



uncover **your** potential **our**Team

Senior Homeless Officer Job Pack

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Job Description

Job Title	Senior Homeless Officer
Service	Strategic Housing Service
Grade	8
Responsible to	Homeless Team Manager

1. Main Purpose of the Job

- 1.1 To deliver the Council's housing solutions service.
- 1.2 To apply a customer focused, proactive, problem-solving approach in supporting households to overcome their housing difficulties, preventing homelessness, including effective decision making and homelessness case management in accordance with relevant legislation, policy and procedure.
- 1.3 To ensure all customers receive a comprehensive assessment of all available housing options; including proactive advice and support to sustain existing accommodation where possible (and appropriate) or to access alternative accommodation solutions where necessary.
- 1.4 To undertake case reviews and deal with statutory appeals under Housing Act 1996, Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and any subsequent amendments, and manage more complex homelessness cases as directed.
- 1.5 To provide senior officer case support to the Council's Homeless Officers, assisting them to carry out their statutory homelessness case work in order to meet the Council's legal duties under Part 7 Housing Act 1996(as amended) and ensuring that casework quality is of good quality and meets all necessary legal standards outlined in the Act and the associated code of guidance

2. Duties and Responsibilities

- 2.1 To support the casework team to deliver the Council's statutory functions in respect of homelessness, providing effective, accurate, timely and impartial advice to households threatened with homelessness, in order to maximise homelessness prevention and minimise homelessness in the City of Chelmsford in accordance with relevant legislation, policy and procedure. This will include some participation in the weekly duty rota.
- 2.2 To work with the Housing Casework Manager and to be responsible for ensuring the Council fulfils its statutory duty in respect of homelessness through the accurate assessment of applications, issuing and reviewing decisions and the provision of appropriate, advice, information and assistance as required.

- 2.3 To prepare and present cases via the Homelessness Acceptance process (HAM) as well as ensuring that cases prepared by the Housing Solutions Officers are complete, with all necessary evidence and documentation in readiness for sign off by the Housing Casework Manager
- 2.4 Where required, be responsible for case managing a complex casework applications in line with Council's quality casework standards, from their initial application, assessment, decision making, through to the discharge of the Council's statutory duty.
- 2.5 To make home visits / visits to other locations, both where necessary to facilitate client casework and when attending multi agency/ professionals meetings, forums or other relevant bodies.
- 2.6 Be responsible for assisting in the development and implementation of new initiatives and approaches and evidence a demonstrable focus for improving services and will be instrumental in shaping and implementing new processes
- 2.7 Responsible for ensuring the prompt issuing of personal decisions and discharge of duty, where appropriate, including actioning Notice to Quits.
- 2.8 To provide senior officer support to the Council's Homeless Officers, to assist them with casework queries and to help them maintain good quality casework, meeting all statutory timescales and decisions required during an application under the Act.
- 2.9 To represent the Strategic Housing Service at internal and external meetings, deputising for the Housing Casework Manager, as required.
- 2.10 To provide out of hours homelessness advice and support, on a rota basis, including cover at weekends and over bank holiday periods, being the only point of contact when on call, for individuals requiring assistance with housing.
- 2.11 To supervise the update, maintenance and monitoring of statistical information and contribute to the reporting of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and management reports.
- 2.12 To support the Homeless Officers to maintain the correct recording of casework on the Council's online Homelessness System, including the quality and accuracy of data to be reported to central government under the HCLIC requirements
- 2.13 Maintain an in-depth knowledge of legislation, case law and good practice in relation to housing and homelessness, to be able to deliver advice and guidance as necessary to support front line officers. Mentor and coach new casework staff.
- 2.14 To lead on projects for the improvement of or introduction of new homelessness and other systems and technology.

- 2.15 To undertake all corporate requirements on health and safety, equal opportunities, data protection, risk management and financial regulations.
- 2.16 Any other duties commensurate with the level of the post.

3. Work Location

You will normally be based at Civic Centre, Chelmsford, but may be required to work from any other location within the City should circumstances make it necessary.

