**Job Description**

**Housing Options Officer – Rough Sleeper specialist**

**Role Profile** HOU002

**Service/Team** Housing Options

**Reports to** Senior Housing Options Officer

**Responsible for** N/A

**Number of posts**

**Post number**

**Career Grade** H

**My job improves the quality of life for the people of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole by** ensuring I help people to resolve their housing circumstances.

**Job Overview**

* To assess the Council’s housing duty to those applying for housing; as homeless or threatened with homelessness, in accordance with statute and Council policy and working procedures.
* To support people who find themselves rough sleeping, to secure new or reconnect with existing accommodation through the provision of housing advice, guidance and support under the framework of the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act.
* As a member of a committed team, provide person centred housing options advice and support with a focus on preventing homelessness
* To work closely with BCP commissioned outreach service and other relevant partner agencies to provide wrap around support and multi-agency response to people rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping.
* To contribute to the collective aim of preventing rough sleeping in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole where possible and where it is not ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring.
* Carry out wide ranging complex and sensitive meetings with individuals who are rough sleeping, applying technical knowledge to assist and resolve housing needs where you can
* To work in a multi-disciplinary environment, collaborating with specialist services & using your skills and knowledge, to respond to those with complex problems; including, domestic abuse, adult safeguarding, mental health, substance misuse, learning difficulties, child protection, disabilities and other medical / social issues.

1. **Key Responsibilities**

* To provide specialist advice on a range of complex housing options and homeless prevention initiatives
* To hold a caseload & carry out detailed legal assessments of applications for housing under Part VII Housing Act 1996 (as amended), making decisions on all aspects of housing or homelessness applications
* Determine the support needs of households in housing need and refer to specialist providers where appropriate.
* To participate in Housing Options Duty Rota, providing excellent customer service in respect of a range of complex and contentious housing enquiries, through a range of communication channels, online, face to face & in the community.
* To lead multi-agency case meetings for households with complex support needs
* To act as housing lead in response to serious domestic abuse, child protection, adult safeguarding etc. where clients have identified housing needs.
* To work closely with BCP commissioned outreach service and other relevant partner agencies to provide wrap around support to people rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping.
* Contribute to BCP’s muti-agency delivery of Severe Weather Provision (SWEP) when triggered to safeguard and protect people who are rough sleeping.
* To develop strong relationships with all housing providers and promote multi-agency initiatives in the prevention of rough sleeping and homelessness
* To maintain continuous professional development and up to date knowledge of related legislation, such as landlord and tenant, family, welfare benefits, child and adult safeguarding
* To effectively manage a caseload through personal housing plans, communication strategies and effective record keeping.
* To provide affidavit evidence in cases where legal review is triggered.
* To apply client confidentiality procedures to investigations undertaken and to follow guidance in relation to lone working where there are potential risks to personal safety.
* To constructively participate in one-to-one supervision, case reviews and case conferences, employee appraisals and training sessions. To assist in providing induction and/or training programs to other officers as required.
* To respond to and initiate routine and non-routine correspondence with a wide range of agencies including Councillors and Members of Parliament.
* To produce and analyse statistical reports as appropriate.
* To respond to emergency situations where appropriate, attending cover at externally located rest centre(s).
* During the course of your employment, you will be required to maintain a record of all training and development undertaken.
* To undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time commensurate with the level of the post.
* To comply with all decisions, policies and standing orders of the Council and any relevant statutory requirements, including Equality and Diversity legislation, the Health and Safety at Work Act and Data Protection Act.

1. **Specific Qualifications and Experience**

* Level 4 diploma or the equivalent experience
* Significant experience of providing excellent customer service
* Experience of providing professional advice or support to people in housing need or a relevant sector.
* Experience of working for a range of different vulnerable clients (e.g. victims of domestic abuse, mental health, offenders, substance misuse, young people, learning or other disabilities)
* Experience of managing a caseload and developing support plans
* Experience of team working and multi-agency working

1. **Personal Qualities & Attributes**

* Ability to understand and impart information and legislation though face to face interviews and in writing
* Effective interpersonal and negotiation skills.
* Be able to deal with conflict and challenging behaviour and have strategies to deal with this
* To be able to problem solve and make decisions using professional judgement and intuition in a complex environment
* Able to organise a diverse workload without close supervision and manage competing demands
* Ability to recognize issues relating to Adult safeguarding, child protection and domestic abuse
* Ability to effectively use casework management systems
* Ability to support vulnerable households in trauma informed and strength based manner
* Enjoy working in a supportive team & highly pressurised, rapidly changing environment dealing calmly & effectively with a wide range of challenging client behaviours
* Understanding and commitment to diversity and equal opportunities

**4. Job Requirements**

* Ability to travel around the area (and to other areas of the UK) in an agreed timely manner
* Ability to work in the community at a variety of sites
* Enhanced Criminal Records Check (DBS)
* Flexible approach to working hours to cover 24 hour call out which operates on a rota basis
* Ability to speak fluent English