

WHERE
CAREERS
THRIVE

When potential
is unlocked,
talent *thrives*



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Job description and person specification

Housing Options & Strategy Manager

Housing and Communities, Communities and Opportunities

Thank you for your interest in this role. Our vision at West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is: 'to make West Northants a great place to live, work, visit and thrive'.

We truly stand by this and work hard every day to make this a reality, and at WNC it's about our people. People who thrive with ambition, bring new ideas, demand better ways of working, care about every detail, and who never shy away from a challenge.

Our culture is a gateway for new experiences. A place to forge new opportunities. To empower you in your career and unite you with like-minded people. When potential is unlocked, talent thrives.



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Purpose and impact:

To lead and manage the Council's Housing Options and Housing Strategy services to:

- Deliver and monitor the Council's Housing Strategy and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- Ensure the Council's statutory housing and homelessness functions are carried out effectively in accordance with relevant legislation, guidance, and case law.
- Provide a seamless and positive customer journey delivering positive outcomes to customers.
- Prevent and relieve homelessness across a range of different specialist areas including domestic abuse, ending of private rented sector tenancy, family exclusion and vulnerable single people.
- Work in collaboration with the wider Housing and Communities services to improve the quality and reduce the use and cost of temporary accommodation.

Accountable to:

This role is accountable to the Assistant Director Housing and Communities responsible for the direct line management of Housing Options and Housing Strategy. The role sits within the Housing and Communities team, part of the Communities and Opportunities Directorate in West Northamptonshire Council.

Responsibilities:

1. To effectively lead, manage, develop, and deliver the Housing Options and Housing Strategy services, ensuring the Council is high-performing and compliant in meeting statutory housing and homelessness requirements and delivering key initiatives to meet the wider housing and homelessness agenda.
2. To play a key role in driving, delivering, and monitoring key Council strategies, including:
 - The Housing Strategy, which shapes housing activity by the Council and external stakeholders across all housing tenures in West Northants.
 - The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and associated homelessness review, which shapes our priorities towards homelessness and rough sleeping in West Northants.
 - The Housing Allocations Policy, which determines who will be considered for social housing within West Northamptonshire.
3. To work in collaboration with wider Housing and Communities services to deliver key strategic objectives, including:
 - Improving the quality and reducing the use and cost of temporary accommodation.
 - Improving collaboration between partners to make homelessness everyone's business.
 - Identify housing need at the earliest stage and delivering joined up intervention and prevention of homelessness.
 - Increasing provision and access to suitable and sustainable housing solutions, including commissioning accommodation and support services to meet identified local need.
 - Ensuring that when rough sleeping occurs, it is rare, brief and non-recurring.

- Delivering affordable housing to meet a diverse range of housing needs.
4. To ensure compliance to the Council's statutory homelessness and housing obligations under Housing Act 1996 and other relevant legislation, the code of guidance and case law by developing and implementing robust processes, safe working practices, learning and development frameworks and a monitoring and reporting structure. To deliver effective practices to prevent and relieve homelessness across a range of different specialist areas, including domestic abuse, ending of private rented sector tenancy, family exclusion and vulnerable single people.
 5. To effectively manage designated budgets in accordance with the Council's financial controls and procedures, including management of staffing budgets and contracts relating to the Housing Options and Housing Strategy service. Identify and maximise grants and external resource to support the delivery of services, including government funding and private investment. Submit accurate and timely statutory returns.
 6. To foster effective relationships with internal and external stakeholders to influence opportunities for collaboration to address local housing need. Manage the development and implementation of effective joint protocols, service level agreements contracts and partnership agreements. Represent and advocate for the Council's interests nationally, regionally, and locally.
 7. To collaborate with the Transformation team and HR to implement and embed a range of transformational and cultural projects and change across Housing Options, Housing Strategy and wider Housing and Communities within defined timescales and budgetary constraints.
 8. To advise directors, cabinet members and other stakeholders across the Council on changes to legislation, initiatives and funding opportunities to ensure they are considered in our local strategic response to housing issues.
 9. To ensure that an effective out of hours service is in place for those approaching as homeless outside of business hours, and ensure an appropriate response is given in emergency situations.
 10. To maximise personal productivity, minimise duplication and errors; and manage our information efficiently and securely to reduce risk, through effective use of Office 365 and our internal IT systems and applications.
 11. Actively challenge and seek to eliminate any directly or indirectly discriminatory practice or behaviours.
 12. Demonstrate awareness and understanding of other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs and ensure that reasonable care is always taken for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons.

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 postholder.

Person specification:

The requirements for the role are outlined below and will be part of the selection process. Each of the criteria listed below will be measured by:

(A) Application Form, (T) Test, (I) Interview, (P) Presentation, (D) Documentation.

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills experience and qualifications required for this job.

Skills and abilities:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Excellent leadership, management, negotiation and influencing skills. This will include the ability to develop, support, empower and motivate a team to perform highly and achieve goals set out in council strategies and service plans.	E	A, I
Political sensitivity and a demonstrable ability to recognise, influence and manage the communications of sensitive information.	E	A, I
Excellent interpersonal skills in order to deal with escalated issues with customers and third parties in an objective yet compassionate manner in a demanding environment but essential as the final arbiter in conflicting decisions and stage 2 complaints.	E	A, I
Ability to prioritise work to meet multiple tight and conflicting deadlines and work independently, making full and effective use of delegation.	E	A, I
Excellent written and oral communication skills, at all levels.	E	A, I
Strong understanding of the potential of IT to deliver better service outcomes and efficiencies.	E	A, I
Ability to develop and maintain good working relationships with a wide range of customers, stakeholders and partners to develop a positive personal and organisational profile.	E	A, I
Proactive and innovative approach to problem solving and decision making at senior level.	E	A, I
Excellent ability to analyse and understand trend and performance data for housing and the ability to report on key statutory information.	E	A, I
Demonstrate effective use of Office 365 (incl. Teams, OneDrive, etc.) or willingness to undertake training during the probation period.	E	A, I
Ability to demonstrate awareness and understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs.	E	A, I
Ability to work in a way that promotes the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults.	E	A I

