

Role Title	Housing Sustainment Officer
Job Family	Housing Solutions
Competency Level	Principal Officer
Pay Range / Scale	PO1

Purpose

Waltham Forest Council is focused on providing a new holistic strength-based approach for homelessness prevention. The housing sustainment officer will be working to identify and assist families who may be at risk of homelessness earlier upstream and proactively tackling issues before a crisis point is reached.

You will be expected to develop and deliver tailored advice, assistance and support to clients) who are at an increased risk of homelessness. Clients at risk will be proactively identified using data or referred into the service by partner agencies. You should possess excellent verbal, written communication and be able to communicate clearly and effectively with colleagues, customers, landlords and other professionals. You will need to build excellent working relationships with internal and external partners including the DWP, Social Care, GPs and VCS.

Generic Accountabilities	End Results/ Outcomes
Provide advice and make recommendations based on up-to-date knowledge and analysis / evaluation of information. Manage escalated or complex customer issues within the relevant area.	Expert advice, information, interpretation, and support are provided on the full range of technical / professional issues within the area of responsibility. Issues are managed through to a satisfactory conclusion. Risk to the Council is minimised.
Contribute to the development of service plans to meet strategic business goals.	Strategic and operational input is provided to wider business planning and development. Customer needs are identified. Services meet legislative and policy requirements. Work in partnership with Housing Services to prevent homelessness wherever possible.
Research developments in relevant area. Collate process and analyse information / data. Translate outputs into advisory reports / documents / actions as appropriate.	Relevant information / data are managed efficiently and accurately. Accurate and relevant information / reports / documentation are produced. Trends and issues are identified and prioritised. Statutory and procedural obligations are fulfilled. Management decision making is supported.
Lead on the development, implementation, maintenance and management of systems, policies,	Changes to systems, policies and / or procedures are identified and recommended.

<p>procedures and / or standards within area of responsibility.</p>	<p>All updates, amendments, developments are tested and approved prior to delivery.</p> <p>Customers receive prompt, accurate policy / procedural updates.</p> <p>Service standards are improved.</p>
<p>Work closely with others to support/Manage the development and delivery of improvements in processes and procedures.</p>	<p>Identifies gaps in service provision/highlight policy issues and makes recommendations to resolve the issues.</p> <p>Design pathways to ensure early identification of solutions and prevent homelessness.</p> <p>Agreed improvements are developed, delivered, and evaluated.</p> <p>Issues and recommendations are brought to the attention of senior managers.</p> <p>Benchmark against best practice authorities and center of excellence.</p>
<p>Prepare and present a full range of reports (both standard and non-standard) covering area of responsibility.</p>	<p>Reports are prepared, distributed / presented to the appropriate committee/ to the required standards and timescales.</p> <p>Evidence based recommendations are made.</p>
<p>Manage a portfolio of Projects and Reviews.</p> <p>Lead on specific projects as required.</p>	<p>Projects are delivered to agreed specification, timescales and budgets.</p> <p>Change initiatives are successfully integrated and implemented across all impacted service areas.</p> <p>Value for money is achieved.</p> <p>Ongoing savings secured.</p>
<p>Co-operate with and support colleagues.</p>	<p>Colleagues are supported.</p> <p>Required information is provided.</p>
<p>Act in accordance with all policies and procedures which apply to the job and understand the reasons for this.</p>	<p>All policies and procedures are complied with.</p>
<p>Carry out all duties and responsibilities with reasonable care for the health and safety of self and others and report any potential hazards or unsafe practices to line manager.</p>	<p>Work is carried out in a way that is safe and without risks to health.</p>

Job Specific Accountabilities:	
To build and maintain effective working relationships with families identified as being at an increased risk of homelessness.	<p>Encourage a holistic strength-based approach to the needs of households at risk of homelessness establishing links with health, education, employment, and other relevant agencies.</p> <p>Develop a clear understanding of local resources within the local community that support local people, which includes voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>Build positive, supportive and working relationships across a wide group of individuals, families, communities, and service partners.</p>
To assist families at risk of losing their home by identifying problems early and take action before a crisis point is reached.	<p>Deliver targeted, advice, assistance and support to families at risk of homelessness. Work to identify creative and innovative upstream interventions to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>Support to access, navigate, and coordinate services, where required.</p> <p>Work with lettings agents and landlords to secure accommodation for families at risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Work to reduce demand for statutory homelessness services.</p> <p>Clear agreed responsibilities, actions, and outcomes, with reviews of plans and support.</p>
Support families to build resilience and reduce the risk of housing insecurity in future.	<p>Work with services across the Council and with partners to assist families in finding employment, entering education, maximizing their income and addressing debt to help build financial resilience.</p> <p>Increase understanding of housing option in the borough.</p>
Support applicants to approach statutory homelessness services if prevention has not been successful.	Ensure clear, accurate and appropriate information is shared appropriately with consent.
Assist families to develop and utilise personal and local community networks to develop practical solutions to meet their goals and needs.	<p>Work to develop and support informal strong and enduring personal relationships within the community to improve opportunities for contribution, participation, employment.</p> <p>Be aware of access to resources, supports and services in local communities.</p>

