

JOB DESCRIPTION

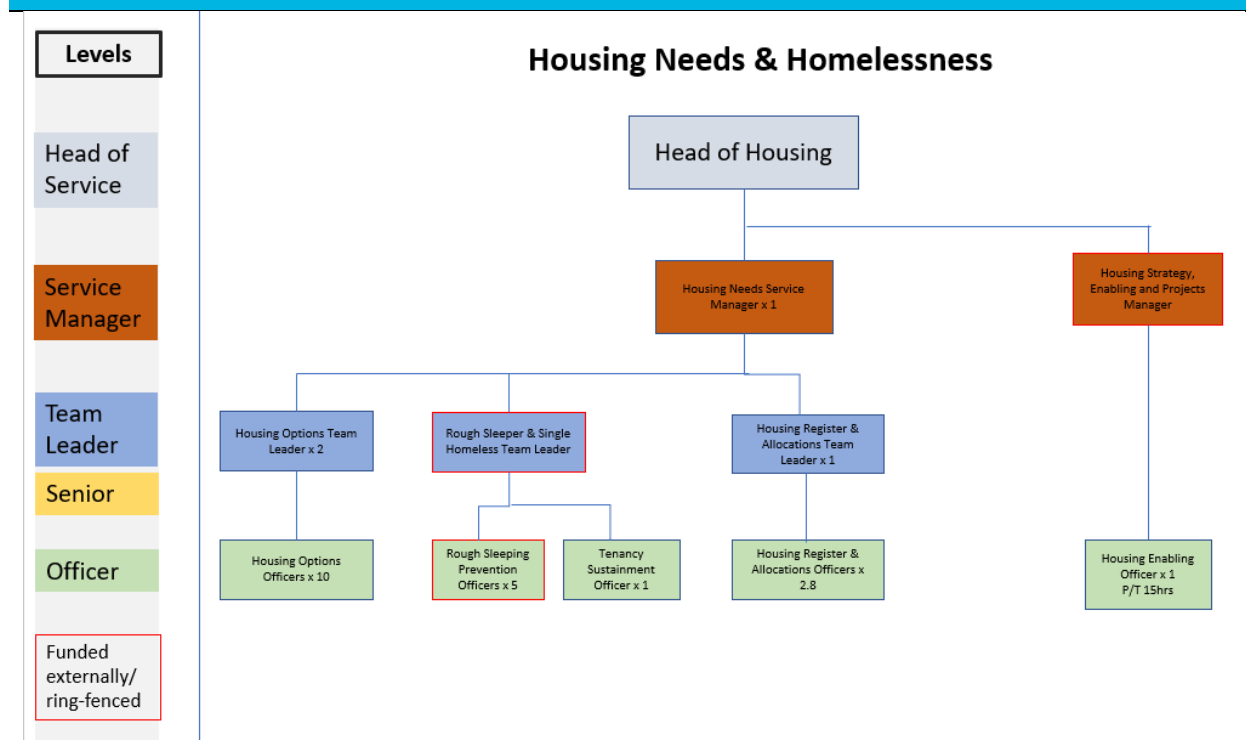
Job Title:	Housing Options Officer		
Directorate:	People	Salary:	£36,363 - £40,777 FTE plus £729 London Weighting
Section:	Housing Service	Grade:	BG-G SCP 25 - 30
Location:	Time Square	Work Style:	Flexible

Key Objectives of the role

To actively support the prevention of homelessness by providing a comprehensive housing options and advice service. In addition, fulfilling the statutory obligations in respect of homelessness and access to housing and work with partner organisations.

Under the guidance of the Housing Options Team Leader, you will be responsible for undertaking timely and appropriate assessments of applicants seeking support from the local authority including housing advice and homelessness casework.

