

## JOB DESCRIPTION

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| <b>DIRECTORATE</b>           | Deputy Chief Executive                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>SERVICE</b>               | Housing and Strategic Assets                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>POST NUMBER</b>           | TBC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>JOB TITLE</b>             | Housing Needs Officer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>SALARY</b>                | Local Salary Scale 6                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>CONDITIONS OF SERVICE</b> | National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services as amended locally                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>RESPONSIBLE TO</b>        | Housing Needs Manager                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>RESPONSIBLE FOR</b>       | No supervisory responsibility                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>JOB PURPOSE</b>           | To advise people seeking advice or assistance with any kind of housing problem relating to the District. To give people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness advice, information and assistance that is appropriate to their individually assessed needs to help their efforts to find accommodation. To provide well informed and reciprocal referral services for clients with a wide variety of agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors. To provide support to the Homelessness Assessment and Allocation Teams, providing cover where required, ensuring resilience within the Housing section as a whole. |

### RDC Values and Target Operating Model Principles



- **Efficient and effective** (systems and resources evidencing Value for Money; Return on Investment – a commercial mindset)
- **Empowering** (timely decisions at the right level – proportionate governance)
- **Focussed on customer outcomes and early intervention** (evidence-led decision making and resource allocation)
- **A Community Leader** (influencing stakeholders, driving delivery with partners)

| MAIN AREAS OF WORK |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| 1                  | To make prompt and thorough enquiries into the circumstances of people who apply as homeless or who are threatened with homelessness and to decide whether and how homelessness may be prevented or delayed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2                  | To consider and offer imaginative solutions to individual's and household's housing problems putting great emphasis on prevention of homelessness; be aware of the frequently changing options that are available to client groups, so as to identify the optimum solution for the applicant.                                                                                                                                                    |
| 3                  | To ensure that members of the public receive comprehensive up-to-date advice on all aspects of re-housing in the public and private sectors, including advice on homelessness and the prevention of homelessness and to maintain confidentiality                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 4                  | To maintain professional working relationships with public, private and voluntary sector agencies. In particular with Primary Care Trusts, other health services, Adult Services, Children's Services, Citizen's Advice Bureau, RSLs, private landlords, commercial agents, Job Centres and Connexions, To liaise with these agencies as required to ensure clients are provided with a seamless service to meet their housing and related needs |
| 5                  | To represent the Council at case conferences with other agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors: to negotiate professionally with other agencies and, where appropriate, represent and be an advocate on behalf of clients                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 6                  | To acquire and maintain an up to date knowledge of housing law, including case law, Housing Benefit and other welfare benefits, housing policies, initiatives and all forms of assistance available to resolve housing problems, particularly homelessness prevention                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 7                  | To produce and maintain comprehensive file reports on all housing and homelessness applicants, other statutory and voluntary agencies, landlords and any other body or organisations regarding homelessness and housing register/transfer cases and to keep those files up to date. Provide and develop information on landlord/tenant law, domestic violence, harassment and welfare rights                                                     |
| 8                  | To assess applications for housing, ensuring that Council policy and any statutory obligations are met, specifically by interviewing applicants to ascertain housing need; investigating claims of homelessness in accordance with legislation and guidance; arranging medical assessments and advising applicants of the decision, as required to provide cover for the Homelessness Assessment team                                            |
| 9                  | To ensure that regard is given to the Code of Guidance in the determination of all Housing Register, advice and homeless applications                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 10                 | To ensure that all re-housing opportunities available to the Council through nominations to RSL's, (HOMES) mobility schemes and through reciprocal arrangements are fully explored and utilized, ensuring the best use of the housing stock within the district and to promote and assist applicants to effect mutual exchanges                                                                                                                  |
| 11                 | To assist the Housing Needs Manager with the preparation of information required for statistical purposes and monitoring of temporary accommodation and recovery of costs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 12                 | To contribute positively to the use and development of the new technology within the Housing Needs, Initiatives and Private Sector Housing Teams                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 13                 | To liaise with other members of the Housing Needs Department to ensure that                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

