



JOB PROFILE

SERVICE AREA	Housing
JOB TITLE	Housing Advice & Homelessness Prevention Officer
POST NUMBER	N/A
GRADE	F
RESPONSIBLE TO	Housing Options Team Leader
KEY LIAISON WITH	Housing Team
JOB PURPOSE	<p>To fulfil policy and statutory functions in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing advice• Homelessness prevention (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)• Part VII Housing Act 1996 homeless applications• Homelessness relief (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)
JOB PROFILE LAST REVIEWED	NFI

KEY CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives/targets.
2. To participate in Employee Development Scheme/Appraisals and contribute to the identification of your own and team development needs
3. To actively promote the Council's Equal Opportunity Policy and Diversity Strategy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place.
4. To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 etc., the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.
5. To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to Section 17 'Duty of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder'.
6. At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time may be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.



KEY SERVICE RELATED ACCOUNTABILITIES

Main Purpose of Job

To play a key role within the Housing Options section by assessing Housing Need and take a pro-active role in identifying and maximising housing opportunities for the local community. Engaging with customers to design services that work for them and utilising resources within the local community to make a real, quality difference to people's lives.

To provide a wide range of advice and assistance on housing options, tenancy sustainment in relation to welfare changes and the introduction of universal credit to prevent homelessness.

To manage and respond to actual homelessness, interviewing applicants, conduct investigations into homeless applications, to detect and prevent fraudulent applications, management of temporary accommodation.

To fulfil this role within the framework of service objectives, the Council's corporate objectives and policies and any legal requirements.

Main Duties and responsibilities

1. To deal promptly and efficiently with written and verbal housing/homeless enquiries from the public, Council Staff, Statutory Agencies or other bodies. Ensuring a high level of professionalism and customer service are always maintained.
2. To provide advice & assistance on the range of housing options that is available to applicants. This includes advising on all aspects of the Council's Allocations Policy, Housing Act 1996; Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
3. To interview applicants presenting themselves as homeless or threatened with homelessness, to assess their applications under the homeless legislation and decide on the appropriate action to take.
4. To give advice and support to customers in relation to welfare reform in the prevention of homelessness.
5. To assess an applicant's circumstances and to identify their rights and opportunities, to negotiate with landlords, lenders or other bodies as necessary to prevent or resolve homelessness.
6. To seek to extend the range of housing options available to



applicants.

7. To liaise with all appropriate agencies, e.g. C.A.B, private landlords etc in relation to all matters including harassment and illegal eviction.
8. To liaise with Registered Social landlords who provide temporary accommodation.
9. To liaise with and ensure the Council's Medical Advisor is adequately briefed on cases requiring medical advice on homeless households or those threatened with homelessness.
10. To discuss and assess personal financial circumstances and refer applicants to specialist debt organisations as necessary.
11. To conduct interviews with priority and non-priority applicants and advise on housing options.
12. To carry out home visits and liaise with statutory, voluntary and other external agencies, including attendance at case conferences or other meetings as necessary.
13. To conduct or assist with statutory interviews, with applicants presenting themselves as homeless or threatened with homelessness to conduct or assist with assessment of their applications under the homeless legislation and decide the appropriate action to take.
14. To maintain accurate written and computerised records of progress and outcomes for all casework and competently use computerised technology including Microsoft Office, (word, excel and outlook etc), the internet, Nafn, Land Registry and in-house systems such as Orchard and Locata.
15. To monitor and control rent arrears arising from temporary accommodation accounts.
16. To maintain and provide statistical information relating to homelessness, housing advice and prevention as required by the Housing Options Team Leader.
17. To manage the Rent Deposit Scheme and seek and identify new properties that may be suitable for that scheme.
18. To assist with the management of the Council's temporary accommodation stock, arrange allocation of properties to homeless households, to arrange removals and storage where necessary for homeless applicants.