Knowledge:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Advanced knowledge and understanding of legislation, policy, procedure and practices in respect of homelessness, housing allocations, landlord and tenant law, immigration and welfare rights/benefit issues, relevant codes of guidance and case law.	E	A, I,
Extensive knowledge of local/regional/national policies in relation to housing solutions and homelessness.	E	A, I

Advanced knowledge of funding regimes to support the work of the Housing Options and Housing Strategy functions.	E	A, I
Strategic knowledge and understanding of commissioning and contract management.	E	A, I
Knowledge and understanding of the dynamics and complexities of the public sector and specifically the local government environment, including its impact on service provision, staff and relationships with key stakeholders.	E	A, I
Thorough understanding of local government operational structures e.g. governance processes & approvals; Cabinet, Full Council and/or committee processes; Constitution; financial regulations.	E	A, I
Evidence of continued professional development that demonstrates knowledge of current housing legislation and best practice in the sector.	E	A, I
Detailed knowledge of recognised project management approaches and service improvement methodologies to deliver short, medium and long-term projects.	D	A, I

Relevant experience:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Extensive experience of running a large service dealing with complex issues across a range of activities/causes of homelessness with high levels of demand, significant time pressure and conflicting priorities, including crisis management within a local government housing environment.	E	A, I
Strong track record of leading and managing high performing teams delivering a statutory front line service, ensuring every team member contributes to achieving positive outcomes for our customers.	E	A, I
Extensive, demonstrable experience of overcoming resistance to change at all levels.	E	A, I
Experience of designing and delivering service improvements to realise efficiencies and increase productivity.	E	A, I
Excellent business service planning experience, particularly in relation to delivering customer focused services.		
Extensive experience of working collaboratively and proactively with other services and organisations to prevent homelessness and provide innovative solutions.	E	A, I
Experience of managing large budgets, including forecasting expenditure and obtaining value for money through procurement.	E	A, I
Experience of writing Cabinet/Committee reports and taking them through council governance and approval processes or equivalent governance system/process.	D	A, I

Education, training and work qualifications:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Member or Fellow – Appropriate level of qualification from professional institute (Level 4 Chartered Institute of Housing) or demonstrable service experience and knowledge and ongoing	E	A, I, D

professional development that is equivalent to this and willingness to work towards the required level of CIH qualification.		
Educated to degree level in a relevant subject area (e.g. housing, geography, social/behaviour science, public policy, law) or equivalent qualification or comparable experience in the housing sector.	E	A, I, D
Evidence of continued professional, managerial and personal development.	E	A, I, D

All appointments are subject to standard pre-employment screening. This will include identity, references, proof of right to work in the UK, medical clearance and verification of certificates.

Additional pre-employment checks specific to this role include:

Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check

Day-to-day in the role:

Hours:	37 hours	Primary work base:	One Angel Square
Job family band:	Regulatory & Technical	Worker type:	Part-flexible
Salary range:	£63,510 - £69,613	Budget responsibility:	Yes
People management responsibility:	Yes		

Working conditions & how we work:

We are open to discussions about flexible working.

This role has been identified as a part-flexible worker type, this means that you will be able to work from other work locations and when not working from an office you will be working remotely for up to 3 days a week (including from home).

Our organisational values and behaviours

Everything we want to achieve for West Northants depends on having the right people in place and doing the right things and we want all colleagues to THRIVE, both personally and professionally. Our values and our behaviours framework underpin how we work and what partners and customers can expect from us. We want to do our very best for our residents, service users and businesses and for our staff – we want everyone to THRIVE.

T Trust	We are honest, fair, transparent and accountable. We can be trusted to do what we say we will.
H High Performing	we get the basics right and what we do, we do well. We manage our business efficiently.
R Respect	we respect each other and our customers in a diverse, professional and supportive environment.
I Innovate	we encourage curiosity, we are creative and seize opportunities to grow individually as an organisation and as an area.
V Value	We continually strive for best practice and ways of improving existing procedures, practices and systems and thereby promoting efficiency and cost effectiveness
E Empower	we believe in people, will listen, learn and trust them to make decisions. We help people to realise their ambitions.

“Valuing colleagues as individuals and encompassing our different perspectives to deliver our collective ambitions. One West inclusive culture”

When potential is unlocked, talent *thrives*

Choose a career that offers you a true sense of achievement, fills you with pride and challenges you in a positive way, everyday.

The benefits of a career at WNC include:

- **People** are at the centre of everything we do. Without our people, we wouldn't be able to deliver services to the people in our community.
 - **Ambition** runs through everything we do at West Northants Council, we nurture and develop our people's ambition and willingness to succeed, to continually improve the service we provide to the community.
 - **Care** is at the heart of West Northants Council, we care in so many ways; seen and unseen, helping our colleagues and community to thrive.
 - **Flexibility** is key, we know work-life balance is critical to wellbeing, so we work hard to make sure our benefits package promotes and improves wellbeing; from annual leave, sick pay, family leave and flexible working, financial security offered by a local government pension scheme and life assurance, and discount schemes which make a difference to your day-to-day life, through to employee helplines offering free legal, health, financial and wellbeing advice and support.
- We want you to have balance and be happy.

