

Job Description: Housing Options Officer

Waverley is an ambitious authority, committed to being one of the leading Councils in the country at a time of major change by developing a high performing, highly engaged staff team to share the organisation's values and deliver our corporate objectives.

JOB DESCRIPTION	
Job title:	Housing Options Officer
Service:	Housing
Team:	Housing Options
Location:	The Bury, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1HR
Reporting to:	Housing Options Manager
Responsible for:	N/A
OUR ORGANISATIONAL VALUES	
Openness	In Waverley we value openness and honesty where communication is clear and constructive and actions are transparent .
Excellence	In Waverley we value excellence , working in a consistent and professional way to achieve the highest standards possible, taking the time to recognise and celebrate success .
Fairness	In Waverley we value fairness and respect , working with integrity to ensure that everyone is treated well and has equal access to the opportunities available.
Team Work	In Waverley we value team work and collaboration , with approachable staff actively contributing to our shared corporate goals.
PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF THE ROLE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a comprehensive homelessness prevention and relief service to customers including administering client housing register applications, deposits scheme awards making prevention/relief duty decisions, and providing general housing advice. To investigate and recommend main homelessness duty decisions for approval by the Housing Options Manager. To provide excellent customer service to all customers. 	
MAIN DUTIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a responsive front line Homelessness Advice, Prevention, Relief and main duty service to members of the public including those who are homeless/threatened with homelessness in 56 days. Participate in a reception duty rota. To provide current and bespoke housing advice, conducting Triage and Full Housing Assessments (FHA), compiling and updating Personal Housing Plans (PHPs) and setting Review meeting dates. . The PHP must include relevant reasonable steps directly related to a full holistic assessment of individual housing and other needs. To issue Prevention/Relief acceptance/discharge letters and co-ordinate reviews. 	

- To conduct detailed casework to prevent or relieve homelessness, and propose main duty decisions.
- To attend and contribute to external and internal meetings including Team Around Family, Child in Need and Core Group meetings, Child Protection Conferences, Safeguarding meetings etc.
- To maintain a current and working knowledge of housing and related legislation including homelessness law, landlord and tenant law, family law, immigration, welfare benefits.
- To develop partnerships with private and voluntary sector landlords to maximize the available housing options.
- The role involves understanding detailed legislation and then exercising careful judgement in applying it to complex households circumstances, to achieve a positive outcome.
- To source accommodation solutions for clients from a range of tenures.
- To undertake any other duties that are required as appropriate with the level of the role.

DIMENSIONS OF THE ROLE

- 900 new cases per year for the whole team, of which approx. 25% will require detailed casework and involve accepting and discharging a prevention/relief duty.
- Approximately 4 Triage cases in reception per week.
- Approximately 2 Triage cases over the telephone per day
- Approximately 4 Full Housing Assessments per week.
- Approximately 3 PHP review meetings per week
- Issue 3 PHPS and duty acceptance letters per week
- Issue 3 duty discharge letters per week
- Ongoing caseload of 20 customers at any one time including approach, prevention, relief and main duty cases.
- 3 or more visits a week

AREAS OF ACCOUNTABILITY/PROBLEM SOLVING – DECISION MAKING / SCOPE FOR IMPACT

- Apply legislation to establish whether the LA is satisfied that someone is homeless or threatened with homelessness in 56 days; whether a prevention/relief duty is owed; whether this duty may be lawfully discharged
- Provide lawful and accurate housing options advice that is effective in preventing and relieving homelessness.
- Make appropriate main duty enquiries to reach a balanced decision after applying legislation and case law to the facts of each case.
- Maintain up to date knowledge of housing law relating to homelessness, security of tenure, money/debt advice principles, benefits and welfare reform.
- Negotiate with third parties in order to prevent and relieve homelessness.
- Ensure housing register application priority bands are awarded promptly, accurately in line with Council policy and customer's situation.
- In carrying out duties able to identifying and report Safeguarding concerns taking into account the sensitive balance between client consent and duty of care.

PLANNING/ORGANISING/CONTROLLING

- Prioritise own workload to prevent/relieve homelessness and meet key dates when dealing with and making enquiries into homelessness applications.
- Organise workload to balance Triage/FHA/PHP review meetings/visits against the requirement to keep admin up to date.

- Organise deposit scheme check in arrangements to ensure smooth transition.

