

## London Borough of Havering Job Profile

<b>Previous Job Title:</b> Housing Solutions Manager (Specialist)	<b>Directorate:</b> Housing
<b>Service/Section:</b>  Housing Demand/Housing Solutions	<b>Post Number(s):</b> 10004016  <b>Job Evaluation Number:</b>
<b>Grade:</b> G10	<b>Date last updated:</b> June 2019  <b>Date of last Evaluation:</b> June 2019

### Main Purpose of the Job/Key Objectives:

- To understand the challenges and complexities around homelessness today, the impact that homelessness has on families and single people, and have a commitment to transforming housing services and reducing homelessness.
- To provide a professional and effective Housing Solutions Service to Havering residents. This involves responsibility for the operational management of the following functions:
  - Tackling and reducing rough sleeping by improving access to services;
  - Improving access to housing and support for homeless people with multiple complex needs;
  - Managing the work of the Appeals & Review Officer and working closely with Legal Services to ensure legal challenges and judicial reviews are minimised.
  - Managing the work of the Community Outreach Officers which is central to effective homeless prevention by pro-actively working within and with communities to help resolve client's housing problems than a reactive approach.
- To be the lead Officer on the provision of an effective and responsive 'out of hours' homelessness service and support the council's emergency planning, critical incidents and service response arrangements.
- To lead on deciding who is placed in emergency temporary accommodation and also lead on the Council's primary objective of reducing expenditure on Temporary Accommodation by exploring all other housing avenues.
- To lead on co-ordinating and integrating the housing options and homelessness process for the benefit of customers, promoting channel shift and electronic case management to promote greater efficiency of service.
- To oversee and protect the Council reputation in Court when responding to legal challenges and pursuing criminal or civil action against landlords/agents.
- To manage highly complex / high risk issues within the framework of homelessness, private rented sector and temporary accommodation provision ensuring that objectives and targets are developed and agreed in line with service plan. High level of discretion and use of initiative in deciding what course of action to take. Exercise

expert judgement in assessing complex stakeholder requirements, potential risk and managing quality assurance of service.

- To implement the Council's Homelessness strategy coordinating the activities of all service areas.
- To be the professional lead for all aspects of housing advice and homelessness service delivery and to develop new policies in these areas.
- To put the strategic framework in place to ensure that the services maintain high levels of customer satisfaction and continually improve.
- To lead in developing and implementing homeless prevention initiatives and projects in close liaison with a wide range of colleagues and stakeholders to improve service delivery across the homelessness service.
- To initiate and develop policies and strategies to meet legal challenges, new demands and pressures on the service
- To drive innovation within the service through the application of best practice homelessness solutions as a means of mitigating the negative impact of welfare reforms and to meet the government prevention agenda.
- To manage the collation of homelessness data for the Department for Communities and Local Government ensuring that the council supports the government's aim to develop a true picture of homelessness in the United Kingdom.
- To support the Head of Housing Demand in securing the continuous development, improvement, efficiency and success of the Service as a whole through effective planning, budget management, staff management and governance.
- To display "role-model" behaviours while coaching and monitoring the Housing Solutions Caseworkers, ensuring the service is dynamic and effective, maximising outputs and value from the Councils resources.

### **Job Context:**

This is a specialist role where the post holder will be responsible for taking the operational lead in the housing advice, options and homelessness service. There is a high volume of activity, significant level of complexity, cost and reputational impact in terms of effectively managing legal challenges through judicial review and the requirement to effectively manage demand.

The financial impact of failing to sufficiently manage the operational demands of the service is significant for the council, amounting to budget pressures of due to increased temporary accommodation costs.

1. This post is a permanent post.
2. The post holder reports to the Head of Housing Demand.
3. The post holder is a member of the Operational Management Team.
4. The post holder has line management responsibility for up to 7 direct reports.

5. The post holder has budgetary responsibility for the allocated department / team budget of approximately £3.5m per annum.
6. The post covers a 36 hour week.

