

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

Designation:	Housing Advice & Early Intervention Team Leader	Grade: PO3
Reports to (Designation):	Homelessness Prevention & Assessment Service Manager	Grade: SMG1
Directorate:	Housing Regeneration & Public Realm	Division: Housing Needs

Main Purpose of the job:

To manage a team of officers who are a first point of contact to clients and others presenting to the Housing Needs Service.

To ensure that the team provide an efficient, person centred, information, advice, guidance, intervention, assessment, assistance and practical support service to residents, enabling them to make informed choices in relation to their housing needs and signpost as necessary.

To carry out holistic assessments of housing, health and social care needs, providing appropriate interventions and referrals, with the aim of minimising avoidable escalation to homelessness and use of higher level statutory and crisis service provision.

To undertake the operational management of the officers in delivering a prevention focussed service assisting people to achieve and maintain independence. To provide regular support and supervision to staff on a one to one and team basis.

To deputise for the Service Manager and cover the duties of other Team leaders across the Service as required.

Summary of Responsibilities and Personal Duties:

MANAGEMENT ROLES & EXPECTATIONS

As a Team Leader/Manager you will:

1. Adapt the planned delivery of services to ensure changing community and customer needs.
2. Monitor and review service outcomes ensuring effective delivery of personal and team objectives.
3. Ensure the continuous improvement in services using creative and informative inventions as well as effective performance and quality management.
4. Plan, deploy and co-ordinate people resources to meet changing operational needs.
5. Ensure services meet statutory and identified organisational standards and regulations.
6. Ensure an understanding of the impact of your service on other functions
7. To effectively recruit, induct and train staff, undertake regular supervisions and set and monitor objectives; ensure annual performance development appraisals are completed

alongside learning and development plans and any performance and HR issues are dealt with as they arise.

8. To be responsible for leading and motivating the team on a day to day basis to deliver a high quality, professional and customer centric service to internal and external customers; provide and/or facilitate coaching and mentoring and effectively address poor behaviours and poor performance.
9. To promote a philosophy of putting customer needs first at every opportunity and to put in place arrangements to action this.
10. To oppose and where possible eradicate all forms of discrimination, making a positive contribution to managing diversity, both as an employer and service provider.
11. To raise performance in the team by contributing to a culture of continuous improvement.
12. To manage the service in a way that achieves strong performance and continuous improvement in the following broad areas (the list below is not exhaustive):
 - Demonstrates at all times clear focus on improving services and outcomes for customers and communities
 - Ensure that the team carry out high quality triage, initial assessment, assessment of needs and provide robust advice to customers to empower them to resolve their housing issues.
 - Ensure if customers require further support and are threatened with homelessness or homeless that they are referred to the correct team in a timely way to receive the correct support.
 - Expects high levels of customer satisfaction
 - Involves and engages customers and communities in developing, shaping and feeding back on services: engagement is early and often
 - Expects services to be responsive to customer and community need, and focuses our targeted services on those in greatest need
 - Takes ownership of the front door and work closely with customer services and ensure smooth transition from out of hours service to day time services.
 - Anticipates changing & likely future need, organises and prepares to meet it
 - Acts as an advocate for customers, communities and users of services when needed and sign post.
 - Drives and shapes services to ensure ease of customer access to advice, support and service
 - Work to achieve the aim of reducing the numbers of people going in to temporary accommodation
 - Developing and implementing a robust duty rota system and any initiatives that support customers to resolve their housing needs much sooner than reaching crisis point.
13. To identify cases of fraud and misrepresentation and ensure appropriate legal action can be taken
14. To provide effective and timely responses to complaints and enquiries from customers, Councillors and MPs, taking steps to resolve service issues at the earliest opportunity. To provide professional advice to Councillors and other officers on relevant areas of service delivery, ensuring compliance with the Council's standing orders

15. To develop and maintain systems, making efficient and effective use of ICT to ensure that appropriate management information is provided and made accessible to senior management and commissioners, submitting periodic performance returns as required. To adhere to General Data Protection requirements at all times when collecting, recording and handling personal data
16. Engage and support any statutory review process relating to allocations or a discharge of duty resulting from an offer of a property made by the team and to ensure that offers are compliant.
17. To adhere to policies and procedures relating to the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Internal Contacts: These include officers from across Customer Services, Housing Services Division, officers from across the Council eg Housing Benefits, Strategic Development, Childrens Young People Directorate, Corporate Procurement Team

External Contacts: This will include Lewisham Homes and other Registered Providers, Landlords, Landlord Agents, Capital Letters, Police, Advocates.

To carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council's relevant codes and procedures.

All employees are required to participate in the Performance Evaluation Scheme (PES) and to undertake appropriate training and development identified to enhance their work.

Undertake other duties, commensurate with the grade, as may reasonably be required.

Consideration will be given to restructuring the duties of this post for a disabled postholder

THIS JOB DESCRIPTION MAY NEED TO BE AMENDED BY THE DIRECTORATE TO MEET
THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE SERVICE.

