

Waverley is an ambitious authority, committed to being one of the leading Councils in the country at a time of major change by developing a high performing, highly engaged staff team to share the organisation's values and deliver our corporate objectives.

JOB DESCRIPTION	
Job title:	Senior Homechoice Officer
Service:	Housing Strategy and Delivery
Team:	Homechoice
Location:	The Burys, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1HR
Reporting to:	Homechoice Manager
Responsible for:	Homechoice Coordinator/ Transfer and Easy Move Officer, Rough Sleeper Support Officer & Temp contracts in absence of Homechoice Manager
OUR ORGANISATIONAL VALUES	
Openness	In Waverley we value openness and honesty where communication is clear and constructive and actions are transparent .
Excellence	In Waverley we value excellence , working in a consistent and professional way to achieve the highest standards possible, taking the time to recognise and celebrate success .
Fairness	In Waverley we value fairness and respect , working with integrity to ensure that everyone is treated well and has equal access to the opportunities available.
Team Work	In Waverley we value team work and collaboration , with approachable staff actively contributing to our shared corporate goals.
Taking Ownership	In Waverley we value taking ownership , where everyone feels personally committed to issues at hand and is working towards a positive outcome .
PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF THE ROLE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The post holder has ultimate responsibility to oversee the Transfer/ Easy Move Officer, ensuring that social housing transfer applicants are currently assessed registered and banded according to the Council Allocation scheme and for managing further detailed inquiries regarding such cases e.g. customer queries and liaison with statutory and voluntary agencies and other Council departments. Provide support to the Transfer officer on complex decision or enquires. To assist and deputise for the Homechoice Manager in the correct advertising, 	

shortlisting and allocation of all void Council and Housing Association properties under the Council's Homechoice scheme to ensure correct and efficient relet of properties.

- In deputising for the Homechoice and RSI manager, ensure that reports of rough sleeping are responded to swiftly by the Council's Rough Sleeping Outreach and Support service
- In fulfilling these responsibilities, the post holder has to exercise a high level of professional judgement and expertise. This includes taking into account complex housing, social welfare and medical factors, Government guidance and the evidence supplied by other professionals such as Health professionals, the Police, and Social Services.
- The purpose of the role is to help create balanced social housing communities and identify fraud

MAIN DUTIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Support the Transfer/ Easy Move Officer to ensure that housing applications from social housing tenants are correctly recorded, assessed, verified and registered. This includes ensuring that procedures are followed and where needed up dated to verify housing applicants' circumstances, including medical and social welfare factors, so that the correct level of housing priority is awarded and any possible fraud identified.
- Assist the Homechoice manager dealing with any appeal or review requests from housing applicants and dealing with complaints and MP, Councillor and Freedom of Information enquiries.
- The post-holder will liaise with other council departments and other housing teams.
- Liaise with statutory and voluntary agencies as appropriate in relation to housing applications e.g. Police, GPs, Health, Social Services Citizens Advice, other local authorities, housing associations etc. When required the post holder will attend or contribute written information to Adult or Child Protection case conferences
- Assist the Homechoice Manager and Homechoice Coordinator in coordinating the weekly advertising and shortlisting of properties under the Council's Choice Based Lettings Scheme.
- With the Homechoice Manager carrying out the weekly shortlisting of bids for advertised properties and deputise for the Homechoice manager's role when ever required e.g. leave, away from office or in meetings or sickness absence e.g. management and supervision of staff and providing cover to the Rough Sleeper Support Officer and any management issues arising from homeless temporary accommodation.
- Ensure that the housing applications of all shortlisted applicants are verified, taking into account the requirements of the Allocation Scheme e.g. priority banding, household size, income/ savings/ fraud affordability etc.
- Determine the tenancy type of all new tenancies taking into account the Council's tenancy strategy and the current tenancies held by shortlisted housing applicants.
- Following verification of shortlisted housing applicants, ensure that property viewings are promptly conducted by Housing Management Officers and conduct property viewings in situations where they cannot be conducted in a timely manner by Housing Management Officers.
- Ensure that the outcomes of property viewings are recorded, databases updated and that the necessary sign-up paperwork is prepared for tenancies that are accepted and liaise with the Homechoice Co-Ordinator on a daily basis in terms of lettings and what actions need to be complete or chased up, such as property

videos being sent out, arrange Docusigns, commencing and terminating tenancies etc.

- Liaise with Property Services and the Council's repairs contractor to ensure that any necessary repairs and maintenance issues highlighted at viewings are carried out.
- Attend weekly void meetings, if required, and any other meetings related to relet of properties if needed.
- Help in monitoring and recording the relet of properties and work to ensure swiftest possible relet of properties
- Co-ordinating Occupational Health Assessments for disabled applicants and ensure that any adaptation work is coordinated with the Property Services team.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Council's Allocation Scheme so that it prioritises those in most housing need in the Borough, taking into account the rights and responsibilities of housing applicants.
- Provide housing associations with nominations for their advertised properties (and any Council owned hard to let properties) and liaise with them on any follow up issues to ensure good, ongoing working relationships with housing associations operating in the Waverley area.
- Ensure the Homechoice team maximises opportunities for transfer applicants to do mutual exchanges and promote mutual exchanges as part of the team's work.
- As a key post holder in the housing service, participate in initiatives to review and improve the housing registration, allocation, letting processes, prevention of homelessness and recommend necessary improvements.
- Monitor the Homechoice team's performance in registering housing applications and advertising and allocating social housing to ensure it positively contributes to improved relet times.
- When required participate in void performance review meetings with Housing Management and Property Services to ensure a coordinated and improved Housing Service to customers.
- Ensure that the Homechoice Service meets its obligations under Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (Ex offenders, schedule 1 offenders), Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (victims of domestic abuse), National Witness Protection Mobility Arrangements and child and adult safeguarding arrangements.
- Represent the Homechoice/Options Service and participate in presentations on the work of the team and housing service to other teams and external agencies.
- Provide performance indicators/reports on the work of the Homechoice service and identify improvements and efficiencies.
- Help in ensuring that the Homechoice Service is promoted and that appropriate information is available and accessible to customers online, in writing and in person.
- Work closely the Housing Options team and other teams whose work overlaps with Homechoice e.g. Housing Management, Senior living, Rents, Property Services, Family Support, Housing Benefit, Environmental Health and Council tax.
- Co-ordination of assessments for Senior Living Accommodation.
- Provide senior officer cover and expertise for other Housing Options work
- With the Homechoice manager, work to ensure a joined up, close working, shared responsibility across the Options service (Options, Homechoice and Support) and across wider housing teams.

