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| **Department** | **Adult Services / Bolton Integrated Care Partnership** |
| **Job Title** | **Housing Options Officer** |
| **Grade** | **Grade F** |
| **Primary Purpose of Job** | To assist and support the delivery of a high quality Housing Options & Advice Service for homeless persons, those threatened with homelessness and others in housing need.  Provide for all aspects of homelessness and housing advice casework from contact / initial application, assessment, decision, provision / securing of prevention and relief assistance through the delivery of statutory homelessness prevention, relief and other assistance via related policies and practices.  To assist vulnerable customers to access and engage in services; offering advice and support on all options; advocating and negotiating on behalf of customers; and work closely with other agencies externally & internally in order to provide options, prevent and relieve homelessness and to provide for the needs of households. |
| **Reporting To** | Housing Options Principal Housing Options Team Leader(s) / Service Manager(s) |
| **Direct Staffing Reports** | N/A |

**Main Duties**

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| **1** | **ASSESSMENT AND ASSISTANCE**  In order to fulfil relevant duties including prevention and relief of homelessness within scope of all relevant legislation, policy and practice: receive enquiries; obtain necessary information from; undertake assessments of; and develop plans for customers seeking advice & assistance with housing related matters including homelessness, in various settings/locations as directed. Provide advice, options and assistance including via liaison, negotiation and advocacy with other services and agencies as appropriate in order to meet need. | |
| **2** | **TECHNICAL ADVICE**  To have a working knowledge of: housing, homelessness and related legislation; associated Code(s) of Guidance, local policies & procedures; and have an awareness of changes in legislation, policy guidance and current practice with regard to all the issues around housing & homelessness. Keep up to date with changes to relevant policy. law and practice. Develop and maintain a thorough knowledge and understanding of related service provision and processes locally. | |
| **3** | **WORKING WITH CUSTOMERS**  To actively work, liaise and negotiate with internal and external customers / agencies (including private and public sector landlords) to: prevent and relieve homelessness; increase awareness of relevant legislation; promote good practice; and where necessary instigating multi-agency case meetings on potentially difficult and complex cases.  To support and encourage customers (including those who may be homeless) through appropriate techniques and mechanisms in order that they: take responsibility for and engage in actions to address their own housing and other needs as appropriate; and are assisted with maintaining or securing suitable accommodation including through negotiation with support services to sustain successful outcomes. | |
| **4** | **PROVIDING ADVICE AND INFORMATION**  To provide specialist advice and information on housing options, advice, homelessness and allocations as well as general advice on related matters as appropriate to internal and external customers and agencies including landlords.  Produce as required information on services and procedures in appropriate formats for other internal & external staff, agencies and customers. | |
| **5** | **REPRESENTING THE SERVICE**  To represent the Council and the service ensuring collaborative case-working, contributing to service development and reporting on progress to management in all liaison and work with internal and external services / agencies on matters concerning housing options & homelessness within the Borough.  To act as liaison officer for specific temporary accommodation, other services &/or projects as required; to assist and deliver awareness / training to other internal & external staff, agencies and customers as appropriate. | |
| **6** | **MONITORING**  To check and maintain all case file records in good order, ensure data base records are accurate & up to date, and prepare & provide required case work monitoring and management information as required in good time.  To assist in the preparation of any reports, statistical returns or analysis required concerning relevant aspects of Homes for Bolton & related services.  To assist in monitoring the satisfactory re-housing of customers in compliance with legislation / Code(s) of Guidance and Council policies | |
| **7** | **UNIQUE REPORTS / LETTERS**  Dealing with correspondence to and from internal / external customers including Councillors and MPs, other Departments and agencies concerning case work and related matters. | |
| **8** | **DEVELOPING THE SERVICE**  Highlight emerging trends and issues with team leaders and management and engage in work to contribute to the development of services and procedures to better meet customer and policy needs. | |
| **9** | **CASH**  To assist in administration of small cash float including for customers' travelling expenses, emergency accommodation or collection of fees for printed material. | |
| **10** | Such other duties as are consistent with the objectives of the post and as may be required from time to time by the Head of Service. | |
| **Date Job Description prepared/updated:** | | **22nd January 2021** |
| **Job Description prepared by:** | | **Jon Powell** |