Number of fully managed staff: up to 8 members of staff

Title:	Grade	No of posts
Housing Advice & Early Intervention Officer		7
Employment Advisor		1

Number of partially managed staff:

Title:	Grade	No of posts
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PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Housing Advice & Early Intervention Team Leader

POST NO:

DEPARTMENT: Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm

GRADE: PO3

Note to Candidates

The Person Specification is a picture of the skills, knowledge and experience needed to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the shortlisting and interview process for this post.

Those categories marked 'S' will be used especially for the purpose of shortlisting.

Please ensure that Equality and Diversity issues are addressed specifically in relation to the role for which you are applying when addressing the requirements of this person specification where appropriate.

If you are a disabled person, but are unable to meet some of the job requirements specifically because of your disability, please address this in your application. If you meet all the other criteria you will be shortlisted and we will explore jointly with you if there are ways in which the job can be changed to enable you to meet the requirements.

Equality & Diversity

Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community	S
Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post	S

Knowledge

Excellent knowledge and detailed understanding of Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and other relevant housing and homelessness legislation, case law and guidance	S
Excellent knowledge of Suitability and affordability assessments for accommodation provided under homelessness provisions	S
Up to date knowledge of the welfare benefit system and its application-	S
The Housing Health and Safety Rating System	
A good understanding of budgetary control-	S
Working knowledge health & safety legislation in the workplace-	S
Comprehensive understanding of the needs of vulnerable people and how their needs can be met, including their social, emotional and wellbeing needs-	S
Excellent knowledge of safeguarding responsibilities in a frontline service	S

Aptitude

Ability to maintain databases and work effectively with IT systems

Aptitude for working creatively and acting on own initiative.

Ability to identify business risks at an early stage, alerting appropriate managers and developing possible solutions.

Ability to prioritise competing demands in a pressurised environment, recognize service priorities and manage a high workload within agreed targets.

Ability to meet performance targets and deliver positive outcomes.

Ability to take a proactive role in reviewing and developing working practices in order to continually improve service delivery.

Aptitude for utilising new technology to help develop the service.

Able to prepare and present reports and to analyse statistical information

Skills

(Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested)

(To Be Tested – S)

Strong interpersonal skills to effectively communicate verbally and in writing and build trust mutually respectful relationships with a range of audiences, including Councillors, residents, stakeholders and commissioners, including the ability to write clear and concise reports. **S**

Strong negotiation, advocacy and influential skills to effectively implement system change, imbed new and complex initiatives and build and maintain wide networks internally within the council and externally with partner agencies and the voluntary sector.

Ability to deliver excellent customer care and adapt behaviour of self and team to support residents in a timely way and respond effectively to challenging behaviour.

Ability to collect and analyse data and critically reflect on work practices to improve services, using new technologies to improve services delivery and accessibility.

Ability to motivate and develop staff, effectively manage and support staff through change, provide welfare support to staff covering frontline work and inspire team work and a collaborative culture with internal and external colleagues.

Strong analytical and numeracy skills to carry out complex housing and financial assessments and the ability to make difficult and contentious decisions on a range of issues. **S**

Ability to regularly deal with crisis situations and prioritise workload, and make quick and accurate decisions **S**

Experience

Proven experience of designing and implementing robust and efficient business processes that have delivered tangibly improved services and dramatically improved efficiency. **S**

Proven experience of reviewing performance and service levels, using performance management techniques to drive service delivery and improvements, implementing robust plans to ensure excellent service delivery is maintained, responding to, and escalating, quality assurance concerns. **S**

Proven experience of staff management, delivering and leading change and transformation across a multi-disciplinary team, and developing staff to meet their full potential. **S**

Proven track record of reducing spend on legal challenges as a result of implementing robust and effective case management systems

Significant experience of assessing homeless applications and providing housing advice and homeless prevention services **S**

Proven excellent communication, mediation skills dealing with landlords and prospective tenants particularly those who may have disabilities or are vulnerable

Advanced knowledge and experience of using Microsoft packages, including Word, Excel and PowerPoint packages.

General Education

Extended formal training with A Level qualification, other professional qualification, or equivalent experience, with knowledge and training which relates to the specific requirements of the job
Evidence of relevant continuing professional development. **S**

Degree and/or professional housing qualification- Desirable

Personal Qualities

To be personable and presentable

Organised and target driven **S**

Able to set and maintain the highest standards in professional relationships and behavior with customers, colleagues and other external contacts

Excellent time management and organisational skills to effectively manage a varied workload. **S**

Commitment to high levels of attendance and punctuality

Flexible and proactive, with a commercially-minded approach to developing services and sustaining relationships with landlords **S**

Willingness to undertake home visits which are effective and take into account health and safety requirements.

High standard of integrity

Ability to remain calm when working under pressure

Circumstances

Flexible approach to working hours, able to attend meetings outside normal office hours (including evenings) and to work reasonable additional hours as required.

DBS Disclosure Required? **No** ☐ **Basic** ☒ **Enhanced** ☐

(Tick as appropriate – guidance available from your HR Advisor)

Physical

Generally candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post