Designation of post and position within departmental structure



Daily and monthly responsibilities

1. To consider and assess homelessness applications in accordance with the Housing Act 1996 Part VII as amended by the Homeless Reduction Act 2017
2. To investigate, assess, assist, advise and determine customers housing options, providing the council's statutory obligations in relation to housing advice and homeless services including the s184 notifications with direct communication via phone, email or in person, with members of the public seeking support or advice.
3. To ensure that the council complies with its statutory duties in providing the above, with particular reference to the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and Parts VI and VII, and the Housing Act, taking into account the relevant codes of guidance, case law and agreed legislative and service standards.
4. To actively work with clients to prevent their homelessness. By assisting them to retain their existing accommodation or secure alternative housing when all other housing options or solutions are exhausted.
5. To negotiate with landlords, family members and other agencies, both statutory and non-statutory, to find the best solutions to clients housing needs and seeking to prevent homelessness wherever possible.
6. To undertake comprehensive financial assessments to ensure accommodation is affordable and that where required, to work closely with colleagues from the Welfare Service to maximise income and ensure timely application or changes to benefits are progressed.
7. To provide consistently high quality housing advice regarding complex and sensitive matters including but not limited to domestic abuse, tenancy rights and eviction or access to the housing register.
8. To assess and review housing register applications, ensuring up to date and accurate information relating to housing and homelessness applicants is recorded on our systems.
9. To provide customers with robust Personal Housing Plans to ensure customers have the best chance to improve their housing options. Including wider support planning, linking with education, employment, health and other support providers and agencies.
10. To work with the Housing Management Officers to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out and referrals are made as necessary for those clients moving into temporary accommodation.
11. To attend multi agency meetings where required such as S47, MARAC or MATAC and working in partnership with teams across the organisation including Welfare or the Housing Resources teams to ensure that a One Council approach is adopted to all cases wherever required.
12. To work closely with all internal teams and provide support as required, enabling an effective housing service.
13. To attend court if required in connection with housing or homelessness matters.

Scope of role

You will be expected to make decisions on homelessness applications and where required, the offer of emergency accommodation or the acceptance or discharge of statutory homelessness duties.

You may be required to visit vulnerable householders in their homes and will be required to use council laptops in that context which will hold category 3 level information.

All employees working with children, young people and vulnerable adults have a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting their welfare.

Commitment to the Council's Equal Opportunities policy at all times

Commitment to working within the bounds of the Data Protection Act and GDPR legislation at all times

Such other duties as may from time to time be necessary, compatible with the nature of the post. It should be noted that the above list of main duties and responsibilities is not necessarily a complete statement of the final duties of the post. It is intended to give an overall view of the position and should be taken as guidance only

PERSON SPECIFICATION

KEY CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Skills and qualifications	A good level of education to include GCSE Maths and English to ensure high quality of written communications can be shared with applicants.	CIH or equivalent housing qualification or study of same.
Competence Summary (Knowledge, abilities, skills, experience)	A sound working knowledge of Housing Act 1985, Housing Act 1996 (Part VI) and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 Ability to manage and prioritise a varied case load of work. Experience of problem solving with customers and gaining agreement to a course of action. Experience of providing emotional support to customers who are faced with difficult/challenging situations. Experience of working in a busy, front line, customer-focused team. Demonstrable experience of working with a suite of ICT systems including MS Office. Effective communication skills, orally and in writing, including experience of dealing with situations involving distressed or challenging conversations. Understanding of and commitment to the requirements of safeguarding children, young people, vulnerable adults and promoting their welfare.	Good knowledge of welfare benefits such as Universal Credit and Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support schemes Experience of working with Abritas Housing Solution.
Work-related Personal Requirements	Experience and ability to be empathise with customers. Good listening skills.	

Other Work Requirements	A satisfactory Basic Disclosure and Barring Service check. This role has been identified as public facing in accordance with Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016; the requirement to fulfil all spoken aspects of the role with confidence in English applies.
Role models and demonstrates the Council's values and behaviours	Our values define who we are. They outline what is important to us. They influence the way we work with each other – and the way we serve our residents and engage with our communities. We make our values real by demonstrating them in how we behave every day.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the Council's Equality & Dignity at Work policy at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality & Diversity legislation and Council policies/procedures.