<p>To develop and maintain a clear understanding of local community strengths, resources, connections, gaps and opportunities.</p>	<p>Work with volunteers, communities and services to build local responses to gaps – increase resources and choice in local communities.</p>
<p>To build, maintain and develop effective working partnerships and relationships across the Council, statutory services and VCS organisations.</p>	<p>Work in partnership to address issues and build resilience within families.</p> <p>Advocating for families to receive the assistance needed to build on their strengths and address issues proactively.</p>

Nature of Contacts

Families identified as being at risk of homelessness.

Housing Service, other Council directorates and statutory agencies including the DWP.

Landlords, letting agents and housing associations.

Third sector, community and faith groups, and organisations, the Council for Voluntary Service and independent service providers

Colleagues in other Authorities and relevant networks.

Procedural Context

Identify and support families to:

- Consider their housing options and understand services and resources available to them in Waltham Forest.
- Remain in their current accommodation or;
- Find alternative accommodation suitable for the family's needs and income
- Reduce reliance on statutory homelessness services by focusing on upstream intervention.

Act within guidelines and standard procedures with discretion to allocate or otherwise organise work to meet service delivery requirements. Works within laid down procedures but needs to deal with day-today problems without always referring to others.

Decisions will be made based on Council procedures.

Occasionally the post will be expected to work from other locations

Key Facts and Figures

This is a new role designed to tackle homelessness in the borough.

Resourcing

None

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

1. EXPERIENCE, direct work experience, other relevant experience.

- Experience of working alongside and supporting individuals and families from a variety of backgrounds and with varying abilities, strengths and needs.
- Experience of providing advice on housing/benefits matters.
- Experience of managing complex casework.
- Experience of private rented sector, preferably in a homelessness or housing advice environment
- Experience of working in and with communities.

2. KNOWLEDGE, without which the job cannot be done effectively.

- Knowledge of Homelessness, Housing Advice casework and relevant legislation.
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- Knowledge of IT systems, including ability to use word processing, emails, and the internet to create simple plans and reports

3. SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Ability to listen, empathise with people and provide person-centered support in a non-judgmental way
- Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, with people, their families, carers, community groups, partner agencies and stakeholders
- Ability to identify risk and assess/manage risk when working with individuals
- Able to adopt an asset-based approach, building on existing community and personal assets
- Able to set goals, manage own work and a variety of tasks and competing priorities, use initiative and exercise judgment.
- Skills and experience in influencing, managing and supporting change at the individual, family, community and systems levels
- Ability to record and present complex issues in a clear and concise manner both verbally and written.
- Able to identify and respond to potential safeguarding situations, maintaining effective longer-term support.

4. PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS.

- An ability to work closely and effectively with a wide range of professionals and people.
- Capable of working with a degree of autonomy, analysing issues and reaching creative solutions.

- An ability to remain client focused and resilient whilst working under pressure.
- Awareness of the issues impacting society and the desire to make a difference
- Ability to organise, plan and prioritise on own initiative, including when under pressure and meeting deadlines
- Good level of written and oral communication skills
- Able to work flexibly and outside of normal office hours

5. Desirable

- Knowledge of VCS and community services in the locality
- Knowledge of the local private rented sector and experience negotiating with landlords.

Indicative Qualifications

- Relevant qualification in Community Development, Housing, Health or Social Care or equivalent experience.

OR

- 3 years' experience in a similar role at a similar level.

The above profile is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by employees in this role. It is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and responsibilities which may be required. This role profile will be supplemented and further defined by annual objectives, which will be developed in conjunction with the post holder. It will be subject to regular review and the Council reserves the right to amend or add to the accountabilities listed.