## **Experience and Skills**

- Substantial experience of managing and delivering housing advice and/or homelessness services to people in need some of which must have been on a casework basis.
- Experience of improving performance in a housing context.
- Experience of motivating and managing staff in a customer-focused environment.
- Experience of managing change in a local authority or similar environment.
- Developing and implementing an equalities approach in service delivery and staff management.
- Experience of analysing, monitoring and developing information management systems to improve service delivery.
- Experience of financial management and budget control.
- Experience of successfully developing strategies, policies and service initiatives, and working collaboratively with partners and staff, to deliver improvements.
- A thorough understanding of current issues affecting social housing and private housing provision in outer borough areas.
- Detailed working knowledge of legislation on lettings, homelessness, temporary accommodation, supporting people, security of tenure, tenants' rights including codes of guidance, case law and good practice. Thorough knowledge of full range of housing options and homelessness prevention approaches.
- Ability to demonstrate a track record of achievement in Homelessness Assessment where results have been clearly demonstrated.
- Ability to create the environment in which staff are motivated and empowered and to build effective teams.
- Ability to develop a performance management culture which enables the translation of strategic objectives to team and individual objectives and goals.
- Ability to manage conflicting priorities in a pressurised work environment subject to frequently changing circumstances in order to meet laid down deadlines.
- Awareness of risk assessment and Health & Safety provisions in relation to public service areas

## Qualifications

A degree or equivalent professional qualification or relevant work experience at a senior level

## Working conditions/circumstances

The post holder is the lead officer for provision of out of hours' homelessness service and is required to work evenings, weekends and public holidays in order to meet service requirements.

Undertake any other duties commensurate with the general level of responsibility of this post.

## Key Accountabilities and Result Areas

Key Result Area	Expected End Result
Manage a team of up to 7 officers (including additional fixed term contract staff funded through the Government's Rough Sleeping initiative) taking responsibility for all people management issues including performance management, disciplinary and conduct issues and sickness management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Management of the full staff recruitment and training process including: selection, appointment, deployment, training and disciplinary issues, staff consultation, welfare, safety matters, performance management and appraisal in line with Council policies and procedures.</li><li>• Mentor, appraise and coach new and existing officers in the team and to ensure staff retention and staff morale is high.</li><li>• Agreed team plans and performance targets are delivered and a culture of putting customers' first and continuous service improvement is maintained.</li><li>• Quality services are delivered to clients through staff supervision, support, planning personal development, establishing targets and standards in line with corporate performance management framework</li><li>• All team members receive the appropriate level of communication to maintain engagement with the Council's vision, priorities and activities.</li><li>• Deputise for the Head of Housing Demand as required, and in their absence, cover the general supervisory aspects of that post, including team meetings, in line with Departmental and Corporate policies.</li><li>• To challenge, manage and resolve poor performance where it exists within the team.</li></ul>
Deliver a cost effective, efficient and professional Housing Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understanding and interpreting complex legislation, preparing concise factual reports,</li></ul>

Service to customers

providing rational options for decisions and where necessary effectively presenting these to residents, Senior Officers, the Ombudsman and any other relevant audiences on behalf of the Council.

- Undertaking risk analysis on a continual basis and developing rigorous and effective strategies to minimise the external risks
- Lead in the research and identification of best practice and ensure that this is incorporated into service redesign.
- Lead on the development of a range of self help tools and information to be made available through local outlets, websites, and other media and outlets.
- Produce literature, including leaflets, posters, training packs and ensure that appropriate information is available at all of the Councils public outlets, regarding the service.
- The council provides an effective, professional homelessness service including assessment and investigation of homeless approaches and applications in line with the Council's statutory duties under Housing Act 1996 Part 7, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, Care Act 2014, Children's Act 1989 and relevant case law.
- Realistic and accurate advice services is delivered to customers through personal or telephone interviews, correspondence, advocacy, reception, home visiting and outreach service.
- Personalised Plans issued by officers following a detailed assessment with all customers is monitored and reviewed and is kept up to date
- Suitable housing solutions are provided to customers with complex needs and rough sleepers.
- Customers receive advice on a full range of options to solve their housing problem, including intervention if threatened with homelessness, registering on council housing list, initiatives for council tenants, private renting, mortgage advice, moving out of London and shared ownership and any other prevention tools that may be available
- Customers are advised of available tenancy support services including income

