

Job Description: Senior 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:	Senior Housing Options Officer
OUR ORGANISATIONAL VALUES	
Collaboration 	We know, work with and support one another. We collaborate with residents, businesses and partners and realise the potential of the Guildford and Waverley Collaboration. We empower ourselves and others.
Wellbeing 	We look after our own and other's wellbeing. We know it's okay to talk to each other about anything we are struggling with. We stay resilient and raise any concerns we have.
Trusted 	We abide by the Nolan Principles of Public Life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership.
Value for Money 	We spend public money wisely and carefully. We understand and follow our governance processes and raise any concerns with the right person. We celebrate successes and learn from mistakes.
Professionalism 	We provide professional advice and excellent service, we know our local areas and understand the communities we serve. We listen to all concerns and ideas. We benchmark our performance and always strive to improve.

PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

- To provide a comprehensive homelessness prevention and relief service to customers including conducting Triage, Full Housing Assessments (FHAs) making prevention/relief duty decisions, issuing, monitoring and updating Personal Housing Plans (PHPs), administering client housing register applications, deposits scheme awards and providing general housing advice.
- To oversee officer casework, maintain detailed knowledge of homelessness legislation and caselaw and deal with review/appeals. Investigate and recommend main duty decisions for approval.
- To act as a source of expertise on homelessness legislation and caselaw, and the Allocations policy.
- To provide excellent customer service to all customers.

MAIN DUTIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Contribute to the delivery of a responsive front line Homelessness Prevention, Relief and main duty service including dealing with case work queries and advising Officers on actions/steps/duty decisions.
- Provide current and bespoke homelessness prevention and relief advice, conducting Triage and FHAs, issuing, monitoring and updating PHPs and setting PHP Review dates. Issue Prevention/Relief/Main duty acceptance/discharge letters. Conduct detailed casework to prevent or relieve homelessness, and propose main duty decisions. Source accommodation solutions for clients from a range of tenures.
- Maintain a detailed and current working knowledge of legislation and caselaw, relating to homelessness, housing need assessments (Part VI), landlord and tenant responsibilities, security of tenure, family law, immigration and welfare benefits.
- Oversee the day to day assessment and registration of housing register applications in line with the Allocations policy and deal with review requests.
- Conduct reviews of housing register officer level decisions on behalf of the Housing Options Manager.
- Assist with reviews of homelessness prevention/relief duty officer decisions in conjunction with the Housing Options Manager.
- Assist with appeal/judicial review applications.
- Build relationships with private, voluntary and supported housing landlords to maximize available housing options.
- 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.
- Deputise for the Housing Options Manager.
- Co-ordinate and participate in a duty rota and lunch cover arrangements
- Comply with all Health and safety legislation for your area of work, ensuring that risks are identified, managed and monitored as required
- 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 per week face to face/telephone
- Approximately 3 Full Housing Assessments to conduct and PHPs to issue per week.
- Issue approximately 3 duty acceptance letters per week and 3 duty discharge letters per

week

- Ongoing caseload of 15 customers at any one time including approach, prevention, relief and main duty cases.
- Up to 5 officer casework/decision queries per day
- Approximately 1 x Part VI and 1 x Part VII review request per week
- Assist with verification of up to 1000 housing register applications a year
- 2 appeals/judicial reviews per year
- Manage up to 3 Co-ordinator colleagues alongside another Senior Housing Options Officer

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

- Apply legislation to the facts of each case, having made appropriate enquiries, 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.
- Maintain up to date detailed knowledge of law relating to homelessness, security of tenure, money/debt advice principles, benefits and welfare reform and apply this knowledge whilst overseeing own casework, the team's casework.
- Deal with casework lawfully, thoroughly and in a timely manner to minimize review requests and county court appeals.
- Negotiate with third parties in order to prevent and relieve homelessness.
- Deal with reviews in a lawful, timely and thorough manner to minimize the number of unnecessary county court appeals and judicial reviews.
- 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 identify 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 deposit scheme check in arrangements to ensure timely transition.
- Deal with officer case work queries on a daily basis to ensure consistent quality of work
- Carry out lawful, procedurally fair and thorough reviews within the required statutory period.
- Organise workload to balance Triage/FHA/PHP review meetings/visits, and note keeping, against homelessness and housing register advisory and supervisory responsibilities described above.

