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**OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

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|  | **POST TITLE:** | Housing Options Officer  |  |
|  | **POST NO:** | TBC |  |
|  | **GRADE:** | Band 6 (£29,269 - £32,076) |  |
|  | **DEPARTMENT:** | Housing Services  |  |
|  | **SERVICE AREA:**  | Built Environment  |  |
|  | **RESPONSIBLE TO:** | Housing Options Manager |  |

**JOB CONTEXT:**

1. To assist in the effective delivery of the Housing Options Service, under the supervision of the Housing Options Team Leader. Duties to include homelessness, assessing housing need of customers and liaising with other agencies, both voluntary and statutory, to ensure the necessary support packages are in place to promote sustaining of tenancy.
2. To interview applicants presenting themselves as homeless or threatened with homelessness, to assess their applications under homeless legislation and decide on the appropriate action to take.
3. Ensures that all reasonable efforts are made to prevent homelessness, which will include negotiations with family/friends and/or housing providers, comprehensive welfare benefit information, detailed debt advice, negotiations with creditors/financial institutions.

**MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. To interview and give advice and support to applicants presenting themselves as homeless, to assess their applications under the legislation and agree on appropriate actions to take. Prepare and keep up to date Personal Housing Plans.
2. To investigate and issue Section 184 Homeless Decisions.
3. To give advice and support in the prevention of homelessness.
4. Promote and maintain a culture which places customers first and aims to deliver a high standard of service.
5. To seek to extend the range of housing options, available to applicants including arranging loans for rent deposits.
6. To arrange temporary accommodation for homeless applicants including bed and breakfast when necessary and referrals to hostel accommodation
7. To assist with the effective operation of the Council’s Homeless Hostel(s).

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1. To monitor and control any rent arrears arising from temporary accommodation accounts, including liaising with Revenue Services regarding any housing benefit claims.
2. Assisting in the selection of qualifying nominees for social housing tenancies.
3. To assess medical information in line with the allocations policy and amend housing application banding on medical grounds where necessary.
4. To assist in the collection and analysis of statistical information, by maintaining up-to-date and accurate information relating to housing and homelessness applicants on current systems. Making sure that new information and circumstances, relating to housing and homeless applicants is taken into account and acted upon
5. Identifying and supporting vulnerable housing applicants. Liaison with and referral to other support agencies where appropriate.
6. Maintain the computerised and manual systems and records that are required for the service
7. Carry out assessment visits, contact visits and support visits to home seeker/ homeless applicants when required.
8. Promote the Housing Options services, and particularly CBL to statutory and voluntary agencies, and other services/ organisations.
9. Represent the organisation at meetings, forums and events as when required.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESOURCES:**

1. The post holder will be required to ensure that any data systems under his/her control are kept secure and properly managed.

**KEY FUNCTIONAL LINKS WITH:**

**Internal:** Allemployees of the Council and Elected Members.

**External:** Residents of the Borough the General Public, other Local Authorities and other external bodies, partnerships and organisations as required.

**WORKING CONDITIONS & ENVIRONMENT**

1. The post is situated within the Main Council Offices. However, you may be required to work from other sites and places within the Borough where your professional attendance is required
2. The post holder may be required on occasion to work outside normal working hours to attend meetings or other occasions when your professional attendance is required, including providing on call cover when necessary. This will be reimbursed as time off in lieu at the appropriate rate.
3. The post is designated a casual car user allowance.
4. This post is part time – 18.5 hours per week.
5. This post is designated as politically sensitive within the meaning of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
6. The post holder will be subject to a Basic, Standard or Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service check.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. This job description outlines the main duties of the post but does not exclude other duties, which may be undertaken to ensure the efficient operation of the department. Other duties required will be consistent with those listed above and appropriate to the title and grade of the post.
2. Ensure equality of opportunity for all people, in service provision and in employment, and to work in a non discriminatory manner in accordance with the Council’s Equal Opportunities Statement.
3. Comply with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Computer Misuse Act 1990, Human Rights Act and the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or any amendment or any statutory re-enactment thereof at all times.
4. To take all necessary steps in order to ensure that information acquired through their employment or contained within the Council is kept confidential.
5. This job description is a record as at the date below. Any changes to the job description will be carried out in consultation with the post holder, who will be expected to participate fully in such discussions. It is the Council’s aim to reach a mutual agreement to reasonable changes but if this is not possible the Council reserves the right to implement reasonable changes to the job description after consultation with the post holder.
6. Carry out all duties outlined above in accordance with all Council Policies and procedures.

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 **Person Specification**

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| **Date Issued:** April 2023  | **Job Title:**Housing Options Officer  | **Team:**Housing Services  | **Salary Band:** Band 6  | **Car Allowance Level:**Casual Car User  | **Employment Status:**Permanent part time  |
| **Criteria** | **Essential** | **Method of Assessment** | **Desirable** | **Method of Assessment** |
| **Qualifications and Processional or Vocational qualifications** | * GCSE Grade A-C in English & Maths or equivalent experience
 | App,E | * Qualification in Housing
 | E |
| **Relevant Experience and Knowledge** | * Proven experience in a customer care role.
* Experience of interviewing and/or providing advice to people who are under stress and/or living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
* Proven ability to manage difficult situations.
* Experience of working in confidential situations with an understanding of when and how to share sensitive information with customers and relevant agencies.
* A good understanding and awareness of housing issues.
 | App/ IntApp/ IntApp/ IntApp/ IntApp/ Int | * Experience of working with people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
* A good understanding of government policy relating to homelessness.
* Experience of advice work.
* Proven experience of casework management, joint working and interagency liaison.
* Knowledge of landlord and tenant law and/or the homelessness
* Knowledge of current housing legislation in relation to social housing allocations
* Experience of working in a Housing Needs, Local Authority Lettings or equivalent environment
* Experience of working in partnership with local authorities or other housing providers
 | App/ IntApp/ IntApp/ IntApp/ IntTTApp/ IntApp/ Int |
| **Skills and Abilities** | * Excellent customer care skills and a strong commitment to equal opportunities.
* Excellent communication skills (written and verbal) and good negotiating skills.
* Friendly, tactful, approachable, non judgemental, empathic and customer focused.
* Confident and assertive.
 | App/ IntApp/ IntIntApp/ IntApp, Int | * Proven ability to interpret and explain complex legislation and guidance.
 | App/ Int |
| **Attitude and Motivation** | * Must remain positive in difficult and stressful situations.
* Calm and approachable towards residents and employees.
 | App/ IntApp/ Int | * Commitment to environmental sustainability
 | App |
| **Other** | * To demonstrate and promote the Council’s visions and values.
 | Int | * Full valid driving licence and access to a car.
 | E |
| **Assessment Key:** | E = Evidence | App = Application Form | Int = Interview | T = Test/Assessment |