	<p>maximisation, debt and rent arrears advice, Discretionary Housing Payments, Housing Benefit support, mutual exchange and under-occupation schemes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where the service is unable to prevent or relieve homelessness, a formal homelessness application is completed on time and detailed investigation is carried out to determine what duty, if any is owed.</li> <li>• Relevant identity/credit software is used to enable the service to check and verify the accuracy of a homeless approach or application, and the circumstances affecting the customer.</li> <li>• Statutory professional standard S184 decision letters, letters of referral to other authorities where an applicant's local connection lies elsewhere, and outcome letters are written and issued to advise the customer following their initial and follow up assessment.</li> <li>• Legal challenges against homeless statutory decisions, Part VI housing register and allocation of social housing appeals are addressed.</li> <li>• Residents are supported, coached and empowered to independently assess and manage their own housing situation and make informed choices on future housing options and related matters.</li> <li>• Comply with all relevant statutory requirements, Government Guidance and Codes of conduct, Havering policies and procedures, management instructions, professional and performance standards and good housing and homelessness prevention practice and ensure that staff complies with these.</li> <li>• Timely resolution of enquiries, complaints and correspondence from customers and their advocates, including solicitors, councillors, MPs, the ombudsman and other housing providers, in line with the Council's complaints and enquiries procedure. This may include preparing information to support court cases for which the post-holder is responsible.</li> <li>• Drive innovation within the service through the application of best practice homelessness</li> </ul>
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	solutions.
Lead on advising the Council on high level complex and contentious issues in relation to homelessness assessment and identify and implement strategies and initiatives to address any deficiencies identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service risk is mitigated.</li> </ul>
Lead on customer service by ensuring it is at the heart of service provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine customer service requirements by maintaining contact with customers; conducting surveys; forming focus groups; benchmarking best practices; analysing information and applications.</li> <li>• Holistic, informed and accurate housing advice which is “right first time” is provided to all customers of the service</li> <li>• An ethos of excellence in service delivery is promoted and a responsive individualised service is available to each household approaching the council with a housing need.</li> </ul>
Lead on the initiation and development of policies, business plan and strategies to meet legal challenges, new demands and pressures on the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness and rough sleeping data for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is collated and submitted on time in order to ensure that the council supports the government’s aim to develop a true picture of homelessness in the United Kingdom.</li> <li>• The business plan, the Council’s overall Housing and Homelessness strategies, policies and procedures for the service are developed.</li> <li>• Head of Housing Demand is supported in capacity planning of the service.</li> <li>• Lead officer in research and development projects as required within the general area of responsibility of the post.</li> </ul>
Manage the budget to ensure best use of available resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the preparation, monitoring and control of annual budgets, and participate in the financial planning and budget making process.</li> <li>• Robust systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating expenditure within the service area, in order to protect the Council’s financial position and comply with internal financial regulations as well as those imposed by statute and external agencies.</li> <li>• Cost of temporary accommodation is minimised.</li> <li>• Allocated budgets are kept within set annual</li> </ul>

