**Job Description**

**Support and Inclusion Officer**

**Role Profile** HOU001

**Service/Team** Housing Options and Partnerships

**Reports to** Senior Housing Options Officer

**Responsible for** n/a

**Number of posts** Multiple

**Post number** 11492

**Career Grade** G

**Job Overview**

**My job improves the quality of life for the people of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole by** ensuring effective support is offered to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

* To support households to remain in their own home proactively preventing homelessness
* To assist households who are homeless and living in temporary or emergency accommodation to secure a longer-term housing solution.
* To work within a team to find creative and sustainable housing options for customers
* As part of a wider team to deliver a responsive front line duty service
* To support customers in a variety of tenure types including the private sector, social housing, and family arrangements.
* To deliver support in a variety of community settings including customers’ homes.
* To empower customers to live independently and sustain their accommodation.
* To work with vulnerable people who have a wide range of needs that may impact on their ability to sustain their home and
* To work effectively with partner agencies to implement a holistic support package tailored to household needs.

**Key Responsibilities**

* To be responsible for managing a caseload and to conduct planned regular home visits.
* To lone work adhering to the Council’s Lone Working policy.
* Work with customers to follow and contribute to their housing and support plans to prevent and relieve homelessness
* Follow risk management and safeguarding procedures in line with Council policy.
* Offer advice and assistance to prevent households becoming homeless, by taking a proactive approach to preventing homelessness.
* Work and negotiate with landlords and tenants to find solutions to prevent eviction from the private sector
* Support customers living with family or friend arrangements to sustain their arrangements with appropriate support in place.
* Develop and maintain effective working links with other services to prevent homelessness. This will include agencies such as drug and alcohol services, Social Care for children and adults, social and private landlords, primary care services and mental health teams.
* Ensure that potentially homeless households are given advice and assistance to claim housing, support and other welfare benefits available to them with the aim of preventing or delaying homelessness.
* Effective data collection and accurate prevention case note recording

**Prevention of Homelessness**

* Assist households to maintain the current accommodation in all sectors to prevent homelessness by regular consistent contact.
* To assist clients in the private sector to prevent eviction by supporting to rectify tenancy issues.
* Ensure that households at risk or threatened with homelessness are assisted to maximise their income and rectify benefit issues to prevent eviction and sustain tenancies.
* Provide specialist advice on matters relating directly to tenancy advice.
* Work in partnership with landlords, clients and relevant agencies to support the prevention of homelessness.
* To work with clients and family members to prevent eviction using negotiation techniques.
* Where remaining in current accommodation is not possible, support clients to move to alternative suitable accommodation to prevent homelessness

**Relief of Homelessness**

* To be responsible for the effective delivery of a high-quality resettlement support and resettlement service for homeless people.
* To support households in emergency and temporary accommodation in

finding alternative settled accommodation including the Private Rented Sector, support housing and Social Housing.

* To ensure a swift response to Housing Benefit queries from both landlords and applicants.
* To closely monitor households placed in temporary accommodation and move on from hotel accommodation as soon as possible.
* To assist Housing Options Officers to review Personal Housing Support Plans including identifying suitable exit accommodation.
* To assist and review the support a client requires to maintain accommodation and carry out appropriate referrals (e.g. Drug and Alcohol support services and Mental Health services).
* To work with relevant partner agencies to provide support to clients whilst in temporary accommodation and aid the transition to settled accommodation.
* To ensure the client is assisted to meet their health needs by providing a link into primary health services
* To support the client to maximise their income and ensure they have appropriate documents to enable access to settled accommodation (e.g. ID and bank account)
* To assist clients to assess affordability of prospective accommodation, i.e. completion and review of income / expenditure and to provide basic budgeting advice and guidance.
* To assist clients to secure essential items required for resettlement into their accommodation
* To provide robust housing advice and assistance in line with current legislation and council policies to anyone with a housing related need.
* Construct accurate case notes and record all activity on relevant case management systems.
* Maximise the use of the private sector by liaising with landlords and other providers to ensure a ready supply of accommodation is available for homeless households’ occupation.
* To assist clients to secure private sector accommodation that is suitable for them and support their move.
* To attend, participate in, and where necessary lead case conferences and multiagency meetings and represent the service as requested.

**Job Requirements**

* Enhanced Criminal Records Check (DBS)
* Ability to speak fluent English
* Must be able to travel throughout BCP area and further distances where needed. Must be able to either using public or other forms of transport where they are viable, or by holding a valid UK driving licence with access to own car.
* To constructively participate in one-to-one supervision, case reviews and case conferences, employee appraisals and training sessions.
* During your employment, you will be required to maintain a record of all training and development undertaken. All employees will be given encouragement from their Manager/Supervisor to develop their skills and knowledge to the benefit of themselves and the Council.
* To undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time commensurate with the level of the post.

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| **ATTRIBUTES & CRITERIA** | **ESSENTIAL/ DESIRABLE** | **METHOD OF ASSESSMENT** |
| **EXPERIENCE**   * Experience of dealing with members of the public both face to face and over the phone * Experience of supporting vulnerable people * Experience of data entry * Experience using Microsoft Office systems effectively and ability to data entry * Experience of liaison and negotiation with Private sector Landlords, agents, and statutory agencies * Experience of working with mental health / substance misuse / welfare benefits | Essential  Desirable  Essential  Essential  Desirable  Desirable | Application Form Interview  References |
| **QUALIFICATIONS / TRAINING**   * English and Maths GCSE A\*-C (or equivalent) * NVQ level 3 (or equivalent experience in housing support services) | Essential  Desirable | Application Form  Certificates |
| **APTITUDES /ABILITIES**   * Excellent communication skills and ability to adapt these according to the circumstances * Strong negotiation skills * Ability to motivate people and obtain positive engagement * Ability to explain legislation so it can be clearly understood * Ability to deal effectively with caseloads and competing demands * Creative and able to work on own initiative * Resilient and ability to work under pressure * Flexible, adaptable, and innovative * Effective team member * Able to take an empathetic and non-judgemental approach to customer care | Essential  Essential  Essential  Essential  Essential  Essential  Essential  Essential  Essential  Essential  Essential  Essential | Application Form  Interview  References |
| **KNOWLEDGE**   * Homelessness and an awareness of the Housing Act 1996 VII (as amended) * Knowledge of other legislation such as the Children’s Act, Care Act, Protection of Eviction Act * Private sector housing market * Welfare Benefits * Trauma informed and strength-based approaches | Desirable  Desirable  Desirable  Desirable  Desirable | Application Form  Interview |