19. To advise on Local Housing Allowance levels and to negotiate suitable rental costs with Landlords. To identify and recommend applicants that meets the referral criteria for these schemes.
20. To assist in devising strategies in order to maximise homeless prevention and reduce the use of temporary accommodation in accordance with government targets.
21. To develop and maintain effective working relationships with other Council staff and a variety of statutory and voluntary agencies, including Social Services, Police, Probation and other local housing providers.
22. To be an active and willing member of the Housing Options Team. This includes participating in all duties and providing cover for colleagues.
23. To attend and participate in the in the internal and external meetings as required.
24. To keep up to date with housing legislation and related policies including homelessness, allocations, landlord and tenant law, benefits, welfare reform, universal credit, immigration and asylum, and matrimonial law.
25. To refer to the Housing Options Team Leader any matter of a serious or contentious nature.
26. To participate in the One2One performance review process and undertake any training and development in support of your role, as required.
27. Undertake such other duties as may be reasonably required within this post to support the operational needs of the service area and Council, including maintaining business continuity and during any civil emergencies.

This document is subject to review to reflect any changing operational needs of the service and the Council.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Housing Advice & Homelessness Prevention Officer

DEPARTMENT: Housing Services

Information for Applicants: The Person Specification provides an outline of the experience, skills and abilities we expect the Successful Applicant to possess. You should match your own skills, experience, and abilities to those listed below. Tell us in what way you have carried out the criteria asked for. **Disabled people will be offered an interview where they meet the Essential Criteria alone**

Method of Testing

1 = Application Form 2 = Interview 3 = Assessment Tests

Weighting of Criterion

1 = Low Importance 2 = Medium Importance 3 = High Importance

<u>Key Competencies and Behaviours</u>	How Measured 1 - 3	Weighting of Criterion 1 - 3
1. Skills and Abilities – Essential		
a) Excellent numeracy, literacy and IT skills.	1/2/3	3
b) Competent in the use of I.T packages, including word, excel and outlook.	3	2
c) Competent data entry skills.	1/2/3	2
d) Analyses numerical data, verbal data and all other sources of information.	1/2/3	3
e) Probes for further information and/or greater understanding of a problem.	1/2/3	3
f) Makes rational judgement from the available information and relevant analysis.	2/3	3
g) Demonstrates an understanding of how one issue may be a part of a much larger picture.	1/2/3	3
h) Appropriately follows instructions from others without unnecessarily challenging authority.	1/2/3	2
i) Arrives punctually for work and meetings.	1/2	3
j) Demonstrates commitment to the organisation.	1/2/3	2
k) Complies with legal obligations and safety requirements of the role.	1/2/3	3



<u>Key Competencies and Behaviours</u>	How Measured 1 - 3	Weighting of Criterion 1 - 3
1. Skills and Abilities – Desirable		
a) Experience of working with Orchard/Locata Housing IT systems	1/2/3	2
2. Special Knowledge – Essential		
a) To be educated to GCSE Maths and English (Grade A* - C) or equivalent	1	3
b) Part VII of the Housing Act 1996	1/2/3	3
c) Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	1/2/3	3
d) Landlord & tenant law	1/2/3	2
e) Immigration and Asylum legislation	1/2/3	1
f) Welfare benefits	1/2/3	2
2. Special Knowledge – Desirable		
a) Implementation of H-CLIC Government statistic recording	1/2	3
3. Experience – Essential		
a) Demonstrable experience of working in a housing prevention/homeless team	1/2/3	3
b) Ability to compile and maintain accurate casework	1/2	3
c) Able to work on own initiative, prioritise and manage own casework	1/2/3	3
3. Experience - Desirable		
a) Experience of preparing housing cases for statutory review, including suitability reviews.	1/2	2
b) Experience of Localism Act 2011 discharge placements.	1/2	2



<u>Key Competencies and Behaviours</u>	How Measured 1 - 3	Weighting of Criterion 1 - 3
4. Other Requirements – Essential		
a) Full driving licence and use of own vehicle	1/2	3
b) Willingness and flexibility to work outside normal hours as necessary	2	3
c) Adapts to changing circumstances	1/2/3	2
d) Accepts new ideas and change initiatives	1/2/3	2
e) Deals with ambiguity, making positive use of the opportunities it presents.	1/2/3	2
4. Other Requirements – Desirable		
a) Proven ability to review current practices and procedures to implement change both collaboratively and individually, as per Management direction.	1/2/3	2
5. Equality – Essential		
a) Adapts interpersonal style to suit different people of situations	1/2/3	3
b) Shows respect and sensitivity towards cultural and religious differences	1/2/3	3
5. Equality – Desirable		
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