	<p>budget limits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost-consciousness is demonstrated and any cost effective changes to own way of working is identified and implemented.</li> <li>• Purchasing and procurement is conducted in line with the corporate guidelines with appropriate use of the Council's financial systems.</li> </ul>
<p>Develop and implement a programme of service improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative and creative, keeping up-to-date with best practice and preparing fully costed and reasoned business cases to justify changes to policies, procedures and business processes.</li> <li>• Lead on the analysis of data, identify where systematic failure has occurred and make recommendations and lead on the implementation of changes.</li> <li>• Monthly audits on standard, volume and quality of case work are carried out and where necessary improvement plans are put in.</li> <li>• Information is shared with other services (particular reference to Adult Social Care &amp; Children's services) in order to deliver the best outcome for customers and the council.</li> <li>• Improvement initiatives and change programmes are managed using the Council's Project Management and Service Improvement methodologies.</li> </ul>
<p>Maintain and promote liaison with internal and external stakeholders in order to enhance the Council's performance, reputation and image.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This area of work is high profile; and there is a significant level of contact with members on the impact of service delivery on residents' well being; as well as the need for the post holder to work across departments at an operational level, working closely with areas such as Children's Services and Adult Social Care.</li> <li>• Represent the Council at meetings ensuring that the Council's interests are properly protected.</li> <li>• Proactively work with internal and external partners to develop, and keep under review, a range of initiatives to provide housing advice, prevent homelessness.</li> <li>• Meetings of relevant partnership boards and agencies are attended in order to represent the service and/or council as required.</li> <li>• Communicate with a wide range of internal and external contacts including directors, senior managers, elected members, professional and government bodies and partner organisations</li> </ul>



	<p>using a wide range of interpersonal skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with other council departments where appropriate in particular with Adult Social Care and Children's Services to deliver a seamless service where appropriate.</li> <li>External - Including but not limited to: Probation, Police and Multi Agency Public Protection Units; Ministry of Housing, Communities &amp; Local Government; DWP; Solicitors; Estate Agents; Accommodation Agencies; Register Social Landlords; Voluntary Agencies; CABs, Health Care providers &amp; CSU/CCGs.</li> </ul>
<p>Develop, implement and monitor a robust performance management system in order to drive up performance of both individuals within the team and services across the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance data is regularly analysed and provide regular management reports are provided regarding operational performance using relevant information systems.</li> <li>Regular customer feedback is available.</li> <li>Specific individual annual targets and objectives are set as part of the individual Performance Plan.</li> </ul>

### Competency Profile

Competencies are a set of descriptions of personal behaviours required by people in their workplace.

Competency	Level	Criteria to be Evidenced (Description)
Communicating openly and effectively	D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses communication and influencing skills to progress complex situations and achieve significant impact</li> <li>Able to effectively present to &amp; influence large groups of people</li> <li>Translates strategy into effective operational messages, easily understood at all levels</li> <li>Demonstrates an in-depth understanding of organisational politics and uses this effectively</li> <li>Creates and implements appropriate communication strategies to support complex projects</li> <li>Ensures communication effectiveness throughout the business is continuously reviewed</li> </ul>
Delivering excellent customer service	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acts as role model in own personal approach to customer focus</li> <li>Proactively seeks and effectively uses customer information to inform service delivery</li> <li>Proactively seeks to establish and meet current and future needs of customers</li> <li>Organises processes around customers, taking</li> </ul>