CUSTOMERS AND CONTACTS

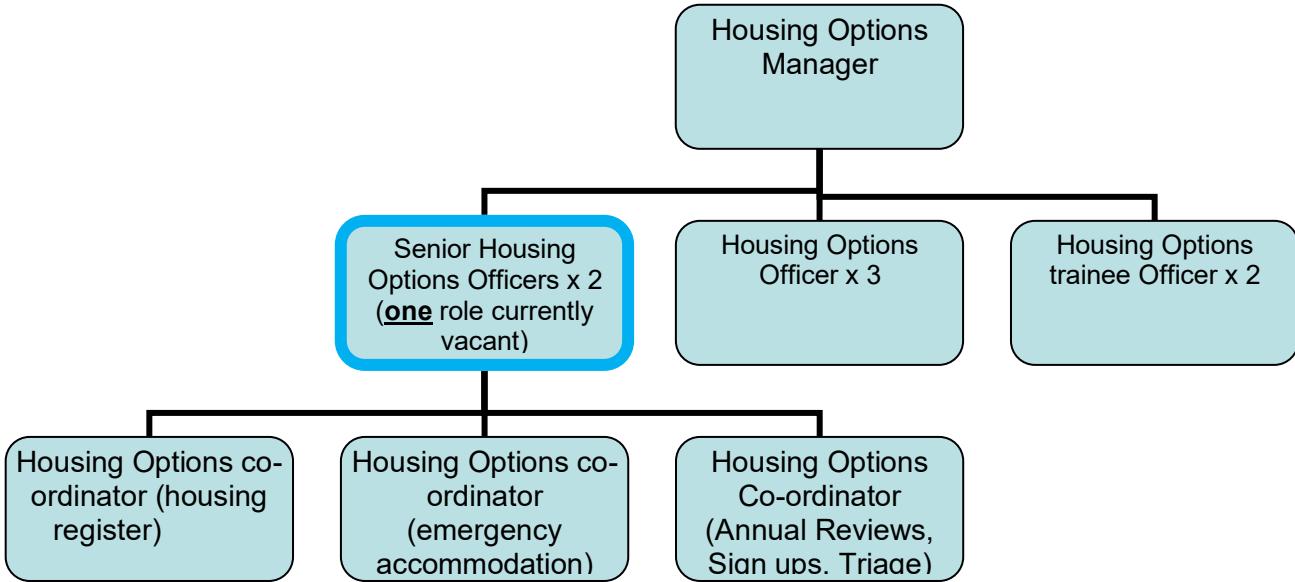
INTERNAL

- Housing Options team colleagues, Rents, Property Services, Tenancy and Estates, Senior Living, Council Tax and Housing Benefit, Environmental Health, Specialist Housing Options Officer, Family Support Team, Members, Housing Options Manager, Housing Needs Manager, Assistant Director of Housing, Corporate Management Team, Elected Members

EXTERNAL

- Members of the public, Advocacy services, Money/debt advice agencies, Mediation services, Supported Housing and Support Providers, Social Services, Occupational Therapists, Police, Medical professionals and Health Visitors, Mental Health Services, National Probation Service, the Court service, Mediation providers, Private Landlords & Lettings Agencies,

SERVICE/TEAM STRUCTURE



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates must be able to demonstrate, giving examples, **all essential criteria** marked as A, A/C or A/I 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) • Housing related qualification (e.g.CIH or equivalent), or working/willing to work towards • Considerable experience of giving advice to prevent/relieve homelessness whilst working on a multi-agency, holistic basis 	AIC AC AI	CIH member Experience of working in local government Experience of Managing staff Experience of dealing with review requests and main duty decisions	AC AI AI AI
KNOWLEDGE /TECHNICAL SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed understanding of homelessness legislation and caselaw, and of the law relating to different tenures. • Knowledge of state benefits and their interaction • Excellent IT skills • Awareness of Safeguarding 	AIT AI AIT	Experience of working within, and opening up the private rented sector Experience of using Jigsaw, Orchard, Docusign, Civica, mail merge	AI AI
COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to speak to people at all levels in an assertive but diplomatic manner, whilst maintaining a position; able to negotiate with and influence others, build constructive relationships be resilient and persist to achieve good outcomes. • Able to navigate difficult conversations to achieve acceptable outcome • Excellent administrative skills; able to produce high quality and accurate legal accurate decision letters, emails and timely notes. 	AI AI AIT	Support others to contribute to discussions Confident and effective presenter Seeks to overcome barriers to communication	A I AI
CUSTOMER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of and commitment to promoting 	AI	Has instigated customer	AI

SERVICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> equality and diversity in service delivery and employment.. Understands the needs of and challenges faced by homeless people and the challenge of meeting housing need Accurate spoken English is required in the role 	I I	feedback and responded appropriately	
TEAM WORKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible and adaptable, inspires and supports and encourages colleagues learning and development Work with others constructively whilst delivering own share of workload to improve team performance. Aware of political context, and positively influences the way the team works together. 	AI AI I		
MANAGING SELF AND OTHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to remain calm, focused and professional when under pressure Able to prioritise workload to meet multiple deadlines Motivates others to succeed, corrects others when needed, anticipates and diffuses conflict. deal with sensitive and confidential information discretely. 	AI AI AI AIT		
CAN DO APPROACH / ACHIEVING RESULTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to work proactively on own initiative having assessed associated risks. Able to absorb and retain new information, policies and procedures and suggest ways to improve the service. Confident and able to deal with disputes or disagreements 	AIT T AI		
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 valid driving licence and use of car during working hours Appropriate business wear 	A A I		

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.

Or Politically Sensitive post: Political Restrictions

Please note that the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990 apply to this post. In general terms these provisions mean that the postholder is prohibited from:

- holding or standing for elected public office (except Town or Parish Councils);
- holding office in a political party;
- speaking or writing in public (including on social media) in a personal capacity in a way that might be regarded as favouring one or other political party;
- canvassing at elections

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Job title:	Senior Housing Options Officer	Post no:	HC
Service:	Housing	JE score:	
Team:	Housing Options	Pay band:	
Location:	The Burys Godalming, Surrey GU7 1HR	Position type: (if part time, working pattern)	37 Hours/Five days per week
Competencies: (level 1 – 4)	Communication:	3	
	Customer Service:	3	
	Team Working:	3	
	Managing Self and Others:	3	
	Can do approach/Results	3	
REVIEWED BY:	E Donaldson	DATE:	09012036
CHECKED IN:	Employee Services	DATE:	
LAST UPDATED:	09012026	DATE:	