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| **Job Title** | | | | **Housing OptionS Officer** | | |
| **Stage One** | | | Disabled Candidates are guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential criteria | | | |
| **The Minimum Essential Requirements for the above Post are as Follows:** | | | | | | **Method of Assessment** |
| **1.** | **Skills and Knowledge** | | | | | |
| 1. | Knowledge of relevant legislation, policy and guidance | | | | | Application/Interview/Test |
| 2. | Understanding of housing need and homelessness issues | | | | | Application |
| 3. | Ability to interpret and apply legislation, policy and guidance | | | | | Interview |
| 4. | Ability to make decisions / recommend appropriate action, advice and assistance on cases where households may have complex circumstances | | | | | Interview |
| 5. | An awareness of the potential conflict of interest and political sensitivity involved in decisions and actions taken | | | | | Interview |
| 6. | Able to communicate effectively with individuals and groups internal and external of the council at all levels both verbally and in writing | | | | | Interview |
| 7. | Excellent customer contact, interviewing and relevant skills in order to encourage customers to adopt a particular course of action | | | | | Application/Interview |
| 8. | Demonstrate effective organisational skills, with the ability to plan, develop and prioritise work in order to meet deadlines and changes in priority | | | | | Application/Interview |
| 9. | Ability to work as part of a team and under own supervision using initiative | | | | | Application/Interview |
| 10. | Demonstrate the ability to network effectively with a wide variety of agencies and to negotiate e.g. on behalf of customers and influence decisions and access to services. | | | | | Interview |
| 11. | Knowledge, understanding & practical awareness of safeguarding children & vulnerable adults | | | | | Application |
| 12. | **Competencies** – Please note the council’s corporate competencies, which are considered to be essential for all roles, are in the attached CORE COMPETENCIES document | | | | | Interview |
| **2. Experience/Qualifications/Training etc** | | | | | | |
| 1. | | Experience of dealing with customers, both internal and external (including interviewing) | | | Application | |
| 2. | | Demonstrable front-line experience in a closely related service area | | | Application | |
| 3. | | Must be willing to undertake appropriate training and development in order to meet the requirements of the post. | | | Interview | |
| **3. Work Related Circumstances** | | | | | | |
| 1. | | Occasional out-of-hours working. | | | Interview | |
| 2. | | This post has been designated an essential car user post. Applicants must hold a full, current and valid driving licence and a vehicle with a current valid MOT certificate. There must also be adequate vehicle insurance cover to comply with the council’s requirements, in line with the Travel Costs Reimbursement Policy | | | Application/Interview | |
| 3. | | This post is subject to an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service | | | Application/Interview | |

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| **STAGE TWO** | | Will only be used in the event of a large number of applicants meeting the minimum essential requirements | |
| **Additional Requirements** | | | **Method of Assessment** |
| **1. Skills and Knowledge** | | | |
| 1. | Knowledge of Housing Law, Private Rented or Public Rented Sector | | Application/Interview |
| **2. Experience/Qualifications/Training etc** | | | |
| 1. | 2 years experience of conducting in depth interviews | | Application/Interview |
| 2. | 2 years experience of working in a housing related area | | Application/Interview |

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| **Date Person Specification prepared/updated:** | **22nd January 2021** |
| **Person Specification prepared by:** | **Jon Powell** |



**These core competencies are considered essential for all roles within Bolton Council. Please be prepared to be assessed on any of these during the interview process and, for the successful applicant, throughout the probationary period.**

**Developing Self & Others**

Promote a learning environment to embed a learning culture.  Support others to develop their skills and knowledge to fulfil their potential. Actively pursue your own development. Support and promote the principles of Investors in People.

**Civil Contingencies**

Bolton Council has a statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act to respond in the event of an emergency. If Bolton Council’s Emergency Management Plan is activated, you may be required to assist in maintaining key Council services and supporting the community.  This could require working outside of routine working hours and working from places other than your normal place of work.

**Equality & Diversity**

Uphold the principles of fairness and the Equality Act in all undertakings as a Bolton Council employee, including providing a fair, accessible service irrespective of customer’s race, religion, gender, sexuality, disability or age.

**Customer Care**

The ability to fully understand, assess and resolve the needs of all customers including those who present with complex situations, in a manner that respects dignity and expresses a caring & professional image.

**Health & Safety**

Take responsibility for the health and safety of yourself and others who may be affected by your acts or omissions, and comply with all health and safety legislation, policy and safe working practice, including participating in training activities necessary to your post.

**Data Protection and Confidentiality**

Ensure that any personal data or confidential data you hold is kept securely and is not disclosed, whether electronically, verbally or in writing, to any unauthorised third party. Follow Council policies and procedures on dealing with personal information and information assets, including The Code of Conduct, Data Protection, Acceptable Use and Information Security policies. Personal or confidential data should only be accessed or used for council purposes.

**Fluency Duty**

Should you be required, as a regular and intrinsic part of your role, to speak to members of the public in English, you must be able to converse at ease with customers and provide advice in accurate spoken English, as required byThe Immigration Act 2016.

**Working Hours**

The nature and demands of the role are not always predictable and there will be an expectation that work will be required outside of normal hours from time to time.

**Safeguarding**

This Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Should the role involve working with the above groups, you will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barred List check by the Disclosure & Barring Service.

**The values of an organisation are those key principles by which people are expected to work to day to day. They’re our culture and help define what is expected of each and every one of us**.

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