		<p>account of complex and sensitive issues to meet their long term needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implements and utilises systems to record customer feedback and communicates ideas and information to appropriate people, ensuring information is fed back into appropriate systems e.g. Capita</li> <li>• Creates an environment where team/s are empowered to put customers first</li> </ul>
Managing Personal and Organisational Change	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translates strategic vision into practical and achievable plans</li> <li>• Thinks and acts innovatively and creatively, to improve methods, systems and outcomes</li> <li>• Identifies opportunities for change</li> <li>• Champions, manages and engages with change openly and willingly</li> <li>• Proactive in identifying barriers to change and works to influence others in overcoming them</li> <li>• Promotes a culture that demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement and development</li> <li>• Constantly reviews own and team's objectives to ensure they support long-term strategic objectives</li> <li>• Identifies and exploits own opportunities and those of the team, to fulfil potential</li> </ul>
Achieving Results and Success	D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to identify need and put a strategy/business case forward in response to changing needs of the organisation</li> <li>• Understands and considers the impact of external influences</li> <li>• Ensures work processes and projects are well targeted, resourced and managed to deliver strategic aims</li> <li>• Identifies and manages risk, taking appropriate steps in order to identify new and better ways of improving strategic performance</li> <li>• Works with managers, staff, partners and stakeholders to develop new initiatives that contribute to the development and performance of the organisation</li> </ul>
Respecting Others	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops a culture of Equality and Diversity</li> <li>• Empowers people to achieve best practice in this area</li> <li>• Adapts to different audiences</li> <li>• Demonstrates integrity and consistency in decision making</li> <li>• Ensures team members value diversity</li> <li>• Demonstrates clear and consistent leadership in promoting equality and diversity</li> <li>• Ensures full access to services for all</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responds efficiently and appropriately where there is evidence of unfairness</li> <li>• Respects confidentiality wherever appropriate</li> <li>• Challenges inappropriate behaviour</li> <li>• Upholds a high standard of fairness and ethics in words and actions</li> </ul>
<b>Competency</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Criteria to be Evidenced</b>
Driving Performance	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translates strategic visions into realistic plans to drive performance</li> <li>• Takes an interest in why performance standards are not being met and develops plans to address the issues</li> <li>• Understands and considers the impact of both internal and external factors in performance</li> <li>• Addresses problems, does not personalise failure</li> <li>• Looks to reinforce learning and knowledge of others</li> <li>• Generates excitement for a course of action</li> <li>• Leads, develops and empowers staff to provide a seamless service delivery</li> </ul>
<b>Competency</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Criteria to be Evidenced</b>
Motivating Others	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates and implements a vision where different motivators are accepted and sustained</li> <li>• Has a good overview and is able to use differences in working cultures across services and organisations</li> <li>• Demonstrates effective leadership in promoting motivational approaches</li> <li>• Works with managers and staff to develop new initiatives that address motivational issues in the organisation</li> </ul>
<b>Competency</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Criteria to be Evidenced</b>
Operational Management	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thinks of creative ways of obtaining/using resources</li> <li>• Gets things done and builds momentum</li> <li>• Seeks to automate efficient processes</li> <li>• Builds in performance and quality indicators</li> <li>• Prioritises effectively</li> <li>• Builds in contingencies to deal with the unexpected</li> <li>• Has systems in place to monitor progress</li> <li>• Drives efficiencies and seeks opportunities to deliver value for money and savings</li> </ul>
<b>Competency</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Criteria to be Evidenced</b>
Working Together	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works cooperatively with other departments to develop and improve services</li> <li>• Seeks to understand what is critical to others</li> <li>• Delivers services in a way that reflects customer needs rather than organisational</li> </ul>

		boundaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brings partners and projects together at the right time, in the right way</li> <li>• Fosters joint learning, training and problem solving</li> </ul>
<b>Competency</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Criteria to be Evidenced</b>
Empowering Leadership	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets and communicates clear directions</li> <li>• Demonstrates awareness of own leadership style</li> <li>• Leads by example</li> <li>• Develops self and others</li> <li>• Inspires in others self-motivation to achieve goals</li> <li>• Empowers staff by recognising success</li> <li>• Has a clear vision, motivates and encourages the team</li> </ul>

**Additional Requirements:**

- The Council has a strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity in its services to the community and in the employment of people. It expects all employees to understand, comply with and promote its policies in their own work, and to undertake any appropriate training. Comply with Health and Safety Regulations associated with your employment.
- Be aware of the council's responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1984 for the security, accuracy and relevance of all personal data held on such systems and ensure that all processes comply with this.
- To treat all information acquired through your employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence. There are strict rules and protocols defining employees' access to and use of the council's databases, any breach of which will be regarded as subject to disciplinary investigation.
- You may be required to work at any Council site.
- Demonstrate a flexible approach in the delivery of work within the service area. Consequently, the post holder may be required to perform duties not specifically identified in the job profile but which are in line with the general responsibilities of the post.
- Deal with any Safeguarding issues that might arise, in line with the Council's policies and procedures.