

Job Description

Housing Options Officer

Level 8

Responsible To:

Housing Options Team Leader

Responsible For:

NA

About the job:

To work with colleagues across the service and partner agencies to identify housing solution options for customers who are faced with homelessness or are in housing need, and to provide timely advice and interventions to secure the best possible outcomes.

Role:

- Provide a front-line housing options advice service focusing on the prevention and relief of homelessness and the delivery of the Council's statutory duties. This will include assessing needs, agreeing personal housing plans, and issuing statutory decisions. The post holder will be expected to make an immediate assessment of housing needs and make decisions (usually with minimal supervision) regarding the clients, in relation to any crisis, complex issues and chaotic lifestyles.
- Participate in all the duty/emergency/pre-booked appointment rotas ensuring that emergency situations are dealt with effectively including carrying out an immediate assessment of need, placement in temporary accommodation where appropriate and the issuing of statutory decision letters.
- Carry out the necessary casework and enquiries to assess the legal duties owed to customers in line with legislation. Maintaining thorough and accurate case notes to support decisions made. Undertake home visits where appropriate.
- Issue decision letters which are accurate and legally compliant. Be able to confidently respond to challenge and scrutiny from third parties.
- Keep up to date with changes in legislation and government policy on all aspects of housing and homelessness.
- Assist senior officers and/or managers by maintaining contact with those using and providing emergency accommodation (including Cotswold House and

similar accommodation) to ensure that use of emergency accommodation is kept to a minimum.

- Work with Select Move partners to ensure that agreed procedures and policies are adhered to, applications are up to date and to liaise with Select Move partners to resolve any issues that may arise.
- Pro-actively work with private landlords, lettings agents and providers of supported housing to maximise the offer to customers presenting as homeless.
- Represent the Council and customers at a variety of multi-agency forums and case conferences with other statutory and voluntary agencies. Liaise with other professionals to agree a package of support to address the unique situation of the customers.
- Some posts will be the relevant Subject Matter Expert for the team on specific topics such as Preventing Homelessness, Domestic Abuse etc. These postholders will cascade and share specialist knowledge they acquire during their duties, but all officers will deal with all cases to maintain/develop a wide knowledge and experience.
- To undertake any other duties commensurate with this salary scale.

Responsibilities:

Team:

- You will work with your colleagues to prioritise team objectives over individual objectives.
- You will support and respect your colleagues at all times.
- You will work together to share knowledge and experiences to improve your service.
- You will participate in development activities as required.

Corporate:

- You will carry out your duties and responsibilities in line with the Health & Safety Policy and associated legislation.
- You will actively engage with customer care, value for money and performance management.
- Your duties will be carried out in line with our equality scheme.
- You will be compliant at all times with GDPR and data protection legislation.
- You will constructively participate in communication and promotional activities.

Organisational:

- You will be prepared to take on responsibilities and projects that may be outside of your normal work area but are relevant to your role.
- You will support an inclusive culture which provides opportunities for everyone to participate and progress.
- You will support effective relationships across all Directorates, with stakeholders and external partners to ensure the Council's priorities and objectives are met.
- You will positively promote and represent the Council at all times.

What the successful candidate will have:

Qualifications

- A full or part qualification linked housing or other relevant qualification (desirable), or relevant experience.

Experience

- Experience of working with homeless customers, people in housing need and/or vulnerable customers.
- Experience of working in partnership with a range of agencies and an ability to build relationships with other agencies.
- Experience of carrying out needs and risk assessments and working with individuals with multiple and complex needs.
- Experience of managing casework effectively.
- Demonstrable commitment to Equality and Diversity, excellent customer care and the delivery of quality services.

Knowledge

- A detailed and up-to-date working knowledge of homelessness legislation, landlord and tenant law and housing rights.
- An understanding of the welfare benefits system and issues relating to specific support needs.

Skills & Abilities

- Ability to work with various ICT systems, including spreadsheets and databases.
- Excellent communication skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) which can be flexible depending on the needs of different audiences.
- Ability to manage own case work, plan and review workloads and meet deadlines and targets.
- An ability to work on own initiative and make and deliver difficult decisions with a minimum of direct supervision.
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team.

- Full driving licence and/or ability to travel around the borough (desirable).

Our Values & Behaviours

Customer Focused - We listen to our communities, keeping them informed about the things that matter most to them and providing a professional and responsive service.

Forward Thinking - We solve difficult problems by being adaptable, resilient, and innovative.

Working Together - We are focused on achieving our collective goals as an organisation and we support our colleagues to deliver excellent services.

Making a Difference - We make a positive difference for our communities by being helpful and going the extra mile.

Delivering Quality Services - We strive for quality in everything we do, making sure the people of Chorley and South Ribble get the best outcome.