Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

Housing Assessment & Advice Manager

Salary: Band 9 - £40,443 - £44,252 p.a.

Hours per week: 37

Location: Civic Offices, Portsmouth

Contract type: Permanent

The Service:

Portsmouth City Council's Housing Needs, Advice & Support Service works directly with customers to help deal with housing issues and prevent homelessness in the city and to fulfil the councils' statutory homeless functions. We are a busy front-line service dealing directly with customers, many of whom are vulnerable and/or facing homelessness. The service assesses and advises customers on the housing options available to them, provide support services to vulnerable people and rough sleepers, provide temporary accommodation and link with providers to help people move into more permanent accommodation.

The Assessment & Advice team are the front-line team that deal with customers as they approach the service, looking for advice, support and access to social or affordable housing. The team need to understand all the customer's issues and then work with them, and other agencies, to find a solution to their housing situation.

What is the role?

The purpose of The Housing Assessment & Advice Manager (HAAM) role is to be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Assessment & Advice team within the Housing Needs, Advice & Support Service. This includes the shared line management of a multi-disciplinary team totalling approximately 30 FTE direct reports, although at times you may take responsibility for team members in the wider team.

This role involves managing staffing resources to ensure service delivery to the public, providing a comprehensive front-line service to ensure the City Council’s housing allocation policy and statutory rehousing duties are fulfilled within agreed service standards and ensures that everyone with an accommodation problem receives appropriate help and advice.

The HAAM creates an environment that enables change to occur based on learning, and supports, educates, and develops staff to equip them to do better work.

The HAAM is responsible for:

• The management of all areas of staffing within the area of responsibility, to include recruitment, sickness, leave, development and training, resourcing, disciplinary.
• Involvement in all HR processes which will include dismissals under the guidance and instruction of the Homelessness Prevention Manager.
Following PCC policy in taking a flexible and individual approach to each staff issue.
• Being responsible for day to day running of the office, providing support to front line officers.
• Committing to making safeguarding a priority, and to support officers to ensure all safeguarding responsibilities are met.
• Co-ordinating services, providing specialist advice, resolving disputes and challenging decisions.

Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

• Dealing with all complaints regarding Housing Advice & Assessment Officers (HAAOs) and other complaints when deemed appropriate.
• Monitoring performance standards and targets, looking to achieve continuous improvement of the service.
• Reviewing the statutory decisions made in relation to duties owed under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (amended), Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and Renters Rights Act 2025.
• Working within the legislative framework whilst taking and encouraging staff to take a creative approach to problems through innovative thinking.
• Following the principles of 'Systems Thinking' when looking at our working practice and finding ways of improving the service to our customers.
• Training, coaching and encouraging staff to be creative thinkers.
• Taking an approach of “thinking on our feet” and enabling staff to follow this behaviour.
• Working with information of an extremely sensitive nature with confidence and trust
• Managing allocated budget lines to enable people to resolve housing needs and homelessness.
• Approving expenditure of the homeless prevention fund with authority and responsibility to authorise and approve up to £5k.
• Identification of the most appropriate accommodation route ensuring that care and support needs are met.
• Supporting the team to engage with MARM (Multi-Agency Risk Management Framework), MAPPA (multi agency public protection meetings) and MARAC (multi agency public protection meetings), and being instrumental regarding the support of safeguarding concerns, highest risk offenders and victim-survivors of domestic abuse.
• Working across the organisation and with internal and external stakeholders and support services at all levels.
• Taking responsibility for and having direct involvement for complex cases / high profile media cases.
• Extensive involvement in the multi-agency arena effectively meeting the needs of complex client groups with direct involvement with services across the city and developing best practice.
• Representing the Homelessness Prevention Manager with external stakeholders and partners, representing at meetings when required.
• Working with other services to gather information, resolve issues for the public, and undertaking care and support assessments.
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• Planning and initiating new projects and reviewing specific procedures.
• Interpreting and identifying when it is appropriate to use discretionary powers within Housing and homeless legislation.
• And may be tasked to develop ideas, initiate a project or to review the way we work in a certain area & may be given a specific budget to work within

This is not an exhaustive list, and any other reasonable request can be required.

The Housing, Neighbourhood, and Building Services Directorate use 'systems thinking' as its approach to business improvement, which informs our understanding of the role of leaders and managers. The core role of any manager within the directorate is to understand and act on the system of work to drive improvement.

This will include:
• Ensuring all staff have clarity of understanding about the purpose of the service from the customer's point of view.
• Ensuring we understand customer demand
• Use of robust measures of performance to make visible the customer experience.

• Understanding the flow of work in the service to ensure we keep teams, and individuals, focussed on what is valuable to the customer; and,
• Acting on the system in response to obstacles experienced by customers and staff.

Who is the person?

We are looking for somebody who:

- Has experience of working in a challenging front line service.
- Has the ability to support and manage staff dealing with customers who may have a range of social issues
- Has experience of working within the relevant legislative framework managing, making and reviewing homeless decisions.
- Has a practical understanding of the private rented housing sector and landlord and tenant law generally
- Has the ability to manage a budget
- Can motivate, manage and lead a team, offering support, direction and advice to help them, to be more effective in their role and equip them with the skills they need to robustly engage with customers and partners.
- Can make proportionate decisions in a structured and transparent way and is able to identify and pull resources to themselves to help achieve necessary outcomes.
- Is confident and a strong verbal and written communicator. Able to negotiate and to clearly interpret legislation and contract arrangements, for partners, employees and customers as appropriate.
- Has an awareness of the welfare benefits system and the impact of current reforms on customers and a Housing Needs, Advice & Support service
- Has a commitment to equal opportunities and awareness of the issues facing vulnerable client groups
- Understands and is committed to the safeguarding of adults and children.
- Is always proactive, working on their own initiative, able to manage multiple tasks.
- Is creative, able to respond to customer demand with well thought out solutions to problems and is happy to question current procedures and suggest improvements based on their knowledge of the 'what and why' of the current performance.
- Is competent using a variety of IT systems such as Excel and other office applications.
- Has the ability to converse at ease with customers and provide advice in accurate spoken English
- Has the ability to work in accordance with the 'Ways of working' as described above.

You will need to demonstrate that you have the Right to Work in the UK. No post will be offered without it.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Portsmouth City Council is the Data Controller of any personal information you provide when applying for a job. It will only be used in connection with the recruitment process and will not be kept for longer than necessary. For more detailed information you can access the Data Protection Privacy Notice on our careers portal.