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|    | the section is adequately staffed at all times when the office is open to the public                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 14 | To work to the rosters as agreed and to undertake out-of-hours cover in rotation with other Team members for homelessness problems arising out of hours                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 15 | To contribute when required to the implementation of the Council's District Emergency Plans                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 16 | To ensure an up-to-date knowledge of housing legislation and good practice is maintained at all times                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 17 | To acquire and maintain an up to date knowledge of housing law, housing legislation, good practice, including case law, Housing Benefit and other welfare benefits, housing policies, initiatives and all forms of assistance available to resolve housing problems, particularly homelessness prevention are maintained at all times |
| 18 | To participate in corporate and service specific training as required in order to, maintain a high standard of personal knowledge and skills                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 19 | When required, and as part of generic working, will work within other Services and Directorates in support of the Council's overall objectives and projects                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 20 | Co-operate with Managers in implementing the Council's Health and Safety Policy. The responsibilities of members of staff in respect of this are set out in the Council's Health and Safety Manual                                                                                                                                    |
| 21 | To undertake any other duties for which the post holder is competent and which the Head of Service considers necessary for the effective and efficient delivery of the Council's services                                                                                                                                             |

| RDC Value       | Behaviour          | Description                                                                                           |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Respect</b>  | Professional       | Maintaining high standards – in line with professional/regulatory requirements and Nolan principles*  |
|                 | Value others       | Ensures that people are given opportunity to contribute, appreciate and acknowledge that contribution |
|                 | Empowering         | Enabling and encouraging people to influence and make decisions                                       |
| <b>Open</b>     | Trusting           | Rely on and put confidence in others to do as they say                                                |
|                 | Listening          | Makes time to hear what people are saying, checks understanding                                       |
|                 | Feeding back       | Sharing observations and perception to improve understanding and performance                          |
| <b>Outcomes</b> | Responsible        | Being accountable and reliable, doing what you have said you will do                                  |
|                 | Innovative         | Creating and trying new ways of doing things                                                          |
|                 | Prioritises        | Organise, clarify what is most important and focus on that                                            |
| <b>Together</b> | Communicates       | Shares information in an accessible and timely way with people who need to know                       |
|                 | Collaborates       | Cooperates, identifies, and brings in people to work together                                         |
|                 | Relationship focus | Taking time to build connections and get to know other people                                         |

## PERSON SPECIFICATION



|                                                                                                                                           |                              |           |           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| POST TITLE                                                                                                                                | Housing Needs Officer        |           |           |
| DIRECTORATE                                                                                                                               | Deputy Chief Executive       |           |           |
| SERVICE                                                                                                                                   | Housing and Strategic Assets |           |           |
| POST GRADE                                                                                                                                | Local Salary Scale 6         |           |           |
|                                                                                                                                           |                              | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications                                                                                                                            |                              |           |           |
| At least to GCSE level (including English and Maths)                                                                                      |                              | X         |           |
| Degree or Diploma in Housing                                                                                                              |                              |           | X         |
| Experience                                                                                                                                |                              |           |           |
| Three years experience in homelessness legislation and relevant case-law                                                                  |                              |           | X         |
| Experience and proven ability to hold a caseload and deal with individual clients with empathy and a clear understanding of their needs   |                              | X         |           |
| Experience of working in a target driven environment with clients under extreme pressure, ideally in a social services or housing context |                              | X         |           |
| Working knowledge of preventing homelessness options                                                                                      |                              |           | X         |
| Experience and proven ability to work in a partnership with a range of partners to ensure holistic service provision                      |                              |           | X         |
| Skills and Abilities                                                                                                                      |                              |           |           |
| Excellent verbal and numerical reasoning                                                                                                  |                              | X         |           |
| Clear verbal and written communication                                                                                                    |                              | X         |           |
| Time management                                                                                                                           |                              | X         |           |
| To deal with members of the public and other professionals in a courteous and efficient manner                                            |                              | X         |           |
| To work under pressure and deal with unforeseen and urgent demands                                                                        |                              | X         |           |
| To work as part of a team                                                                                                                 |                              | X         |           |
| Demonstrable computer literacy                                                                                                            |                              | X         |           |
| Sound administrative and report writing skills                                                                                            |                              |           | X         |
| Training                                                                                                                                  |                              |           |           |
| Willingness to undertake training where required                                                                                          |                              | X         |           |
| Knowledge                                                                                                                                 |                              |           |           |
| General housing issues and understanding of the legislative framework relevant to housing                                                 |                              |           | X         |

September 2018