, the service and make a positive contribution to a number of corporate agendas.

### **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 It is recommended that the proposed appointment of five Housing Apprentices is agreed and approval for funding to the value of £123,682.00.

#### **Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Appendix 1**

---

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

## Leeds City Council

### Job Description

**Job Title:** Sheltered Support Apprentice

**Service Area:** Housing Leeds

**Grade: A1 – A3**

**Directorate:** Resources and Housing

**Date: May 2017**

**Responsible to:** Housing Team Leader

#### **PURPOSE OF THE JOB**

You will work towards a qualification on a Level 3 Apprenticeship programme, gaining the skills, knowledge and experience you need to provide high quality housing and support services to older people.

As you learn the role and the systems we use, you will gain the confidence to take ownership of a range of enquiries and services and know when to refer them on to a more senior colleague or specialist team.

You will be supported, trained and expected to develop a good knowledge of housing issues affecting older people, processes and related services and be able to explain these clearly to customers. This is a key entry role into Leeds City Council helping to deliver vital council services.

#### **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

In liaison with the line manager/senior officer, to provide high quality and efficient services.

- To deliver housing related support to older people living in sheltered housing schemes and associated floating support schemes.
- Undertake regular contact with older people, including visits, telephone calls, email and text messaging to support and enable tenants to live independently whilst promoting dignity, choice and confidentiality.
- To work with tenants to develop and review support plans and risk assessments to promote independence in a safe environment - identifying practical, domestic and budgeting support needs.
- To assist in providing a range of housing management services to support tenants moving into and leaving sheltered housing.
- To make referrals to other agencies and Council services and advocate on behalf of tenants, where appropriate, and support tenants to liaise with area housing offices.
- To ensure the Council's safeguarding procedures are utilised where appropriate.
- To work within Council policies and procedures, including data protection and financial regulations.
- To ensure the Council's health and safety policies are adhered to.
- Work flexibly to meet service requirements.
- To support the achievement of equality and diversity in both employment and service delivery,

including the promotion of equality of opportunity.

- To promote and deliver the priorities, values and objectives of Leeds City Council at all times.
- To maintain accurate records and track progress of work.
- To assist with the induction of new staff including the demonstration of duties.

**Economic Conditions:**

Annual Leave: 24 days increasing to 28 days for 5 years local government service pro rata plus statutory holidays  
Hours: 37 hours per week  
Flexitime: Eligible to participate in flexi-time scheme  
Conditions of Service: NJC Conditions apply

**Prospects**

**Promotion:** Whilst no guarantee can be given to subsequent promotion, there are currently a number of higher graded posts within the Council which potentially provide the opportunity for career progression within the Council. Any subsequent vacancies will be filled in compliance with agreed Council procedures.

**Training:** The Council has a positive commitment to the training and development of employees in all areas of its activities. Similarly employees are also expected to adopt a positive attitude to all training provided and also to their own personal development.

**Relationships:** The post holder will work closely with colleagues within Housing Leeds and will also be required to maintain effective relationships with staff at all levels within the Directorate, other Council departments, Elected Members, external agencies and the general public.

**Qualifications**

**Physical Conditions** The post holder may be based at any Leeds City Council office and may require working to the Council's 'changing the workplace' working style. - Leeds City Council has no smoking policy.

Job Description Content Prepared / Reviewed by: Name: Kevin Bruce - Designation Area Manager Date: 15/05/17	Confirmation Job Evaluation Undertaken Name:  Designation: Date:
---	--

**We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We promote diversity and want a workforce that reflects the population of Leeds. Prior to the Interview we will request your References. Failure to obtain both references may result in your interview being withdrawn.**

**PERSONAL SPECIFICATION ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:** It is essential that the Candidate should be able to demonstrate the following criteria for the post within the context of the specific role duties and responsibilities: Candidates will only be shortlisted for interview if they can demonstrate on the application form that they meet all the essential requirements.

