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Job Title Tenancy Sustainment Officer

Grade Scale 5

Job Description

Job Purpose

- To provide support to clients to ensure they maintain their tenancy and prevent them from becoming homeless. Working with both the tenant and landlord to ensure the tenancy is sustained through supporting the tenant in managing and maintaining their tenancy through advice on budgeting, tenancies, advice and linking with other support services, lifestyle skills. Providing reassurance to landlords that we will support tenants in meeting their tenancy agreement and encourage more landlords to house clients who are either rough sleeping or likely to become homeless.

Major Tasks

- To support tenants within their home on how to maintain their tenancy through offering advice, guidance, training and linking the tenant with other relevant services.
- Delivery a professional, efficient and effective customer service advising on how to maintain their tenancies and prevent the client becoming homeless.
- Provide face to face support and linking in with the personalised housing plan to prevent a client's homelessness, especially those who are rough sleeping.
- To support the clients and to build a professional relationship in order to gain confidence for the client to share any concerns or issues in order for the most appropriate support to be provided.
- To fully explore all solutions including housing and financial with the aim of preventing homelessness.
- To support landlords to ensure their tenancies succeed and to gain confidence with the landlords so they will provide more properties to housing homeless clients.
- To work with landlords to identify additional properties to help house those most vulnerable and especially those at risk from rough sleeping.
- To identify housing solutions for clients to prevent homelessness.
- To support the client at property viewings and to provide support at any tenancy sign up to ensure the tenant is aware of their responsibilities in maintaining a tenancy.
- To identify the relevant property and complete relevant processes to sign the client into the property, including completing housing benefit forms, taking customers bank details for rent payments, completing licence or tenancy agreements, providing information packs and advice and logging details onto the relevant database in order to manage rental payments and the tenancy
- To actively bid and/or identify properties for clients in temporary accommodation or those we are preventing from becoming homeless
- To evidence and record any details of clients on appropriate data bases and systems.
- To support the delivery of the actions in the Homelessness Strategy
- Represent the service in a professional capacity at multi agency meetings relating to clients or as directed by the team leader
- Update or check client details on all relevant systems such as Jigsaw, Protocol, Northgate and ensure information is relayed to relevant departments.
- Use knowledge and skills to signpost clients to the appropriate services
- Monitor personal performance to ensure targets are met, managing skill sets and time accordingly.
- Be aware of and adhere to all relevant legislation including confidentiality.

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- Ensure training in processes and procedures are up to date, requesting further training to reduce gaps were necessary.
- To be a point of contact for tenants and landlords that the post supports.
- Promote the Landlord Accreditation scheme to landlords, agencies, organisations and service areas that need either housing or tenants
- To source and engage with partners to provide move on accommodation.
- To sign post clients to relevant services and support
- To complete relevant risk assessments
- To provide service cover within working hours.
- To liaise with partners to identify solutions for housing issues.
- To identify and inform of housing needs of the Borough and future needs of accommodation.
- This is a customer focussed role and some evening and weekend work will be required and is expected to be planned as part of the normal working weekly hours
- Undertake other such duties, projects and responsibilities commensurate with the grade that are not mentioned in this job description.

Contacts & Relationships

- Daily with members of the public in carrying out the duties of the post
- Daily to peers to provide professional advice on all housing related matters
- Regularly with the Team Leader to provide professional advice on sometimes complex issues, share information, receive instruction and recommend courses of action.
- Regularly with internal and external agencies regarding collection or sharing of information regarding clients
- Regularly with landlords, courts, medical professionals, legal professionals, benefits agencies, clients families and friends to collect information or advocate on behalf of the client
- Regular contact with all levels of staff from the areas of the authority.
- Regular contact with voluntary agencies and other partners
- Occasional contact with Elected Members, assisting them with queries
- Occasional contact with landlords and agencies to promote the Agency and accreditation scheme, in the management of existing properties, negotiation of new tenancy arrangements
- Regular contact with SDM and occasional with the assistant director

