

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Employment and Personnel Committee on 24th April 2025

Temporary Accommodation Officer – Permanent Post

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing – Philip Smith

Classification	This report is Public
Contact Officer	Elizabeth Ellis, Housing Options Manager Victoria Dawson, Assistant Director Housing Management

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

- To seek approval to make the current temporary accommodation officer a full-time permanent post on the establishment from 1st May 2026.
- To recommend to Council for the additional General Fund revenue budget associated with the establishment of the permanent post from 1st May 2026, in case the new post does not generate enough new income to cover the costs of the post.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 The Housing Options Team has a leading role in meeting the Council's statutory responsibilities to prevent and relieve homelessness in line with the Act. Since the Act came into force, the Council has seen a gradual increase in the demand on the service.
- 1.2 The Housing Act 1996 Part 7, as amended by The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (which came into force in April 2018) placed new duties on Councils to intervene earlier to actively prevent homelessness, and to work with people who are homeless, or threatened with homelessness, for longer periods of time. For those who are Eligible, Homeless and in Priority Need the Section 118 (Interim Accommodation Duty) is owed for 56 days, and duties for temporary accommodation can increase past this date depending on the homeless duties owed to the household long term.
- 1.3 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 amended Part 7 of the 1996 Act to strengthen the support available to victims of domestic abuse. The Act extends priority need to all eligible victims of domestic abuse who are homeless as a result of being a victim of domestic abuse. The 2021 Act brought in a new definition of domestic abuse which housing authorities must follow which has increased demand for temporary accommodation.

- 1.4 The Housing Options Team are directly impacted by the external cuts/limitations of support services we have seen over the last 5 years. Lack of resources and capacity in services such as Social Care, Probation, Police, Health (specifically mental health services, and addiction support) places additional strain on the department as service user's needs are often not being met in other areas. Without timely intervention for these needs, often the result is homelessness where a person is unable to sustain accommodation. This has also led to an increased demand for temporary accommodation.
- 1.5 In May 2023 we recruited a Temporary Accommodation officer for an initial two-year temporary contract. The costs for the post were covered by the Domestic Abuse Act New Burdens funding, and approval was sought from MHCLG to approve use of the grant for this post.
- 1.6 In April 2024 the member of staff had a change in personal circumstances and requested a temporary change to her hours from full time to 22.20 hours (over 3 days a week). On the 9th August 2024 we confirmed these arrangements as permanent, and extended the existing temporary contract for a further year.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 The post delivers our temporary accommodation service, including managing licenses, and supporting the occupants. The role takes necessary action against non-compliance with any license breaches. We currently have 12 properties, with intention to increase the stock based on demand.
- 2.2 Since the post was established in May 2023, 49 households have resided in our temporary accommodation. The average stay of a single placement is 80 nights. The total amount of nights spent in our temporary accommodation since the post was established, and the temporary accommodation was set up is 3933 nights. Based on the alternative use of hotels, or Bed & Breakfast for this purpose, based on a nightly average of £50 – this would have cost the council £196,650.
- 2.3 The post continues to prove it's worth, with a dedicated officer for managing these tenancies. Often the occupants have additional vulnerabilities and require intensive tenancy management which this post provides.

It proves to be value for money with comparable costs for occupancies during 23/24 as follows:

Total nights TA occupied	2255
Comparable cost of average B&B (£50)	£112,750
23/24 costs for TA (including set up costs)	£35,915
23/24 FT staff costs	£44,768.37

- 2.4 The temporary position has been job evaluated at grade 7 and will be funded until May 2026 from Domestic Abuse Grant Funding. The current annual costs to the Council of the post are £45,940 (full time equivalent). Due to reduced hours,

we are currently paying £27,564 for the post in 24/25. For this post to be fully effective we would be looking to gain approval to cover the full-time hours, to backfill the two vacant days for the post.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Temporary Accommodation Officer post has been significantly impactful since its implementation in 2023. The post is needed for the Council to respond to its statutory homeless duties for temporary accommodation. A permanent position is needed to effectively manage the temporary accommodation within our own housing stock and to ensure the occupants are managed effectively in line with the license agreement.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 There are alternatives which could be considered:

To do nothing and allow the post to remain a temporary contract which will end in May 2026. This is not the preferred approach due to the need to provide permanent resource to the Council's Statutory homeless duties as outlined above.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. To approve a new full time permanent Temporary Accommodation Officer post on the establishment from 1st May 2026 subject to Council approving the increase in budget.

Approved by Councillor Smith Portfolio Holder for Housing

IMPLICATIONS:

<u>Finance and Risk</u>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Details: The cost to general fund would be £47,147 per annum, subject to pay awards and increments. This can be fully funded until May 2026 out of an existing Domestic Abuse Burdens grant.		
On behalf of the Section 151 Officer		
<u>Legal (including Data Protection)</u>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Details: All legal requirements are set out within the body of the report.		
On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council		
<u>Staffing</u>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Details: Covered within the body of the report.		

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service	
<u>Equality and Diversity, and Consultation</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Details: N/A	
<u>Environment</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.	
Details: N/A	

DECISION INFORMATION:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please indicate which threshold applies:	
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an Executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more wards in the District or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue (a) Results in the Council making Revenue Savings of £75,000 or more or (b) Results in the Council incurring Revenue Expenditure of £75,000 or more. Capital (a) Results in the Council making Capital Income of £150,000 or more or (b) Results in the Council incurring Capital Expenditure of £150,000 or more. District Wards Significantly Affected: <i>(to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the District)</i> Please state below which wards are affected or tick All if all wards are affected:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (a) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) <input type="checkbox"/> (a) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) <input type="checkbox"/> All <input type="checkbox"/>

Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i> If No, is the call-in period to be waived in respect of the decision(s) proposed within this report? <i>(decisions may only be classified as exempt from call-in with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer)</i> Consultation carried out: <i>(this is any consultation carried out prior to the report being presented for approval)</i> Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment, Housing
Preventing and responding to homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

Appendix No	Title