



Job Description

This job description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work required of the post to indicate the level of responsibility. It is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list, and the line manager may vary duties from time to time which do not change the general character of the job, or the level of responsibility entailed.

Post Details	
Job Title	Head of Housing Needs and Options
Service	Housing Needs and Options Service
Team	Housing Needs and Options
Location	Shute End/Flexible Home Working
Reports to	Service Director for Housing
Worker Style	Hybrid – Remote working with attendance at Council offices as and when required
Responsible for	Direct supervision of 2 x Team Managers for Housing Needs and Options, Housing and Domestic Abuse Specialist, Overseas Arrivals Coordinator Overall responsibilities for all Housing Needs and Options staff – 28 staff (25.91 FTE)
Grade	SM2
Contract Type	Permanent

Main Accountabilities	
1.	To ensure that the Housing Need and Options service delivers within statutory, Council and Government guidelines and to provide strategic leadership across the service, ensuring that service policies, procedures and processes reflect legislative and regulatory change. To develop and implement strategic plans to prevent and relieve homelessness.
2.	To deliver service improvements and develop innovative solutions to homelessness prevention and early intervention and implementing this into service delivery; to be accountable for performance and to use key performance indicators effectively to manage and implement change.
3.	To be responsible for leading and managing senior roles within the Housing Needs and Options Services, including Team Managers and specialist officers, to ensure effective management of these roles and to promote professional development across the service.
4.	To manage the implementation of homelessness case management data systems and specialist homelessness and migration data tools. To oversee Delta data collections for service.





5.	To represent Wokingham Borough Council at decision making level in regional initiatives to tackle homelessness collectively. To lead and support communications with national Government agencies on homelessness prevention, supporting rough sleepers and related issues.
6.	To engage with stakeholders and partners, ensuring collaboration and co-production with key strategies and policies, to promote partnership working with key agencies to prevent and relieve homelessness.
7.	Play a lead role to ensure housing needs, including homeless people and people who need support, are met alongside other care duties by partnership working across a range of Council services and external agencies including Children's Social Care, Adults Social Care, Housing Management, Rents, Housing Benefit, Department for Work and Pensions, Community Mental Health, Health Services, Police, Probation, Community Safety, Drug and Alcohol support services, Domestic Abuse support services and the voluntary sector to ensure robust and cohesive casework management. To attend and lead discussions with internal and external stakeholders to promote and develop the work of the service, including Heads of Service, Assistant Directors, and lead professionals.
8.	To work with statutory and voluntary agencies and other Council services with regards to Duty to Refer referrals and ensure processes are in place to manage such referrals. To promote awareness of Duty to Refer and Homelessness legislation across services to continue to increase awareness of early intervention and how to access the Homelessness and Housing Needs Service
9.	To ensure an effective governance system is in place to provide assurances around compliance to relevant legislation and to ensure that audit processes are followed by all team members; including but not limited to emergency and temporary accommodation placements social housing allocations, rent deposit and rent in advance loans/ payments and homelessness prevention payments.
10.	To be responsible and accountable for managing the Housing Needs budgets, working closely with Finance Teams, proactively managing risks and overspends, maximising income opportunities and explore all funding opportunities through grant funding bids. To identify efficiencies within the service; particularly reducing the use of emergency accommodation by developing strategic plans for long term temporary accommodation provisions. To prepare spend declaration for government grants.
11.	To ensure compliance with Government data returns and to ensure that data submitted is accurate and subject to quality checks; to benchmark service data and use this to inform service development and for accurate budget forecasting.
12.	To play a lead role in collaboration with corporate colleagues and lead initiatives to meet housing and associated needs cost effectively. This will include sourcing temporary accommodation from the private and social housing sectors using innovative and value for money approaches. To manage effective charge setting and income recovery that is fair to the residents and the Council.
13.	To be responsible for leading the service in relation to all legal challenges, judicial reviews and similar relating to statutory homeless duties.
14.	To promote a positive complaints culture in all services managed. To make appropriate referrals for legal support in complex cases and to provide information to Legal Services in a timely manner. To act as a witness in litigation/ proceedings related to the duties of the post.





15.	To report in writing and in person in relation to housing needs and options issues to partnership bodies, scrutiny processes, Service Director, Lead Member, Directorate Management Team and others, as the acknowledged lead for the Council. To provide accurate and politically sensitive information.
16.	To represent the Housing Needs and Options service and the council at meetings and events as required.
17.	To take responsibility for the health and safety of all staff in Housing Needs and Options, and to comply with the Council's duties under statutory health and safety provisions.
18.	To ensure continuous professional development and mandatory training for the Housing Needs and Options Service, fostering a culture of ongoing learning and compliance.
19.	To ensure that appropriate safeguarding referrals are made and to ensure that officers are responsible and take action to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. To take positive actions to ensure that the service promotes equal opportunities, and this is managed effectively within the service.
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Person Specification	Essential	Desirable
Education/Qualifications	<p>Relevant qualification in Housing/ Homelessness or equivalent experience working in this sector.</p> <p>Educated to degree level</p>	Working towards membership of relevant professional body
Experience	<p>Significant experience of managing successful Homelessness and Housing Needs services</p> <p>Experience of partnership working across the voluntary and statutory sector to provide services for homelessness individuals</p> <p>Experience of developing and writing successful grant funding bids to secure additional resources for homelessness and housing services</p> <p>Experience of developing and implementing strategic plans to prevent and relieve homelessness</p>	