Creativity

- Provide innovative and creative solutions to very complex and diverse housing situations
- Need to have well developed interview/investigative skills in order to identify problems.
- Complete detailed concise and factual file reports regarding each of the cases they hold
- Complete accurate computer monitoring information for all clients
- Provide information to the team leader for the completion of reports
- Support individuals at meetings, including negotiation and mediation with legal and other services.
- The postholder will need the ability to establish innovative solutions, funding packages and partnership arrangements to tackle housing issues
- Have the ability to switch between different cases whilst maintaining confidentiality
- Produce detailed reports for use at various meetings, including potential court.
- Produce basic file reports to provide a complete record of contact
- Often work outside set guidelines to resolve a situation for individuals
- Sign post to other agencies where appropriate to ensure maximisations of solutions

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- Respond to a diverse range of situations often dealing with individuals in stressful situations
- Respond to situations within a pressured environment
- To develop training and support suitable for the client in order for them to learn new skills and to sustain their tenancies.
- The postholder will need to be able to understand and be able to establish links between homelessness and housing interventions to meet householders personal needs and the wider impact this may have on an area or community

Decisions

- Reach decisions on behalf of the Authority on Homelessness and prevention of homelessness within the Housing Act, Homelessness Reduction Act and other relevant Housing Legislation
- Reach decisions on when to refer clients to statutory or voluntary agencies for assistance
- The post holder will be required to work on their own initiative, and to carry out the above responsibilities in a proactive manner sometimes working outside set guidelines.
- Recommends changes to existing practices or policies at team meetings or as and when it is identified a change is needed in order to carry out the function
- Manages own work load with little guidance from the team leader
- Regularly recommends and takes responsibility for the use of prevention money for initiatives to prevent homelessness –
- The postholder will make decision about matters relating to established policy, relevant legislation and guidance and about how best to deal with an enquiry or request for service from a customer.
- Make recommendations for improvements to operational procedures where necessary.
- The postholder will provide professional advice to the managers on homelessness initiatives.

Management & Supervision

- No supervisory responsibility

Supervision Received

- Directly responsible to the Senior Housing Solutions Officer but will work with minimum supervision under own initiative in delivering solutions.
- Regular case management and supervision in line with Council policy.

Complexity

- Need to display professionalism, confidence, tact, sympathy and firmness when clients are often in stressful situations
- Offers housing advice across a wide range of complex legislative housing law
- Work with clients, families and landlords to prevent homelessness
- Act as facilitator, mediator, advocate and many other roles in supporting their client
- Needs to have a wide knowledge of all housing and case law, support services including mental health/substance misuse
- The post holder requires a broad knowledge of the other function of the authority in order to refer clients to the appropriate services.
- The postholder will consider often complex and conflicting information and requirements and provide professional advice and solutions in relation homelessness which may lead to changes to procedure.
- The postholder will require strong negotiation and influencing skills dealing sometimes with accommodation of clients with complex needs and/or addressing landlords acting outside of the accreditation scheme or legislation

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- The postholder will be required to use professional knowledge across a range of disciplines to make subjective decisions.
- The post holder will keep up to date with relevant housing/homelessness legislation and support services within the Borough in order to provide professional advice.
- The ability to deal effectively with customers, partners and providers requiring sensitivity, tact and diplomacy, an ability to negotiate and influence outcomes, strong customer focus and excellent communication skills. The post holder will be accountable for the professional advice given.
- The postholder will be multi skilled and flexible in order to offer an excellent service.
- The postholder is required to have excellent customer service skills and a professional demeanour as the contact for clients needing housing advice and will need problem solving and high customer focus to assist clients. In addition, this postholder must at all times be polite and courteous when dealing with all members of the public, due to the circumstances, some of the clients can be challenging.

Resources

- Responsible for any lap tops, mobile phones and safety equipment issued to the post-holder both in the office and whilst out on site.
- Responsible for processing personal sensitive information
- Responsible for safekeeping of clients personal possessions.

Impact

- Provides support to the Team Leader and Senior Housing Solutions Officer, providing advice and guidance on housing legislation to service users, coordinating multi-disciplinary input to ensure appropriate decisions and guidance are given, reducing error and giving appropriate advice to reduce homelessness and the financial implications this brings.
- Failure to provide an appropriate service within legislation would result in the council being subject to complaints and penalties and leading ultimately to increase in costs and service pressure.
- To provide a housing service within the relevant housing acts and legislations to clients, failure to do so will result in an increase in homeless clients.