4. General Conditions

- A. This Job Description is subject to your conditions of Employment, which, in the event of conflict, shall take precedence. The post holder will carry out the duties specified above and such other duties as may be required from time to time. The Job Description may be reviewed and amended in the light of any changes that are made.
- B. It may be necessary, from time to time, for you to work hours in excess of, or differing from, your normal working hours.
- C. It may be necessary for you to be trained in, and use, new technology as it is introduced into the Council's activities.
- D. It is a condition of employment that you may be required to assist in the organisation and running of elections or referenda that take place in the City, relating to Parish Councils, the City Council, the County Council, Parliament, or other similar bodies. You will normally only be required to carry out election and referenda duties when there are insufficient experienced volunteers from within the Council's service who are available for and able to carry out such duties.
- E. You will carry out your responsibilities with due regard to the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- F. You will be aware and undertake training as required in line with your responsibilities set out in the Council's Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults policy.
- G. All staff have a responsibility for data security in accordance with Data Protection regulations. You are required to ensure that you adhere to Council Policies and Procedures regarding data security. Whilst working at the Council, you may gain knowledge of confidential matters about members of the public and staff. Such information must be considered strictly confidential and must not be discussed or disclosed in an unauthorised manner. Service Managers and designated Information Asset Owners must be aware of their responsibilities, internal procedures and training requirements as directed by the Information Governance team.

Person Specification

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Education/Qualifications		
A high standard of literacy and numeracy	E	-
Possession of a degree or diploma in relevant subject	-	D
Knowledge		
Knowledge of relevant Housing Legislation Acts, case law and guidance relating to Homelessness, Housing Register and tenancy matters	E	-
Knowledge of Affordable/Social Housing and Registered Social Landlords	E	-
Knowledge of Welfare Benefits	E	-
Knowledge of workings of Local Government	-	D
Experience		
Experience of providing advice and assistance to individuals with housing and associated problems	E	-
Experience of supervising and coaching others	-	D
Experience of working in a multi-disciplinary team and with a variety of agencies	E	-
Experience of working with households to prevent homelessness through a wide range of solutions based tools and techniques from start, to finish, including decision making.	E	-
Experience of undertaking quality assurance, case work reviews and dealing with statutory appeals	E	-

Experience of promoting good working relationships with public, private and voluntary agencies & landlords.	E	-
Experience of using housing management systems and other relevant IT	E	-
Experience of research/analysis/developing/ promoting initiatives to respond to housing need and homelessness	-	D

Personal Qualities and Attributes

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate the following qualities and attributes in relation to the job:

Ability to work closely and relate to a range of people to identify solutions	E	-
Ability to work as part of a team or on own initiative	E	-
Excellent negotiation, communication and interpersonal skills	E	-
Clear and logical thinking in assessing complex issues, problem solving and achieving outcomes	E	-
Ability to remain focussed when working under pressure and achieving targets/deadlines	E	-
Excellent report writing skills	E	-
Ability to supervise, mentor and coach others	E	-
Proficient in use of ICT including Word, Excel, Databases and Outlook	E	-

Circumstances

Ability to travel to and from work locations as required	E	-
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Corporate Values and Behaviours

Within Chelmsford City Council we have values that are at the core of how we behave. They form part of our induction and probation processes and underpin our 1-1 conversations. Each value is listed below with behaviours.

Accountability - We take responsibility and ownership for our own actions, behaviours and performance

- We take responsibility to follow things through to completion
- We actively recognise what is working and what is not and are open about mistakes
- We positively contribute to the team and organisation and seek solutions to problems
- We recognise and positively challenge inappropriate behaviour

Creativity - We are flexible in our approach; we focus on solutions

- We adapt our approach keeping the best outcome for all in mind
- We encourage people to try out new approaches and ideas
- We learn from others to find solutions and to improve performance
- We encourage and support people to take measured risks

Learning and Encouraging - We recognise our success; we provide support to further our skills and experience

- We support and encourage each other to be our best
- We recognise and appreciate the contribution that everyone makes
- We take responsibility for finding opportunities to learn for ourselves and develop
- We support others to develop and learn

Collaborative - We build relationships; we achieve more together

- We talk with others to understand their perspective
- We find opportunities to get involved
- We involve other people early in our thinking to keep them informed
- We ask other people to get involved in what we're doing to build strong working relationships
- We seek ideas from inside and outside of our team to achieve more impact

Trust - We will be open and honest and do what we say

- We are open and honest
- We do the right thing and face up to difficult situations in a sensitive way
- We do what we say we will
- We demonstrate integrity by being fair and balanced in our approach
- We commit to the team agenda rather than personal priorities
- We treat each other as we would expect to be treated

Conditions of Service

The following is an outline of the main terms and conditions of service attached to the post. More detailed information can be provided on request or discussed at the interview stage.

Salary – Grade 8 Scale Point 29 (currently £40,566 per annum) rising to Scale Point 32 (currently £44,361 per annum).

