



JOB DESCRIPTION

This form summarises the purpose of the job and lists its key tasks. It may be varied from time to time at the discretion of the Authority, in consultation with the postholder.

Job title	Housing Options Officer (Prevention & Relief)
Reports to	Senior Housing Options Officer (Prevention & Relief)
Team	Housing Service
Grade	7
Last updated	30/5/2022

Job Summary

- To be part of the council's statutory prevention and relief service providing an efficient, high quality advice and assessment service for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness ensuring that customers' circumstances are investigated and their housing and support needs are assessed and met, in accordance with the homelessness legislation and statutory guidance.

Key Tasks

Operational Responsibilities

- Provide housing advice and assistance to customers in line with current legislation and Council policy, providing a professional, sensitive and confidential service.
- To take proactive steps to comply with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and be responsible for the decision making process under the act.
- To meet the council's obligations under the prevent and relief duties of the act, in order to prevent homelessness by engaging in effective partnership working, negotiating and/or mediating, and providing accurate advice and assistance.
- Act as a caseworker to customers who approach the Council with a housing need and assist them, where appropriate, to retain their existing accommodation or advise them of the full range of alternative housing options available.
- If the customer is threatened with homelessness or becomes homeless, to complete a personalised housing plans in writing, giving details of the advice and options and regularly review individual plans,
- Support eligible customers to apply for the Council's Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme.
- Where homelessness cannot be prevented and customers is considered under the Relief Duty consider the need for temporary accommodation in liaison with the Homeless Service Manager.
- To make decisions in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 informing the

customer in writing, giving details of how the decision was reached and their right to review the decision, using appropriate legislation and case law in support of the decision.

- To make homeless enquiries in accordance with the Council's obligations under the Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, (as amended) codes of guidance and relevant case law following the Relief Duty.
- Prepare a report on each case for discussion and sign-off from the Homeless Services Manager recommending a decision as to the Council's duty.
- Inform the customer in writing, clearly and comprehensively explaining how the decision was reached and their right to review the decision, using appropriate legislation and case law in support of the decision. Advise the Homeless Services Manager when reviews are requested.
- To maintain an up to date knowledge of legislation case law, Government Guidance and professional good practice in relation to parts VI & VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by HRA 2017.
- Undertake any other reasonable duties as required by the Senior Housing Options Officer (Prevention and Relief) or Homeless Services Manager.

Management / Supervisory / Team Working Responsibilities

- No management responsibilities.
- To proactively work as part of the Housing Service to support and assist other team members
- To participate with other Housing Team members in the council's out of hours homeless service and in the event of an emergency.

Communication & Contacts

- Liaise with all relevant professional, statutory and, voluntary agencies, elected members, members of the public and internal colleagues where confidentiality permits with the aim of preventing homelessness
- Engage in partnership working with agencies involved with customers and liaise with appropriate Council departments including Revenues and Benefits, Environmental Health, Children's Services and other relevant agencies.
- To provide advice and assistance regarding complex case law to a wide range of voluntary and statutory agencies (internally and externally) and the public.

Financial / Budgetary Responsibilities

- No direct budgetary responsibilities but to be conscious of the impact of expenditure within the Housing Service on the council's overall budget and expenditure obligations.

Other

- To provide the highest standards of customer care and equal opportunities in accordance with the council's policies.
- To ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations and Freedom of Information Act.
- To deliver an effective and appropriate service to all service users fairly and without discrimination in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity policy.
- To contribute to the promotion, development and improvement of the housing service.
- Take instructions as directed in relation to the Service Continuity Plan and Business Continuity Plan, when an event affects the normal running of the services provided by the department/Council and form part of the Council's response to civil emergencies as and when situations arise.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

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We want the postholder to be able to demonstrate the following competencies to a high level and want to use these to the full in their work. This is more important than having a great deal of direct experience of the job content, and we will be looking for evidence of all the following key competencies during the selection process, if you are shortlisted.

- Personal effectiveness
- Proactive
- Managing relationships
- Communication
- Customer focus
- Commercial focus*

Key Criteria

Qualifications and Experience

- Good general level of Secondary Education including Maths and English
- Experience of providing high quality customer focused services
- Experience of using negotiation skills in resolving problems and ensuring objectives are met
- Experience of working with adverse range of customers, some of who are vulnerable
- Experience of general office skills and working in a team environment

Specialist Knowledge and Job Requirements

- Housing experience and/or experience of Homelessness legislation and practice, and housing advice (training will be provided).
- Knowledge of areas related to homelessness prevention such as employment and relationship issues (training will be provided)

Other

- Ability to work unsupervised in a pressurised environment.
- Ability to prioritise own work meet deadlines and manage caseload
- Ability to develop good working relationships with other team members council officers,

and outside agencies

- Ability to work with customers in difficult situations and create a good positive impression and inspire confidence
- Ability to communicate complex messages in an understandable and empathetic way to customers
- Ability to deal with difficult situations in an un confrontational and professional way
- The council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its residents specifically children and vulnerable adults. The council expects all its staff to have an understanding of Safeguarding and to share this commitment