<p>Skills/Knowledge</p>	<p>Excellent IT skills including officer software such as Microsoft Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, and Excel</p> <p>Excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to vary style to meet the needs of the audience</p> <p>Effective report writing skills, able to make recommendations for decision making</p> <p>Ability to actively listen to extract and assess important information and to ask pertinent questions to seek clarification</p> <p>Ability to interrogate and analyse data and information to identify trends and patterns</p> <p>Financial management, forecasting, reviewing and budget setting skills, an ability to manage budget and financial resources efficiently, ensuring services are delivered within budget</p> <p>In-depth knowledge of housing legislation including the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Housing Act 1996, including Part VII applicants.</p> <p>Detailed knowledge of relevant case law and the Homelessness Code of Guidance</p> <p>Detailed knowledge of the roles and functions of statutory and non-statutory services within the Council and externally who can assist in the prevention of homelessness and an understanding of how to work effectively with these services</p> <p>Must demonstrate expected levels of competency at this level in terms of knowledge, skills, experience and behaviours (with internal and external stakeholders, including residents)</p>	
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Purpose Details

<p>Service Purpose</p>	<p>To provide strategic and operational leadership for the Council's activities in relation to the delivery of services to residents who are in housing need including people who are homelessness or threatened with homelessness and to ensure that the service, including responses to domestic abuse and migration, is strategically aligned with local and national policies, including compliance with the Homelessness Reduction Act, the Housing Act and the Domestic Abuse Act.</p>
<p>Role Purpose</p>	<p>To oversee the overall provision, management, development and support of the Housing Needs and Options Service and to drive high performance, innovation and continuous service improve. To lead, innovate and develop creative solutions to preventing homelessness in the Borough, including implementation of early intervention strategies that met rising demand. To oversee the Team Managers and other specialist roles to ensure that customer-focused housing services are delivered and that statutory duties are met. To oversee and implement effective housing strategies, including the housing allocations policy and the homelessness and rough sleeping strategy. To be responsible for the management of the homelessness budgets. To ensure that creative and innovative value for money approaches are taken to applications and use of grant bids and funding streams.</p>
<p>Corporate Parenting</p>	<p>You will champion the principles of corporate parenting by embedding its ethos in all aspects of service delivery, ensuring decisions and actions consistently reflect the responsibility to act as a corporate parent to children in care and care leavers, and actively contribute to shaping and implementing the wider corporate parenting strategy.</p>

Supervision and Relationships

<p>Supervision Received</p>	<p>Direct Line Manager: Director of Housing, and further supervision provided by Executive Director for Children's, Adults and Health.</p>
<p>Supervision Given</p>	<p>Direct supervision of 2 x Team Managers for Housing Needs and Options, Housing and Domestic Abuse Specialist, Overseas Arrivals Coordinator Overall responsibilities for all Housing Needs and Options staff - 28 staff (25.91 FTE)</p>
<p>Contacts</p>	<p>All staff throughout the Housing Needs function, along with Residential Engagement Panels and residents in need of Housing.</p>

Resources/Budget Management

Full budgetary responsibility and accountability for the whole of the Housing Needs operational function, in line with regulatory requirements.





Special Requirements

Will be a hybrid role, but will also need to be able to travel across the borough to various sites based on Housing policy and regulatory requirements.

Occupational Health Risk Assessment	Details
Skin/Respiratory Sensitisers	N
Working at Height	N
Exposure to Noise (>80-85dB)	N
Confined Spaces	N>
Frequent Display Screen Equipment Use	Y
Driving for Work	Y
Hand Arm Vibration	N
Lone Working	N
Healthcare/Social Contact with Patients	N
Blood Borne Viruses Exposure	N
Food Handling	N
Working with Animals	N
Specialised Medical Screening	N
Night Working	N
Safety Critical Work	N

Nature of the Role	Details
Healthcare or Hospital Work	N
Working with Children (under 18)	N
Working with Elderly/Vulnerable Adults	Y





Work Environment Details	Hybrid between Head Office, Home and Housing sites as required
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Role Involvement	Details
Working with Children	N
Working with Vulnerable Adults	Y
Both of the Above	N
Providing Care/Supervision for Children	N
Providing Care/Supervision for Vulnerable Adults	N
Both of the Above	N
None of the Above	N/A

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)	Details
DBS Requirement	Not Required
Eligibility Tool	Find out which DBS check is right for your employee - GOV.UK (Find out which DBS check is right for your employee - GOV.UK)

Re-checks
N/A

Evaluation Declaration	
Date of Evaluation:	5 th June 2026
Evaluated by:	Lynn Campion, HR Business Partner

