

JOB DESCRIPTION



POST TITLE: Housing Options Manager

POST NUMBER HO02

SERVICE: Housing Services

GRADE: I

RESPONSIBLE TO: Operations Manager for Public Health and Housing Options

LIAISON WITH: District Council colleagues at all levels, Elected Members and Members of the Public, Partner Agencies including other Councils, Support Agencies, and other Registered Providers of Social Housing

KEY CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITIES:

1. To lead, manage and monitor performance of the Housing Options Team ensuring that the service is relevant, cost effective and customer focussed, that it provides a quality front line assessment and advice service to meet the Council's Statutory Prevention and Homelessness duties.
2. The delivery of an effective and efficient housing options, Devon home choice, homeless prevention and statutory homelessness service.

KEY SERVICE ACCOUNTABILITIES:

1. Lead and manage the Housing Options Team and support the Operations Manager for Public Health and Housing Options in securing the continuous development, improvement, efficiency and success of the service through effective planning, budget management, staff management and governance.
2. Set and maintain professional and quality service standards and manage service delivery.
3. Ensure the effective operational delivery of key frontline services, including a timely, high quality casework management service and customer-focussed contact arrangements. This will include developing and implementing clear procedures and professional standards to achieve excellence in day-to-day service delivery.
4. Responsible for providing expert guidance, training and support to the team in the provision of housing advice and options; assessment and referral; achieving homelessness prevention; supporting people to sustain their tenancies and achieve long-term positive outcomes; making offers of affordable alternative accommodation. Working with services to provide employment support, Housing Benefit liaison and case management.
5. Work in partnership with relevant internal and external partners to identify, develop and successfully implement a wide range of creative and innovative housing options solutions to prevent homelessness that meet the needs of the service and customer.
6. Represent the Council on a variety of forums and multi-agency panels, as required both internally and externally. Providing and fully promoting a customer focussed service that always seeks to empower customers, particularly in order to maximise available housing options.
7. Ensure innovative sustainable partnership arrangements exist for the effective delivery of services that address the vulnerability and safeguarding of individuals.

8. Make a positive contribution to the delivery of the service, this will include working flexibly and positively to achieve the objectives of the Council.
9. Manage and lead staff to achieve high performance and effective operational delivery, including developing and improving staff capability, motivating and mentoring them to better meet the current and future requirements of the service.
10. The post holder will be expected to provide effective line management support ensuring delivery of Team objectives to support staff and undertake staff appraisals. Recognise and reward excellent performance and deal effectively with poor performance. Champion innovation and creativity, developing employees to create a culture where they feel able to generate imaginative and effective solutions to service delivery.
11. Monitor and keep up to date information and data about local needs for affordable housing through local housing market assessments, local housing needs surveys, the Council's Housing Register and other data sources at national, regional and at local level.
12. Ensure that the Council's statutory duties under housing and homelessness legislation are correctly determined and administered, including undertaking reviews of homelessness decisions. Carry out homelessness reviews and preparation as required for any subsequent legal action.
13. Maintain an ongoing and in-depth knowledge and understanding of relevant housing and homelessness legislation to deliver an effective and efficient service. Keep abreast of changes to Government legislation in relation to political climate, demands, local news and its implications on the service. Undertake and manage homeless appeals up to review and Judicial Review stage. Serve relevant notices in accordance with the role.
14. Manage the Council's own stock of temporary accommodation including HMOs, ensuring that it provides excellent value for money and meets the housing needs of homeless households until the Council is able to discharge its duty to them under the homelessness legislation.
15. Manage the Council's B&B temporary accommodation provision and implement a range of tools and protocols to reduce the use of B&B as temporary accommodation.
16. Authorise payments of agreed assistance under the Housing Assistance policy to prevent homelessness and encourage move on from temporary accommodation.
17. Assist and contribute in the development of the Homelessness Strategy and ensure delivery amongst partners of joint action plans.
18. Develop and amend Policies, prepare committee and other reports, attend public meetings, committee meetings and working groups as required to give advice and guidance on homelessness.
19. Produce regular and accurate management information and performance data. Prepare performance reports, presentations and briefings for other colleagues, Elected Members, residents and other stakeholders.
20. Responsible for the delivery of services relating to Devon Home Choice ensuring that all applications for housing are determined and progressed in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures. To ensure that statutory duties are discharged in accordance with the relevant legislation.