Hours – Two positions available. One permanent contract and one fixed term contract of 18 months. The normal working week for office staff is 37 hours. Normal office hours are worked between 8.45 a.m. and 4.45 p.m. on Monday - Friday.

Hybrid Working – We will be supportive of employees adopting a hybrid working pattern where this suits the role and the needs of the organisation. This means that in agreement with your manager you will have some flexibility over when and where you work. You will be expected to attend a Council work location for part of your working hours, but you can also work at home and other suitable locations as long as the needs of our customers and the service are met. Any work location must be assessed as suitable and the relevant workstation assessments undertaken. Please note that your contractual work location will be a Council office/site and you are able to work from this site for your full hours if you wish to do so.

Annual Leave – The Council operates a standard holiday year from April to March. The entitlement for annual leave for this position is 244.2 hours (33 days) and rising to 281.2 hours (38 days) after 5 years continuous service. This also includes a standard 8 Bank Holidays (59.2 hours), although this may vary depending on the number of Bank Holidays that fall in a particular leave year.

Your annual leave entitlement as above will be calculated on a pro-rata basis dependent on the number of hours you work. The number of equivalent days may also vary based on your working pattern.

Sickness - The provisions of the national Scheme of Conditions of Service apply which provides for up to 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay after 5 years continuous local government service.

Pension - You will be entitled to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. Further details can be provided on request.

Notice Period - The period of notice is 2 month/s.

Probationary Period - The appointment is subject to a six month probationary period.

Criminal Records – The Council is an Equal Opportunities employer and as such the disclosure of a criminal record, or other information, will not necessarily exclude you from consideration for appointment. Any such information will be considered in relation to the tasks and responsibilities required of the postholder and the circumstances and environment in which the role would require you to work.

Failure to declare a conviction, caution, reprimand or final warning may, however, disqualify you from appointment, or result in dismissal if the discrepancy comes to light. A copy of our Policy for Employment of persons with criminal convictions can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

This role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended in England and Wales) and appointment is subject to (as per the guidance above) receipt of a satisfactory enhanced check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

DBS checks for Chelmsford City Council are processed online through an online system provided by Essex County Council, in accordance with the requirements of the DBS, the DBS Code of Practice and data protection legislation (including the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulation)

For further details please visit <https://dbschecks.essex.gov.uk/>

Safeguarding – Chelmsford City Council is committed to promoting the welfare and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Even if your job does not involve working directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults you would be expected to keep your eyes and ears open, as the responsibility of spotting abuse and ensuring the safety of those most vulnerable falls on us all. As part of this commitment the Council ensures that all jobs are reviewed and applicants successful at interview undergo a DBS check where necessary.

Employees who breach the Council's safeguarding policy or fail to follow safeguarding procedures will face investigation and possible disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal and a criminal investigation.

Equal Opportunities – Chelmsford City Council is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Benefits

UK Healthcare Cashplan: The Council pays for a healthcare cashplan for all Permanent members of staff who have successfully passed their probationary period.

Professional Fees: The Council will pay the annual subscription to one professional body if this is a requirement of the post.

Employee Assistance Programme: Available for all employees, this is a free confidential service provided by the Council offering expert advice, invaluable information, specialist counselling and support.

Season Ticket Scheme: Staff can apply for a loan to purchase season tickets for travel to work by train or bus. You will be given a cheque for the full amount of the ticket and the loan will be repaid over a period of 12 months by means of monthly deductions from your salary. There are some terms and conditions, and the scheme is not open to all staff.

Staff Travel Plan: The Council's Staff Travel Plan contains a package of measures to reduce the use of private cars. It aims to promote walking, cycling, using public transport and car sharing. The Staff Travel Plan includes discounts such as 20% off season tickets. In addition there are shower and changing facilities, secure bike parking and parking spaces for car sharing. Regular Staff Travel promotions and events are held throughout the year.

Bike Loan Scheme: Staff can apply for a loan to purchase a bike or cycling equipment for travelling to work. An advance will be made via cheque (up to the value of £1000) and the loan will be repaid over a period of 12 months by means of monthly deductions from your salary, which can save you up to 42%. There are some terms and conditions, and the scheme is not open to all staff.

Staff Discounts: Chelmsford City Council employees benefit from various discounts to many businesses in Chelmsford.

Subsidised Car Parking: Available for new employees, parking currently offered at Meadows Retail Multi-Storey.