CUSTOMERS AND CONTACTS

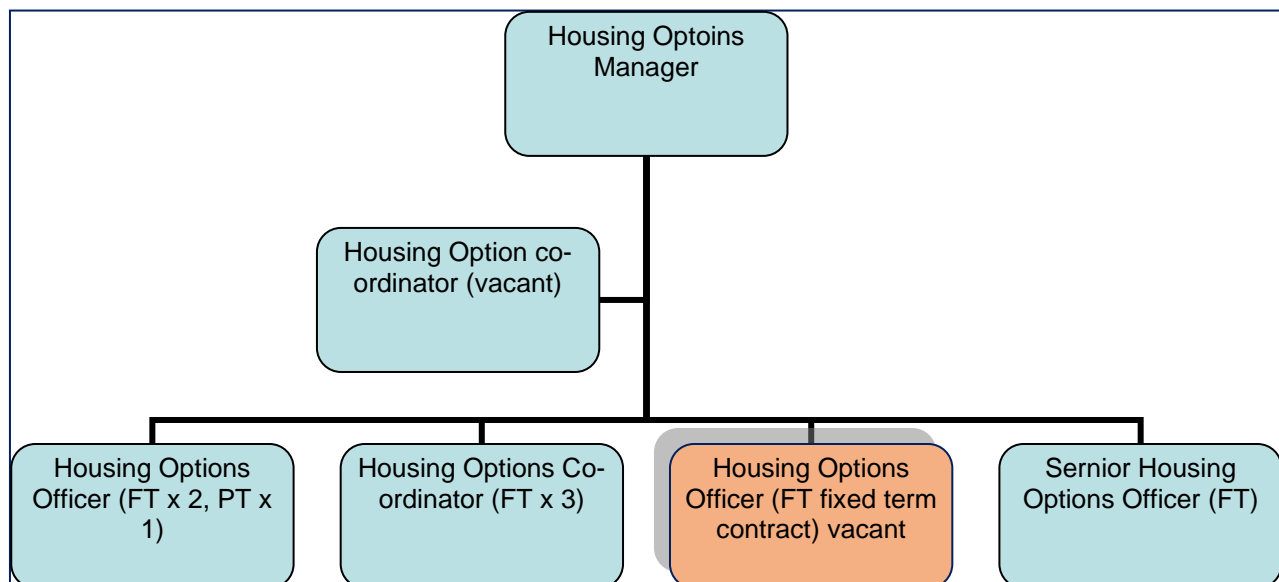
INTERNAL

- Housing Management team, Rents team, Housing Benefit, Council Tax and Electoral roll teams.
- Housing Need Manager, Head of Housing Delivery & Communities), Director of Communities.
- Elected members.

EXTERNAL

- Members of the public.
- Citizens Advice Bureaux.
- Money/debt advice agencies.
- Supported housing and night shelter providers.
- Housing Associations.
- Social Services (all teams)
- Probation Managers.
- Community Mental Health Recovery Service.
- Floating support providers.
- GP, specialist nurses, health visitors.
- Private landlords and letting agents.
- The County Courts.
- Mediation services

SERVICE/TEAM STRUCTURE



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates must be able to fully demonstrate all essential criteria within their application form to be shortlisted for this role.

	PERSON SPECIFICATION			
	ESSENTIAL CRITERIA	HOW ASSESSED	DESIRABLE CRITERIA	HOW ASSESSED
QUALIFICATIONS/ EDUCATION / TRAINING / EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educated to A Level standard (or NVQ equivalent) Considerable experience in a similar role and / or housing related qualification (e.g.CIH or equivalent), or willing to work towards Experience of working within a Housing Options team and dealing with welfare benefits; Excellent IT and, customer care skills; and experience of using, document scanning systems. 	AIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIH member Experience of delivering the HRA 2017 MRI Preventoin and Relief software, Civica Orchard, Sharepoint 	AIC AC
KNOWLEDGE /TECHNICAL SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good understanding of Housing Act 1996 Part VII as amended and of the law relating to different tenures. Experience of giving housing advice/advice, whilst working on a multi-agency, holistic basis Knowledge of state benefits and their interaction including DWP and LAS. 	AIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of Safeguarding Local Government experience Experience of working within, and opening up the private rented sector Experience of giving advice to prevent and relieve homelessness 	AI
COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to speak to people at all levels in an assertive but diplomatic manner. .Able to negotiate with and influence others, persisting to achieve good outcomes. Excellent administrative skills; able to produce high quality and accurate legal correspondence, emails and timely notes. 	AI E		
CUSTOMER SERVICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands and is committed to excellent 	AI		

	<p>customer care and quality service provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the needs of and challenges faced by homeless people. • Accurate spoken English is required in the role 	AI I		
TEAM WORKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible and adaptable • Works with others constructively whilst delivering own share of workload. • Positively influences the way the team works together. 	AI		
MANAGING SELF AND OTHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to remain calm and professional in challenging circumstances. • Able to prioritise workload according to service requirements and be unperturbed by deadlines and/or multiple tasks/ deadlines.. • Able to deal with sensitive and confidential information discretely. 	AIE		
CAN DO APPROACH / ACHIEVING RESULTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to work proactively on own initiative. • Able to absorb and retain new information, policies and procedures. <p>Challenges practice in order to improve outcomes.</p>	AIE		
SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For business continuity purposes you are required to have access to the internet at home via broadband on a PC, laptop or tablet. • Full driving licence • Appropriate business wear 	AI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own car 	

How assessed

- A = Application CV/Personal Statement
C = Certificates/professional Registration
D = DBS police check
E = Exercise
I = Interview
M = Medical assessment

Disclosure and Barring Service

Due to the nature of the work, this post involves a check on an individual's criminal background. The check is carried out through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS, previously CRB). Any offer of employment will be subject to receiving satisfactory clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

or

Basic Disclosure Clearance- Government Requirement for Accessing Council and Government Data

To comply with the Public Sector Networks (PSN) "Code of Connection", Waverley Borough Council, like other public organisations, need to undertake basic disclosure checks for unspent convictions only, in respect of those staff who will access our IT systems. As a result, a Police Act Disclosure form, together with Guidance Notes, will be sent to you if you are successful in the appointment of this post.

For Official Use only			
Job title:	Housing Options Officer	Post no:	HC
Service:	Housing	JE score:	
Team:	Housing Options	Pay band:	7
Location:	The Burys Godalming, Surrey GU7 1HR	Position type: (if part time, working pattern)	37 Hours, 5 days a week
Competencies: (level 1 – 4)	Communication:	2	
	Customer Service:	2	
	Team Working:	2	
	Managing Self and Others:	2	
	Can do approach/Results	2	
REVIEWED BY:	<i>E Donaldson</i>	DATE:	13/4/22
CHECKED IN:	Employee Services	DATE:	
LAST UPDATED:	Add date	DATE:	