21. Assist with managing and monitoring the budget for the Housing Options Team, including temporary accommodation, raising any issues with the Operations Manager for Public Health and Housing Options. Maintain robust financial controls that ensure effective budget management delivered in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
22. Manage service level agreements with a range of service providers as required.
23. Assist in negotiation of Section 106 Agreements with legal and planning departments and work closely with planning officers to advise of affordable housing requirements on new developments.
24. Allocate the property of Registered Providers of social housing in accordance with established policies. Monitor allocations made by Registered Providers of social housing, in particular those where section 106 agreements and/ or local lettings plans apply.
25. Manage, maintain and participate in an effective service for receiving and responding to homelessness applications out of normal office hours including participation in the Council's Emergency Planning arrangements. The post holder will be required to work outside of normal office hours by participating in "out of hours" service provision to deliver the teams objectives and/or respond to emergency incidents that require the re-housing of individuals

OTHER DUTIES:

In order to deliver services effectively, a degree of flexibility is needed and the post holder may be required to perform work not specifically referred to above. Such duties, however, should not normally exceed those expected of an employee at that grade.

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

The Council has a Health and Safety Policy, which outlines its responsibilities as an employer, and the responsibilities of its employees in respect of health and safety. All employees need to be aware of this policy and comply with its content.

RISK MANAGEMENT:

The Council has a Risk Management Strategy and it is the responsibility of Heads of Service/Senior Managers to comply with the contents including leading the risk management process within their service; identifying and managing significant operational risks.

DATA PROTECTION:

It is the responsibility of the Post holder to ensure that the section's requirements for compliance with the Data Protection legislation are met.

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME:

The Council has a Single Equality Scheme which gives clear guidance on the responsibilities of both the employee and the employer. All employees must be familiar with and comply with all aspects of the Scheme.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK:

The Council has a Safeguarding Policy, which outlines its responsibilities and the responsibilities of its employees. All employees need to be aware of this Policy and comply with the contents.

REQUIRED COMPETENCY LEVEL

For further information, please refer to the information attached to the recruitment pack on core competencies.

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Qualifications and Experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to degree level standard in a relevant subject area (including HND, professional/enhanced skill qualification) or equivalent or demonstrable work-related experience in appropriate areas. • Evidence of significant relevant Continuing Professional Development (CPD) • Demonstrable experience in social housing, especially in the areas of housing advice, homelessness and prevention issues as well as an understanding of the HRA. • Experience of working with Statutory and Voluntary organisations at a strategic level. • Experience of managing a team • Relevant professional qualification or part qualification e.g. Chartered Institute of Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management qualification. • Project management qualification • HHSRS Qualification.
Knowledge and Expertise:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent understanding of social housing, housing advice, and homelessness, and the housing options approach. • Detailed knowledge of housing law especially as it relates to allocations under part 6 • A working knowledge of landlord and tenant law • Investigation techniques, and report writing experience. • Understanding of the context and strategic purpose of social housing. • Able to understand and keep up to date on legislative and policy changes • Understanding of rural housing issues and how these are managed. • In depth knowledge of the duties owed to customers threatened with homelessness under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good practical knowledge of project management techniques and requirements. • Knowledge of Housing Standards legislation and appropriateness of accommodation standards.

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In depth knowledge of homelessness legislation including case law and housing related legislation including the roles and responsibilities associated with homeless prevention and the pursuit of wider housing options. • A detailed understanding of the services available to customers seeking help and accommodation provided by other organisations, both statutory and voluntary. • In-depth knowledge of risk assessments and safeguarding practices to ensure the safety of clients. • Working knowledge of the Mental Health Act 1983, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Children's Act 1989, Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and subsequent legislation as it affects the client group. • Knowledge of welfare rights and benefits. 	
Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective use of a range of communication skills including face to face, email, telephone, formal and informal reports and presentations taking into account issues of confidentiality. • Ability to analyse, interpret and present complex information with clarity, tact, and purpose in all relevant situations especially those of a sensitive and emotional nature. • Ability to make complex decisions based on facts, multi-agency intelligence and legislative powers. • Good organisational ability, particularly self-organisation, ability to see tasks through to a successful conclusion. • Self-motivated with the ability to work on own initiative, organise workload and manage that of others ensuring service priorities are met. • Attention to detail and ability to maintain accurate records to the standards of Court work. • Effective negotiation skills to establish partnerships and innovative joint working practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing skills • Experience of contract management.

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to elicit information from service users, carers and professional staff surrounding a wide range of topics. • Ability to think and act creatively to apply unique solutions to problem solving in this area of work based on experience and in-depth knowledge of this area of work. • Ability to manage and motivate staff • Competent in the use of word, excel and database applications 	
Personal Attributes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiastic and professional • Good networker and team player • Good inter-personal skills, particularly when dealing with the public and difficult situations • Ability to work to tight deadlines 	
Special Requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to travel around the Mid Devon area from time to time. • Availability to respond to emergencies which arise out of hours regarding homeless cases • Participate in the out of hours service 	

Date: August 2023