Role Profile

Role Title: Single Homeless Pathway Officer

Service Area: Housing and Wellbeing

Band: 6

Reporting to: Single Homeless Pathway Co-ordinator

Responsible for: Watford's Single Homeless Pathway

Purpose

The aim of this post, funded through MHCLG Rough Sleepers Initiative until March 2026, is to support the Single Homeless Pathway Co-ordinator (SHP Co-ordinator) in the delivery of the ground-breaking multi-agency, multi-disciplinary Single Homeless Pathway in Watford (WSHP). The WSHP is collectively delivered by the council, local single homeless support and accommodation providers, Watford Community Housing, as well as input from Hertfordshire County Council's Complex Needs Strategic Partnership Team. The pathway delivers best practice services to single people experiencing homelessness, including specialist work with rough sleepers in Watford. For those who want it, the pathway enables them to access accommodation and multi-disciplinary support services to reduce the multiple disadvantages the homeless often experience.

The Single Homeless Pathway Officer (SHP Officer), alongside the SHP Co-ordinator, will be a point of contact in the council about rough sleeping and single homeless issues in the borough and will be a key player in the existing strong partnership arrangements within Watford. The post holder will also work with the SHP Co-ordinator to identify upstream avenues of information and activity that will help prevent single people from becoming homeless and/or rough sleeping and will also research, identify and put in place innovative and successful ways to work with rough sleepers experience multiple disadvantage, those with restricted eligibility and those who are currently unable to or do not want to access support or accommodation services.

To post holder will also assist in triaging any customers who approach the service for advice on their housing situation including homeless applicants and rough sleepers. This will include carrying out initial assessments, outreach visits to partners as well as making appointments, as necessary, for Housing Options Officers.

Key responsibilities

- Support the SHP Co-ordinator in setting up systems to enable single homeless people to be placed in safe, secure, welcoming physical environments throughout the pathway, and have fast and effective assessments which are co-produced with clients and will enable them to access the best and most appropriate support that meets their needs.
- Support the SHP Co-ordinator in providing a coordinated response to rough sleeping and street-based activity by working in collaboration with; MHCLG, Watford's accommodation services, the Outreach Plus Service and local third sector agencies.

- Assist the SHP Co-ordinator in embedding the WSHP so that all agencies are aligned to its aims and philosophy, and it delivers seamlessly for the needs of single homeless people through seminars, work shadowing, risk mitigation, the prevention of exclusions, having a person-centered approach and establishing relevant policies and procedures around referrals.
- Assist the SHP Co-ordinator in enabling resources to be used optimally and efficiently to meet the council's aim to reduce rough sleeping and street-based activity in the borough and enable clients to attain independence.
- To support services who work closely with those found rough sleeping in the borough and those engaged in street-based activity to help create and implement bespoke action plans to resolve their situation.
- Help build awareness for a range of agencies, departments and partners about rough sleeping and street-based activity.
- To work closely with the Outreach Plus Service and the Community Safety Partnership (including the Community Protection Group) to ensure services provide a rapid response to reports of rough sleeping or street-based activity.
- Using a variety of sources, ensure that qualitative and quantitative information on rough sleeping issues is collected, analysed and reported on, including Government returns.
- Attend meetings related to the running of the WSHP and follow-up the actions from those meetings, include providing administrative support by producing invites, agendas and minutes.
- Assist in responding to enquiries and complaints, including Member and MP enquiries, about rough sleeping, street-based activity and single homelessness.
- Ensure that the information available to rough sleepers and single homeless people about relevant services is maintained and updated regularly. E.g. Council and partner websites are up to date.
- Support in the application of funding opportunities related to rough sleeping and street-based activity.
- To acquire specialist knowledge about rough sleeping, street-based activity and single homelessness and assist in forming policy and best practice in those areas. This includes assisting in writing procedures and reports on how to address these issues.
- Help research and identifying innovative ways of assisting rough sleepers with high complex needs, those without recourse to public funds and those who refuse to engage.
- To lead on the graduation (move-on) of nominees within the Housing First program, effectively liaising with service delivery partners.
- Assist in delivering the annual rough sleeper count and bi-monthly street counts.
- Ensure as many rough sleepers and single homeless people as possible are recorded on the council's HRA systems and have a personal housing plan.
- To help identify and develop services that provide upstream avenues of homelessness prevention through liaison with Revenues & Benefits, Job Centre+, health agencies and others.
- To provide customers approaching the council with timely and comprehensive housing advice and information / support to services on a range of housing issues.
- To be the first point of contact for homeless applicants and rough sleepers, carry out initial assessments and refer to housing options officers is the 56-day homelessness duty is triggered.
- To develop and attend housing advice drop-in session as WSHP providers.
- Process and complete administrative tasks within the triage team, including monitoring duty to refer application, housing advice for and any other referrals. Undertake any other duties as required by the Single Homeless Pathway Co-ordinator.
- Maybe required to undertake duties to help to deliver council services during times of local or national emergencies. This may include duties outside your usual role and/or a different location.
- Maybe required to undertake duties on behalf of the electoral registration officer and/or the returning officer relating to the registration of electors and the organisation of elections i.e., processing postal votes, canvassing properties during office hours.
- The Council is committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. You will ensure that the delivery of Single Homeless Pathway Officer is compatible with, and promotes, that ambition.
- Take personal responsibility for promoting equality and diversity throughout the Council and ensuring that your job responsibilities are carried out with due regard to the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

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- Champion and exemplify our core values, enabling our people to flourish in a dynamic and agile workplace where they can be their very best.
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- You may also be required to undertake duties to help to deliver Council Services during times of local or national emergencies. This may include duties outside your usual role and/or at a different location.

Specific Knowledge, Skills and Expertise

- Knowledge of housing legislation and ability and willingness to learn about relevant legislation and government guidance impacting on the field of housing in more detail. This includes housing and homelessness legislation, welfare rights, human rights and equalities legislation, and how this affects the development and delivery of local authority housing-related strategies.
- Ability to work effectively as a team member, supporting colleagues and covering their roles when required.
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing with a wide range of people, including the public, elected members and other statutory and partner agencies working both with individual customers and with specific needs groups.
- Ability to represent the council at multi-agency meetings and to always uphold the council's values.
- Ability to adopt an innovative and creative approach to solving very varied and complex problems.
- Ability to extract and understand, interpret and analyse complex information and issues leading to the making of informed decisions and the development of medium-term solutions.
- Ability to work with precision and attention to detail and in a timely way.
- Experience of working with partners to develop positive solutions to complex issues.
- Able to easily engage and communicate sensitively and persuasively with a wide range of stakeholders including rough sleepers, single homeless people, partner voluntary and statutory agencies, housing associations, council officers and members, MHCLG personnel.
- Ability to work subject to general managerial direction with minimal supervision and ability to prioritise own workload.
- Good negotiation and persuasion skills, including the ability to make and communicate difficult and contentious decisions.
- Emotional resilience will be required as the post holder may encounter upsetting details when looking at the delivery of the housing service.
- Computer literate including knowledge of Microsoft Office suite.

Key Relationships

- Single Homeless Pathway Co-ordinator
- WBC Community Safety Partnership
- Outreach Plus Service
- Supported accommodation providers
- Housing Associations
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)
- All council employees