

WHERE
CAREERS
THRIVE

When potential
is unlocked,
talent *thrives*



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Job description and person specification

Housing Options Team Leader

Housing Solutions, 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.



West
Northamptonshire
Council

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.

Purpose and impact:

To support the Housing Options Manager to:

- Manage, motivate and develop a team of Housing Options Officers to ensure the delivery of excellent customer service across housing advice and homelessness functions.
- Lead the team to successfully prevent and relieve homelessness, minimise the use of temporary accommodation and ensure the Council's statutory functions are carried out effectively in accordance with the legislation.

Accountable to:

This role is accountable to the Housing Options Manager, responsible for the direct line management of a team of Housing Options Officers. The role sits within Housing Solutions Service, part of the Communities and Opportunities Directorate in West Northamptonshire Council.

Responsibilities:

1. Provide strong supervision, line management, support and guidance to your team to successfully prevent and relieve all types of homelessness, with a specific focus on one of the identified specialisms (e.g.: Threatened Exclusion; End of tenancy; Domestic Abuse; Single People & Couples; Resettlement, Rough Sleeping & Transitions) working in collaboration with statutory, voluntary and private organisations.
2. Through regular day to day supervision, performance monitoring and advice, ensure that the team completes all casework in line with Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and adheres to all relevant guidance, case law, policies and procedures including the requirement that every customer has a comprehensive personalised housing plan that is actively monitored and kept under review.
3. To oversee, monitor and report on cases and supervise your team to make robust enquires to determine what duty is owed to customers under the homelessness legislation. Ensure your team are delivering the Council's statutory homelessness and housing advice duties under the Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002, Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) order 2002, and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and other relevant legislation. Supervise your team with complex cases where necessary.
4. To supervise and support your team to provide good quality and effective housing and homelessness advice, information and signposting using a full range of housing options. To support staff to develop specialist skills and knowledge in specific areas including parental exclusions, private rental market intervention and access, domestic abuse, single homelessness, rough sleeping, young people and resettlement.
5. Supporting the Housing Options Manager to deliver service objectives and targets, using service improvement plans where necessary, and reporting on outcomes. This specifically includes supporting

your team to meet service targets and objectives to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation.

6. Work in collaboration to develop and implement policies and procedures to prevent and relieve homelessness. Maintain effective working relationships and contribute to the development of joint protocols, service level agreements and new initiatives in conjunction with other services including external voluntary and statutory bodies and ensure these are effectively managed, monitored and reviewed with service users and stakeholders to ensure the delivery of the required outcomes.
7. To support on a continuous approach to learning and improving knowledge of the team in relation to a wide range of areas including housing and homelessness law, welfare reform, landlord and tenant rights, immigration and asylum, and family law. To ensure revisions and updates to legislation are shared and interpreted to staff in a timely manner.
8. Represent the authority on relevant liaison groups and inter-agency forums in respect of homelessness and housing need issues e.g. MAPPA, MARAC, child protection case conferences.
9. To complete homelessness reviews where necessary, ensuring that reviews are conducted in compliance with statutory timescales, regulatory framework, and the Homelessness Code of Guidance. When review decisions are challenged or there is a Judicial Review of a decision, work in conjunction with Legal Services to ensure all documentation required for court and legal requirements are prepared in accordance with the requirements and guidance.
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 taken at all times 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 post holder.

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, negotiation and influencing skills. This must include the ability to develop, support, empower and motivate a team to achieve goals.	E	A,I,T
Ability to articulate through excellent communication, including verbal and written skills, and the ability to produce reports.	E	A,I,T
Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to communicate complex issues clearly and simply in a compassionate and empathetic way in a demanding environment. Ability to effectively manage conflict and respond appropriately to challenging behaviour.	E	A,I,T
Excellent customer care skills, including ability to work effectively with vulnerable customers to resolve problems.	E	A,I
Strong analytical skills, problem solving capability, and ability to interpret complex information and data to make informed decisions.	E	A,I
Drive and commitment to meet targets, objectives, and achieve positive outcomes, through leading the team to deliver best practice and innovative solutions.	E	A,I
Proven and effective relationship building and ability to negotiate with partners. Ability to confidently present information and findings clearly and simply to both lead and influence behaviour.	E	A,I
Proven ability to communicate effectively with customers, MPs, Councillors, and a wide range of stakeholders to respond to queries and complaints comprehensively, to reach agreeable outcomes.	E	A,I T
Financial and budgeting skills, ensuring financial processes are being followed effectively to deliver services within defined budgets, for example, within the allocation of temporary accommodation	E	A,I
Ability to organise, plan and prioritise a varied workload to meet multiple tight and conflicting deadlines and respond effectively to emergencies that require immediate response.	E	A,I
Ability to work on own initiative and make clear, consistent decisions.	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

Demonstrate ICT skills sufficient to maximise the use of software applications, particularly the use of Excel, performance management and housing options and homelessness case management software packages.	E	A,I
Fully understands their role in the context of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, in a housing environment.	E	A,I
Flexibility to occasionally work outside of normal working hours and able and willing to travel to and work from other locations, including completing home visits.	E	A,I

Relevant Experience:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Strong track record of leading and motivating high performing teams in a customer focused context, ensuring team members contributed to achieving positive outcomes for customers.	E	A,I,T
Proven experience of working in a frontline housing advice service with high levels of demand, significant time pressures and conflicting priorities, including responding to emergencies.	E	A,I
Proven experience of delivering a statutory frontline service, ensuring that appropriate legal advice and assistance is given in a timely and effective manner to achieve positive outcomes for customers.	E	A,I
Experience of conducting thorough investigations of complex cases with a focus on positive resolutions and preventing further escalation.	E	A,I
Experience of collating and evaluating monitoring information to initiate, design and deliver service improvements and new ways of working to realise efficiencies and increase productivity.	E	A,I
Extensive experience of effective joint working in a multi-agency context to resolve complex issues collaboratively.	E	A,I
Experience of working proactively and in collaboration with other services to prevent homelessness and meet housing need.	E	A,I

Knowledge:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Expert and detailed knowledge of current homelessness and housing law and practice, such as the Housing Act 1996, Parts VI and VII, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, Homelessness Act 2002, Localism Act 2012, code of guidance and case law.	E	A,I,T

Expert and detailed knowledge of eligibility for homelessness assistance depending on immigration and residence status, with ability to analyse case detail against legislative requirements.	E	A,I
Good knowledge of local, regional, and national policies and practices in relation to housing solutions and homelessness.	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 partners.	E	A,I
Detailed knowledge of welfare reform and changes within the benefits system.	E	A,I
Specialist knowledge of services offered by other internal and external agencies, including health and social care, social welfare, housing, employability and drug and alcohol services. A clear understanding of safeguarding and confidentiality.	E	A,I
Extensive specialist homelessness knowledge in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family and Friend Exclusion - Private Rented Sector Exclusion - Domestic Violence - Single People - Families - Resettlement - Rough Sleeping and Transitions 	E	A,I
Knowledge of recognised project management approaches and service improvement methodologies to deliver short-, medium- and long-term projects.	D	A,I
Strong understanding of equal opportunities in service delivery.	E	A, I

Education, training and work qualifications:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Educated to degree level or equivalent qualification or has significant experience in a related role.	E	A,I,D
Attained or willing to work towards Chartered Institute of Housing Chartered Membership (at level 4 or above, or members who have completed an experiential route accredited by CIH.)	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, Pay grade 8	Worker type:	Part-flexible
Salary range:	£41,816-45,175	Budget responsibility:	Nil
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.