**Method Of Assessment (MOA) – A = Application Form    T = Test    I = Interview    C = Certificate**

<b>1. Qualifications and Knowledge</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Des</b>	<b>MoA</b>
Knowledge of the role of the Council Housing Service and its responsibilities in managing homes and communities.		X	I
An awareness of housing and support needs of older people		X	I
An understanding of equality issues.		X	I
An awareness of customer care		X	I

<b>2. Specific Skills and Competencies</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Des</b>	<b>MoA</b>
Ability to communicate with the general public in a responsive manner.	X		A/I
Ability to demonstrate patience and understanding with customers.	X		A/I
Ability to deal with relevant procedures and maintain standard documentation.	X		A/I
Ability to advise service users on relevant procedures.	X		A/I
Ability to work within a team.	X		A/I
Ability to communicate effectively and sensitively face to face, in writing and by telephone.	X		A/I
Ability to demonstrate customer care	X		A/I
To adhere to LCC Financial Rules and Regulations and Standing Orders.	X		A/I
Ability to use computerised systems.	X		A/I
Ability to record and maintain information received from all sources accurately.	X		A/I
To provide a welcoming environment to customers.	X		A/I
To assist other members of staff with duties when required.	X		A/I
A good level of numeracy and literacy skills	X		A/I

<b>3. Experience</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Des</b>	<b>MoA</b>
Of providing housing related support to individuals		X	I
Of working as part of a team	X		A/I
Of working with the public		X	I
Of working with other agencies to achieve positive outcomes for customers		X	I

<b>4. Behaviour</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Des</b>	<b>MoA</b>
Demonstrate a commitment to Council Values	X		A/I



Positive and flexible approach to change	X		A/I
Commitment to maintaining a healthy and safe environment	X		A/I
Commitment to providing excellent service to customers	X		A/I
Commitment to personal learning and development	X		A/I
Willing to support and promote equality and diversity	X		A/I
This post requires that a Disclosure and Barring Service check as the post involves working with, or substantial access to Children or Vulnerable Groups			C

## Job Description

**Job Title: Housing Apprentice**

**Grade: A1 – A3**

**Service Area: Housing Management**

**Directorate: Resources & Housing**

**Date: May 2017**

**Responsible to: Housing Team Leader**

### **Purpose of the job:**

You will work towards a qualification on a Level 2 Apprenticeship programme, gaining the skills, knowledge and experience you need to provide a high quality housing service.

As you learn the role and the systems we use, you will gain the confidence to take ownership of a range of enquiries and services and know when to refer them on to a more senior colleague or specialist team.

You will be supported, trained and expected to develop a good knowledge of housing issues, processes and related services and be able to explain these clearly to customers. This is a key entry role into Leeds City Council helping to deliver vital council services.

### **Principal Responsibilities:**

In liaison with the line manager/senior officer, to provide high quality and efficient services.

- To assist in providing a range support services for internal and external customers.
- To work as part of a team of housing advisors to provide customer focused services.
- To liaise with colleagues in order to prioritise work to meet conflicting deadlines.
- To maintain accurate records and track progress of work.
- To assist with the induction of new staff including the demonstration of duties.
- Ordering and monitoring stock supplies.
- Preparing routine correspondence and standard letters and forms.
- Managing meeting rooms and dealing with hospitality and signing-in of visitors.
- Assist with the arrangements for conferences, forums and other events.
- Act as the first point of contact for visitors and customers – both in person and on the telephone.

- Provide an excellent customer service to customers, colleagues and visitors.
- To use IT applications and databases effectively to deliver tasks. Operate relevant equipment/ICT packages e.g. word, excel, databases, spreadsheets, Internet
- To input and retrieve data using computerised systems.
- To collate and prepare information from a variety of sources.
- Operate relevant equipment/ICT packages e.g. word, excel, databases, spreadsheets, Internet
- Undertake general financial and administration duties.
- Attend and participate in relevant meetings as required and to take notes at meetings.
- Be aware of and comply with policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to an appropriate person.
- Understand and abide by the Council's equal opportunities policy in the duties of the post and as an employee of the Council.
- Participate in training and other learning activities and performance development as required.
- To gather information from service users to assess the service required.
- Make appropriate referrals for housing support as and when required.
- Contact with tenants using various forms of communication, including visits to tenants in their own homes.

