

Job Description

Single Homelessness Advisor

Date: August 2019

POST:	Single Homelessness Adviser
SERVICE:	Housing Choice
SECTION:	Housing Solutions
BAND:	Band 5
REPORTS TO:	Housing Solutions Coordinator
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	None
TYPE:	Mobile worker within Basildon Council sites and using secure network

All Council posts are subject to National Joint Council (NJC) conditions of service.

Basildon Borough Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults, and expects all employees, contractors and volunteers to share its commitment to prevent abuse, harm or exploitation.

Please note that the Council applies a robust recruitment vetting process.

Please note that this post is subject to Department of Works and Pensions (DWP), Protection of National Infrastructure conditions, which means that the post holder will be required to undergo further vetting processes to ensure compliance.

Please note that this post has been classified by Basildon Council as a Regulated Post as it has contact with vulnerable groups so will require an enhanced Disclosure and Barring {DBS} certificate.

MAIN PURPOSE

The Housing Solutions Team is part of the Housing Choice Department (the strategic housing service) and sits within the Housing Solutions Service. Its primary function is to prevent homelessness by helping customers retain their current accommodation and, where this cannot be achieved, provide access to a range of suitable alternative housing options fulfilling the Council's statutory obligations as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

You will be responsible for assessing customers' housing needs and wishes in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, producing and agreeing a personalised housing plan which you will keep under regular review until a long-term, sustainable housing solution is secured.

You will work holistically with customers on both their short term housing needs as well as their longer term aspirations. You will manage a caseload, drawing in support and assistance from other statutory and voluntary organisations as appropriate to help customers achieve their housing goals and increase their life opportunities moving forward.

This particular post will focus on assisting single homeless customers (including couples without children) who are living in situations where there is no security of tenure (including sofa surfers and those of no fixed abode) and those who are street homeless and rough sleeping.

DUTIES

1. Undertake comprehensive assessment of customers' housing needs and wishes in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
2. Provide specialist advice across a whole range of issues such as housing, welfare benefits, financial well-being and employment, referring customers to specialist agencies and departments for additional assistance where appropriate.
3. Manage a caseload of customers, working with each to offer an individual and empowering service to customers in housing need, producing a personalised housing plan for each customer and ensuring it is kept under regular review.
4. Deliver innovative, tailored solutions to meet housing need using a variety of means including close liaison with the Private Rented Sector Team to secure good quality, affordable private rented accommodation through one of the Council's private sector access schemes.
5. Gain and maintain comprehensive knowledge of other statutory and third sector organisations in the local area as well as those that operate nationally with a view to drawing on appropriate practical help and support for customers in housing need.
6. Contribute to the development of working relationships and protocols with internal Council departments as well as external agencies such as Social Services, Probation, Police and local housing providers.
7. Work across the Housing Solutions Service and, in particular, with colleagues in the Temporary Accommodation and Private Rented Sector Teams to ensure the timely provision of interim accommodation and expediency of affordable private rented sector accommodation as a long-term prevention or relief of homelessness.
8. Interpret and apply complex legislation and, where required, conduct interviews with applicants under Part VII of the 1996 Housing Act as amended in accordance with statutory legislation, guidance and good practice.
9. Maintain a thorough and up to date understanding of homeless legislation, Landlord and Tenant Law, The Housing Act 1996 (as amended), welfare benefit regulations, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and emerging case law to ensure the delivery of accurate and specialist advice in order to make s184 decisions that stand up to legal challenge.
10. Assist with the development and distribution of customer information.
11. Actively contribute to the compilation and collation of management and performance information as required.

12. Have a working knowledge of IT systems in relation to Applications, Allocations and homelessness prevention and relief ensuring that IT systems are updated with client information at appropriate times.
13. Keep up to date with housing and other related legislation, including homelessness, allocations, landlord and tenant legislation, benefits and welfare rights, immigration and asylum, matrimonial and family law, and other matters of a similar nature.
14. Contribute to the development of new services and initiatives to deal effectively with arising homelessness and housing advice issues and responding to trends positively and in a timely manner, including project work as required and attendance and participation at meetings.
15. Work from various locations around the borough, conducting interviews and assessment of customers' housing needs in community based locations ensuring that you conduct a risk assessment of each home visit and comply with the stated home visit procedure relevant to the work activity.
16. Any other duties appropriate to the post: These other duties must be equivalent to or below the salary and status of the role and, where appropriate, under the Equality Act 2010, due consideration must be given to any employees with a "protected characteristic".
17. Undertake all the duties within the framework of Equal Opportunities
18. You must cooperate in all matters relating to Health and Safety and implement all procedures for your job role. The identification of Health and Safety related risks within the working environment must be highlighted to your management.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Position Title:	Single Homelessness Adviser	Date Prepared:	August 2019
Department:	Housing Choice	Band:	5

AF= Application Form	I = Interview	T= Test
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	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
1.	EXPERIENCE			
1.1	Proven experience of working in a frontline customer focussed environment.	✓		AF/I
1.2	Demonstrable experience of working in the public sector housing field or similar environment.		✓	AF/I
2.	KNOWLEDGE			
2.1	An understanding and awareness of housing issues, the initiatives designed to tackle and prevent homelessness, and of government policy relating to housing need and homelessness.	✓		AF/I/T
2.2	Knowledge of Housing Act 1996 (as amended), Localism Act 2011, Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 included related Codes of Guidance and case law.		✓	AF/I/T
2.3	Awareness of a range of available housing options and support services.		✓	AF/I/T
3.	EDUCATION AND TRAINING			
3.1	O Level or equivalent indicating an aptitude for mathematics and English language.	✓		AF/T
4.	OTHER			
4.1	An understanding of, and commitment to the Council's equal opportunities policy.	✓		AF/I
4.2	Ability to travel around the borough.	✓		AF/I
5.	COMPETENCIES			
	RELATING AND NETWORKING			
5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Establishes good relationships with customers and staff b) Builds wide and effective networks of contacts inside and outside the organisation 	✓		AF/T

	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) Relates well to people at all levels d) Manages conflict e) Use humour appropriately to enhance relationships with others 			
5.2	<p>WRITING AND REPORTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Writes clearly, succinctly and correctly b) Writes convincingly in an engaging and expressive manner c) Avoids the unnecessary use of jargon or complicated language d) Writes in a well-structured and logical way e) Structures information to meet the needs and understanding of the intended audience 	✓		AF/T
5.3	<p>PLANNING AND ORGANISING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sets clearly defined objectives b) Plans activities and projects well in advance and takes account of possible changing circumstances c) Manages time effectively d) Identifies and organises resources needed to accomplish tasks e) Monitors performance against deadlines and milestones 	✓		AF/T
5.4	<p>ADAPTING AND RESPONDING TO CHANGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Adapts to changing circumstances b) Accepts new ideas and change initiatives c) Adapts interpersonal style to suit different people or situations d) Shows respect and sensitivity towards cultural and religious differences e) Deals with ambiguity, making positive use of the opportunities it presents 	✓		I
5.5	<p>COPING WITH PRESSURES AND SETBACKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Works productively in a high pressure environment b) Keeps emotions under control during difficult situations c) Balances the demands of work life and personal life d) Maintains a positive outlook at work e) Handles criticism well and learns from it 	✓		I