

## **Job Description and Person Specification**

### **Job details**

Job title: Housing Options Advisor

Grade: Band 5

Reports to: Senior Housing Options Advisor

Responsible for: No direct responsibility for employees

Directorate and Service area: Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing

### **Purpose of the job**

To work with other Housing Options Advisors in a small team within the Housing Advice and Options Service or Single Homelessness Service delivering specialist advice, support and interventions via triage, and casework functions for both families and certain priority groups and single homeless people.

To provide an efficient, high-quality advice and assessment service for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, ensuring that customer's circumstances are investigated and their housing and support needs are assessed and met in accordance with homelessness legislation, statutory guidance and the Council's policies and procedures.

Focussed on securing positive outcomes, the post holder will work collaboratively and proactively with other services and organisations, landlords, letting agents and family members to support and safeguard homeless households and vulnerable people, and work to prevent homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation.

The role will be based across the locality of North Northamptonshire.

### **Principal responsibilities**

1. Acting as a primary point of contact for households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, provide an effective triage service to assess initial housing needs, risks, and eligibility for assistance, offering immediate advice, practical support, and advocacy to stabilise their situations.
2. Take swift and decisive action to mitigate risks of eviction or homelessness, escalating complex cases as needed, delivering timely and appropriate advice and referrals for families and single individuals based on their circumstances and statutory entitlements.
3. Deliver tailored, proactive, and person-centred advice to prevent or relieve homelessness, including negotiating with landlords, mediating with family or friends, and identifying suitable alternative accommodation. Working with customers to complete Full Housing Assessments (FHA's) and create and implement Personal Housing Plans (PHP's) that outline steps to resolve their housing issues sustainably.
4. Manage a varied caseload, ensuring that all advice, actions, casework, assessments and decisions comply with relevant legislation, guidance and caselaw, and the Council's policies and procedures. Ensure decisions are evidence based, and robust, liaising with Senior Housing Options Advisors for guidance on complex or high-risk cases as required.

5. Work collaboratively and proactively across the Housing Solutions service, with internal departments and external agencies to deliver holistic accommodation and support solutions for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Coordinate, lead and actively participate in multi-agency meetings to share information, discuss concerns or risk, work together to respond to housing issues, identify and agree multi agency support plans and improve outcomes.
6. Provide empathetic, professional, and high-quality customer service at all times, resolving queries and complaints promptly and effectively. Escalate recurring issues or trends to Senior Housing Options Advisors for resolution and to support service improvement.
7. Maintain accurate, up-to-date records on all cases using the Council's homelessness case management system and other records as required, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations. Contribute to data collection and reporting processes, supporting performance monitoring and service improvement initiatives.
8. Identify safeguarding concerns for vulnerable individuals, including children and adults at risk, and take appropriate action in line with safeguarding protocols. Work with relevant teams and agencies to address risks and ensure positive outcomes for customers.
9. Take responsibility for own learning and development in relation to updates to legislation, guidance, case law and best practise to enhance knowledge and skills relating to housing advice and homelessness prevention. Share best practices and insights with colleagues to ensure consistency and contribute to the development and implementation of service improvements.
10. Provide flexible support to meet service demands during peak periods or emergencies, ensuring continuity of service for customers in urgent need.
11. Identify trends and areas for improvement within the Housing Solutions Service, contributing ideas and solutions to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and outcomes. Support the development and implementation of new initiatives, policies, and procedures to meet changing demands and legal requirements.

## **General responsibilities applicable to all jobs**

1. Demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs.
2. Comply with the Council's policies and procedures including (but not limited to) safeguarding, financial regulations, promotion of equalities, customer care, agreed audit actions and health and safety (ensuring that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons).
3. Understand the council's commitment to Corporate Parenting and take responsibility to support this commitment. Enable the council to be the best corporate parents possible to children and young people in our current and previous care.
4. Carry out any other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of this job description and which are commensurate with the grade of the post.

This job description reflects the major tasks to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the major tasks may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

## **Special features of the post**

This post requires satisfactory clearance of a Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure.



## Person Specification

Attributes	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
Education, Qualifications and Training	Hold a minimum of 5 GCSE's grade A-C (or other Level 2 NVQ qualification) or able to demonstrate an equivalent capability	Hold a relevant housing qualification (CIH Level 4 Diploma or equivalent) or show an equivalent capability  Evidence of continuous professional development
Experience and Knowledge	<p>Experience of working within a local authority, housing association or voluntary organisation.</p> <p>Experience of working in an advisory / support role or customer focussed environment</p> <p>Experience of managing a caseload</p> <p>A good understanding and knowledge of the main causes of homelessness and rough sleeping, and the barriers that people face when trying to access accommodation and support services</p> <p>Knowledge of homelessness legislation, guidance and caselaw.</p>	<p>Experience of working effectively in partnership with a range of stakeholders</p> <p>Experience in delivering housing advice and support services</p> <p>Understanding of welfare benefits and financial inclusion support</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of housing allocations policies</p> <p>Awareness and understanding of safeguarding practises and procedures</p>
Ability and Skills	<p>Spoken and written English fluency</p> <p>Excellent written and verbal communication skills</p> <p>Good numerical and analytical skills and ability to produce and interpret financial and statistical information</p> <p>Experience of managing and prioritising own workload</p> <p>Ability to work collaboratively within a team and work independently using own initiative</p>	The ability to work with vulnerable people in difficult situations and handle challenging behaviour

Attributes	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
	<p>Ability to manage a varied, complex caseload and work under pressure to meet deadlines.</p> <p>Strong communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to engage effectively with diverse client groups.</p> <p>Problem-solving and negotiation skills, with the ability to develop practical and creative housing solutions.</p> <p>Able to produce clear, concise and persuasive written reports on complex issues.</p> <p>Proficiency in IT systems, including housing management software and Microsoft Office.</p> <p>Good analytical skills and ability to produce and interpret statistical information</p> <p>Ability to develop effective working relationships, and work collaboratively and proactively with key partners, landlords and other stakeholders</p>	
Equal Opportunities	Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs.	
Additional Factors	<p>Full driving licence and access to own transport for work purposes</p> <p>Willing to work outside normal office hours as necessary</p> <p>This post will be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check</p> <p>This post is office based</p>	