**Economic Conditions:**

Annual Leave: 24 days (increasing to 28 days for 5 years local government service pro rata) plus statutory holidays  
 Hours: 37 hours per week  
 Flexitime: Eligible to participate in flexi-time scheme  
 Conditions of Service: NJC Conditions apply

**Prospects**

**Promotion:** Whilst no guarantee can be given to subsequent promotion, there are currently a number of higher graded posts within the Council which potentially provide the opportunity for career progression within the Council. Any subsequent vacancies will be filled in compliance with agreed Council procedures.

**Training:** The Council has a positive commitment to the training and development of employees in all areas of its activities. Employees are also expected to adopt a positive attitude to training

provided and to their own personal development. Apprentices will undertake training and assessment to achieve Level 2 Apprentice Standard Housing/Property Management Assistant.

**Relationships:** The post holder will work closely with colleagues within Housing Leeds and will also be required to maintain effective relationships with staff at all levels within the Directorate, other Council departments, Elected Members, external agencies and the general public.

**Qualifications**

**Physical Conditions** The post holder may be based at any Leeds City Council office and may require working to the Council's 'changing the workplace' working style. - Leeds City Council has a no smoking policy.

Job Description Content Prepared / Reviewed by: Confirmation Job Evaluation Undertaken

Name Kevin Bruce

Name:

Designation: Area Manager

Designation:

Date: 15/05/17

Date:

**We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We promote diversity and want a workforce that reflects the population of Leeds. Prior to the Interview we will request your References. Failure to obtain both references may result in your interview being withdrawn.**

**PERSONAL SPECIFICATION ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:** It is essential that the Candidate should be able to demonstrate the following criteria for the post within the context of the specific role duties and responsibilities: Candidates will only be shortlisted for interview if they can demonstrate on the application form that they meet all the essential requirements.

**Method Of Assessment (MOA) – A = Application Form    T = Test    I = Interview    C = Certificate**

<b>1. Qualifications and Knowledge</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Des</b>	<b>MoA</b>
Knowledge of the role of the Council Housing Service and its responsibilities in managing homes and communities.		X	I
Knowledge of current housing issues.		X	I
Awareness of customer engagement.		X	I
An understanding of equality issues.		X	I

An awareness of customer care	X		A/I

<b>2. Specific Skills and Competencies</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Des</b>	<b>Mo A</b>
Ability to deal with the general public in a responsive manner.	X		A/I
Ability to deal with high volumes of enquiries both at the public counter and over the telephone.	X		A/I
Ability to demonstrate patience and understanding with service users.	X		A/I
Ability to deal with relevant procedures and maintain standard documentation.	X		A/I
Ability to advise service users on relevant procedures.	X		A/I
Ability to work within a team.	X		A/I
Ability to communicate effectively and sensitively both face to face in writing and by telephone.	X		A/I
Ability to demonstrate Customer Care	X		A/I
To adhere to LCC Financial Rules and Regulations and Standing Orders.	X		A/I
To handle cash accurately.	X		A/I
Ability to use computerised systems.	X		A/I
Ability to record and maintain information received from all sources accurately.	X		A/I
To provide a welcoming environment to service users.	X		A/I
To assist other members of staff with duties when required.	X		A/I
A good level of numeracy and literacy skills	X		A/I
<b>3. Experience</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Des</b>	<b>Mo A</b>
Of working in a customer facing environment.		X	I
Of working in an office environment		X	I
Of working as part of a team	X		A/I
<b>4. Behavioural</b>	<b>Ess</b>	<b>Des</b>	<b>Mo A</b>
			A/I
Demonstrate a commitment to Council Values	X		A/I
Positive and flexible approach to change	X		A/I
Commitment to maintaining a healthy and safe environment	X		A/I
Willing to support and promote equality and diversity	X		A/I
Commitment to providing excellent service to customers	X		A/I
Commitment to personal learning and development	X		A/I