Physical Demands

- The level of physical demands would be that of carrying out home visits with very complex clients, providing support at property viewings.

Working Environment

- In the main the post-holder would be working in clients homes and also within other agencies buildings, with some office work. The post-holder will be expected to work outside; for example travelling for meetings and training.
- This role will be lone working with service users
- This role is at risk from verbal abuse or anti social behaviour

Emotional Context

- Due to the nature of this role the post-holder would regularly come into contact with situations that are sensitive, contentious and upsetting as they deal with housing and homeless situations This can lead to threats and intimidation for the post-holder whilst carrying out their duties
- This role may have long term involvement with delivering housing services for service users who have suffered emotional distress and upset and the nature of this involvement may at times cause emotional strain or distress

Other

The postholder will be expected carry out any other duties as are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the job, commensurate with the grade.

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The postholder will be expected to actively follow Telford & Wrekin Council policies, including those such as Equal Opportunities, Human Resources, Information Security and Code of Conduct etc.

The postholder will be expected to maintain an awareness and observation of Fire and Health & Safety Regulations.

Person Specification

Criteria	Standard
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 GCSE C or above to include English and Maths • BTEC Level 3 or equivalent in housing, Advice and Guidance or related subject
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant experience of providing advice and support to a range of client groups face to face • Significant experience of supporting clients with complex issues. • Significant experience of interviewing customers with complex problems in a sensitive and non judgmental way • Identifying and reporting significant issues and solutions to management • Multi agency working at an operational level • Prioritising and management workloads • Experience of how to maintain tenancies
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed knowledge of Homelessness, relevant housing legislation and the Prevention agenda • Knowledge of issues faced with rough sleepers/homeless clients and maintaining tenancies. • Understanding of the issues and impact of inadequate housing on individuals • Knowledge of tenancies and eviction processes
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work with a variety of clients with complex and diverse needs • Ability to display confidence professionalism tact sympathy and firmness in difficult situations • Ability to interpret and put into practice relevant legislation • Strong investigative skills • Ability to ask sensitive questions in order to obtain a complete picture of an individuals situation • Ability to work under pressure to deadlines and other service priorities with a minimum supervision • The ability to interpret and put into practice relevant legislation • Excellent communication skills, both oral and written and to be able to explain service legislation and policies, decisions effectively to clients. • Ability to manage and prioritise own workload to achieve personal and team targets.
Personal style & behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a council employee you will be supported and expected to demonstrate the Councils Core Behaviours. Please note that these may be updated from time to time and are available on the Council's intranet pages. • Develop good relationships with others behaving with integrity, treating people with respect and leading by example

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate well with others and develop a flexible approach to the working environment • An organised systematic approach to work to achieve targets • A flexible and adaptable approach to work and be able to deal with a number of issues simultaneously, responding to operational needs to deliver a high level of customer satisfaction. • Ability to adapt in a changing environment with a can do approach • Some evening and weekend work will be required as part of the normal planned working weekly hours. • Hold a current uk driving licence
Fluency Duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to converse at ease with customers and provide complex, detailed, legislative advice in accurate English is essential for the post. • This post has been identified as a customer facing role and therefore the Council is required to fulfil their statutory duty under Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016. As a public body the Council is obliged to ensure member of staff in such roles are able to have a command of spoken English which is sufficient to enable the effective performance of their role. •

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We will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that no disabled applicant is placed at a substantial disadvantage. This person specification includes what we believe are fully justifiable essential and desirable selection criteria. Provided that the selection criteria unconnected with the disability are met, we will make ALL reasonable adjustments in order that someone with a disability can undertake the duties involved.

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Type of criminal records checks required for this post	Ticked as required
None	
Basic Disclosure	
Standard Disclosure	
Enhanced Disclosure	
Working with Adults - Regulated Activity	
Working with Children - Regulated Activity	

Information on types of criminal records checks is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check>