

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Gordon Bambridge, Executive Member for Health & Housing

To: General Purposes, 22nd March 2023

Author: Gill Duffy, Housing Manager

Subject: Norfolk Housing & Independent Living Manager

Purpose: To gain approval for the externally funded role of Norfolk Housing & Independent Living Manager to be sited in Breckland Council, working on behalf of the 7 Norfolk district councils, being line managed by Breckland's Housing Manager.

Recommendation:

- 1) That the post sits in the housing team and becomes part of the staff establishment.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Each of the Norfolk district councils have an Integrated Housing Adaptations Team (IHAT), made up of Breckland staff and Norfolk County Council Occupational Therapy staff. These teams oversee the Disabled Facilities Grants work in their districts.
- 1.2 The teams were set up 10 years ago to improve the processes and experiences for the customers who need adaptations to their homes and this has been successful in reducing the timescales that it takes from initial enquiry to completion of works.
- 1.3 The districts and the county council are keen to learn from the experiences of the last 10 years and to continue to make improvements.
- 1.4 The financial climate is putting increasing pressures on these services and it is important to explore all funding options available so that as many residents as possible can be helped.
- 1.5 There has previously been a county wide post that was responsible for co-ordinating the running of the IHATs, but the postholder retired in March 2022.
- 1.6 The Norfolk Strategic Housing & Independent Living Group (Managers from the districts and county) has reviewed the service needs and decided to appoint a programme manager on a 0.6 FTE basis to oversee the partnership work and drive forward improvements. The role is also tasked with being the representative of the IHAT services at external meetings, sharing good practice and also lobbying, if required.
- 1.7 This role is funded by all seven districts from their portion of the Better Care Fund, which is top sliced before the DFG grant element is passed on. This is at no additional financial cost to the council and is not reducing the amount of DFG Breckland has to spend. The funding covers salary and also on-costs, including an amount towards the time of the Housing Manager for line management.

2.0 **OPTIONS**

2.1 Option 1: The post sits in the housing team and becomes part of the staff establishment.

2.2 Option 2: The other district councils are asked if they can host the post instead.

3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3.1 Breckland Council is unique in Norfolk in the situation of the disabled facilities grant not being adequate for the needs of the district's population. This role will be key in gaining an understanding of the demands on each district and the demographics and then developing the future possibilities.

3.2 The Housing Manager has a keen interest in the work of this role and has capacity to line manage one additional person.

3.3 Although there are line management resource requirements, these are included in the recharge costs, as are all other recharges, in addition to salary costs.

4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.1 This role will increase the effectiveness of the IHATs across Norfolk, including Breckland's which will, in turn, improve the service to the disabled residents in Breckland.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

5.1 **Corporate Priorities**

Inspiring Communities: (a) We will work to prevent homelessness in the district and (b) We will ensure that our residents have suitable, safe and secure homes

5.2 **Financial**

Pro Forma B attached as Appendix A

5.3 **Health & Wellbeing**

This post will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of disabled residents in Breckland.

5.4 **Reputation**

Although this post is working on behalf of 7 district councils it will be linked to Breckland if the line management sits in Breckland. This is an opportunity to further enhance the reputation of the council.

5.5 **Staffing**

There is a risk of redundancy in the future for this role but the annual costs being charged to cover it will provide the buffer needed to cover any associated costs.

6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 All

7.0 **ACRONYMS**

7.1 FTE – Full Time Equivalent

7.2 IHAT – Integrated Housing Adaptations Team...

Background papers:-

Lead Contact Officer

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory Service

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A Pro Forma B