

Housing Solutions Officer – RS/CST

JE Code: JE2181l

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| **Job Title** | Housing Solutions Officer – RS/CST |
| **Service** | Adult Services / Housing Solutions |
| **Reports to:** | HS Manager – Rough Sleeping/CST |
| **Job Family** | Professional and Technical (PT) |
| **Grade:**  **Date:**  **JE Code:** | F  February 2021  JE2181 |

**Key Deliverables**

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| **1.** | Assessing customers’ needs in accordance with the Homelessness Act 2017, Care Act and within context of other relevant legal frameworks. Developing a personal housing plan with the customer, ensuring responsibility for the actions is clearly determined. To fully support the assistance of various services to people with extremely complex multi-faceted needs, this will include working in partnership with Mental Health, Children’s Services and other agencies such as Police and Probation services. |
| **2.** | To provide outstanding, customer-focussed and efficient service to customers presenting with housing problems, supporting them to achieve positive housing outcomes. Working proactively with them to maintain their current home or in accessing a new home in the public or private sector by utilising a wide range of options to solve their housing issue. |
| **3.** | Providing advice and information to customers so they understand their current housing position and their rights and responsibilities in their current accommodation this will include offering guidance on areas such as security of tenure, protection from eviction, management of finances and matrimonial rights. |
| **4.** | Effectively manage case load, ensuring high quality work is undertaken within timescales and assessments and Personal Housing Plan’s remain up to date and verify circumstances robustly, including making checks regarding applicant’s finances, eligibility, local connection and suitability to be a tenant. |
| **5.** | Maintain thorough, high-quality records of all cases, ensuring these are up to date and inputting data into reports regarding operational performance using information systems such as Northgate (NPS) and other systems as required. |
| **6.** | To work collaboratively with Housing Solutions assessment and internal colleagues in Housing, Adult and Children’s Services and external stakeholders including registered providers and private sector landlords. |
| **7.** | Consider applicants support needs and associated risks to make appropriate referrals, such as safeguarding, tenancy sustainment, floating support and prevention assistance. |
| **8.** | Effectively manage enquiries, complaints and correspondence from clients and their advocates, including solicitors, councillors, MPs, the ombudsman and other housing providers, in line with the Council’s complaints and enquiries procedure and prepare information as required to support court cases for which the post-holder is responsible (reviews and appeals, judicial reviews etc.). |
| **9.** | Provide mediation with customers and family, friends, landlords to prevent homelessness. Using excellent negotiation and strong yet empathic communication to seek positive resolution in complex situations. |
| **10** | Ensure robust assessment of risk is completed, where required working as part a multi-disciplinary team to determine and manage risks with the customer and colleagues in adult and children’s services as well as partner agencies. Understand when and how to escalate risks. |

**Essential Requirements**

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| **1.** | Understanding of the legislative frameworks and statutory requirements relating to the Housing Solutions Service and knowledge of relevant legislation. Understanding Safeguarding, Care Act assessments and requirements. |
| **2.** | Awareness of the Welfare Reform Act and housing allocations as covered by the Housing Act 1996 Part VI and Part VII, in addition to knowledge of allocating private sector units and temporary accommodation units. |
| **3.** | A thorough understanding of current issues affecting social housing and private housing provision, and of range of housing options and homelessness prevention approaches. |
| **4.** | Evidence of creative problem solving, involving management of complex situations. |
| **5.** | High level written and oral communication skills, with ability to provide robust negotiation and mediation in complex situations. |



Role Specification

Job Family – Care & Welfare (CW)

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| **Our Values** | **Our Expectations**  We all will…   * Be professional at all times * Work together for the good of the team, council and local people * Promote a supportive culture * Challenge assumptions * Take ownership * Be willing to change and do things differently * Always work in a safe manner |

***The level***

At this level with dedicated specialist qualifications or an equivalent level of direct experience in their particular field, job holders deal autonomously with complex issues, analysing and forming judgements about not only their own technical or professional specialism, but also the attendant resource, finance, planning and similar issues that combine to challenge the job holder.

***The knowledge and skills required***

The range of knowledge required for these roles includes an understanding of the policies and procedures across the specialist area in which job holders work as well as a solid underpinning of technical knowledge gained through dedicated, formal education. Together, these requirements would usually mean that job holders have been working within the specific field for a reasonable time, such that they have been exposed to many of the routine and more unexpected circumstances of their role.

While the majority of roles will have demands for manual dexterity in relation to typing and similar functions, jobs will use a range of equipment requiring precision in their use and handling.

***The type of thinking, planning and communicating necessary***

The situations and problems dealt with at this level will be increasingly complex, involving several information streams where analytical and judgemental skills will be needed to interpret information correctly and determine optimum solutions. While job holders will have plenty of day to day issues to contend with, they will also need to plan some months ahead to achieve medium-term objectives in such areas as project support or service development.

At this level, the information exchanged with internal and external colleagues, and members of the public will call for developed communication skills on the part of the job holders. Matters will be technically complicated, requiring careful explanation, or sensitive, requiring signficant listening skills to interpret information and provide appropriate advice.

***The freedom to make decisions and innovate***

job holders will have the autonomy to adapt specific approaches to better meet medium term objectives. They will be bound by the recognised procedural framework of their specialism as it is managed by the Council, but will decide when and precisely how duties are to be carried out. They will also deal with problems (often escalated to this level) for which there are no set-down routes to a solution other than broad service practice guidelines.

***The areas of responsibility***

With a diverse range of jobs being represented at this level of the PT family, the precise blend of responsibilities for which the job holder is accountable will depend upon the service in which they operate.

External facing roles will focus on the needs of people - whether external service users or partners - and will be responsible for high-impact decision making and the implementation of appropriate programmes on behalf of individuals or groups of people OR enforcement of regulations which have direct and significant consequences upon those served. Such roles are likely to have only modest levels of responsibility for for finance, information assets, equipment, premises etc.

Internal roles are likely to have this pattern reversed, with weightier responsibility for significant financial and non-financial assets, but less for the assessment of needs of individuals and groups.

jobs will have supervisory responsibility for the work of others and will be accountable for the quality and timeliness of outputs, whether related to the work of internal teams or temporary external contractors, volunteers or others.

***The impacts and demands of the role***

At this level, tasks and duties will be generally carried out in a sedentary position but there will always be a requirement for standing and walking from time to time, and the occasional need to lift or carry items.

The problem solving and decision making elements of these jobs mean that job holders require lengthy periods of enhanced mental attention to attend to duties, while also dealing with deadlines, interruptions and conflicting demands.

Duties of jobs at this level in the PT family will not require job holders to develop and maintain working relationships with people who, through their circumstances or behaviour, place particular emotional demands on the job holder.

Many Professional / Technical job holders find themselves exposed to some disagreeable, unpleasant or hazardous working conditions when the particular needs of their specialism requires them to work on external sites exposed to the weather, in or around refuse and waste plant, close to particularly noisy machinery and in similar environments. Other PT jobs, such as enforcement roles, may also see job holders exposed to verbal abuse and threatening environments. In all cases, job holders will minimise risk and conform to health and safety regulations to mitigate any negative effects of such exposure.