Business Continuity

- Play a pivotal role in business continuity planning and should the need arise assist in ensuring business recovery of key service provision in a 24-hour window.

- **Health and Safety**

Comply with all health and safety legislation for your area of work, ensuring that risks are identified, managed and monitored as required

DIMENSIONS OF THE ROLE

- Deputise for the Homechoice Manager
- Responsible for the advertising, allocation and letting of up to 300 empty Council properties and 100 Housing Association homes a year
- Average weekly rent loss for an empty property £120.
- 50 rough sleeping referrals a year
- In absence of Homechoice Manager monitor and authorise expenditure of the transfer incentive scheme, £40,000 annual budget
- Overseeing the Transfer Officer Role responsible for the verification and assessment of up to 300 social housing applications a year and any resulting review/appeal requests.
- Responsible for the sensitive assessment of complex cases taking into account the presenting needs, limited housing stock and priority of other housing applicants

AREAS OF ACCOUNTABILITY/PROBLEM SOLVING – DECISION MAKING / SCOPE FOR IMPACT

- Ensuring housing applications are correctly verified, assessed and prioritised in accordance with the Council's Allocation Scheme and within the Council's turnaround times
- Ensuring properties are correctly let to housing applicants who fulfil the eligibility criteria of the Council's Allocation scheme, taking into account any changes in applicant circumstances from when first registered.
- Sensitive assessment of multiple need cases (mental health, drug/alcohol issues, learning disability, social exclusion), where a mixture of social, medical and financial factors combine to create complexity.
- Ensuring that vulnerable Adult and Child safeguarding concerns are identified are acted on appropriately
- When required help deal with reviews, complaints and decisions relating to cancelling/ suspension of applications/ Sensitive lets and decision made around not allocating.
- Recommending improvements to the Allocation Scheme and the Lettings process

PLANNING/ORGANISING/CONTROLLING

- Ensuring empty properties are correctly processed including being advertised, viewed, repaired and let as quickly as possible.
- Help oversee smooth running of the team to ensure excellent customer service and performance
- Excellent communication and negotiation skills
- Emotionally intelligent and able to deal with people at all levels in an assertive and diplomatic manner.

CUSTOMERS AND CONTACTS

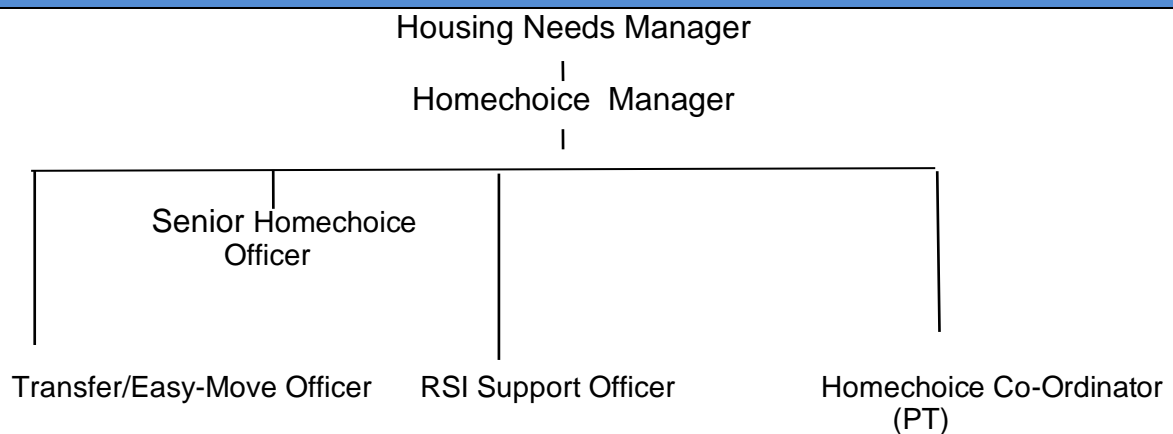
INTERNAL

- Head of Housing Operations, Head of Strategic Housing & Delivery, Housing Options, Rents, Property Services, Housing Management, Senior Living Housing, Council Tax and Housing Benefit, Specialist Housing Options, Family Support Team, Members, Senior Management Team

EXTERNAL

- Housing Associations, Supported Housing Providers, Social Services, Occupational Therapists, Police, GP's, Health Visitors, Mental Health Services, Private Landlords, Legal, York Road Project, Streetlink, Environmental Health, Citizens Advice Bureau, Surrey Homechoice/Allocations Managers

SERVICE/TEAM STRUCTURE



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates must be able to demonstrate, giving examples, **all essential criteria** within their application form to be shortlisted for this role.

	PERSON SPECIFICATION			
	ESSENTIAL CRITERIA	How ASSESSED	DESIRABLE CRITERIA	How ASSESSED
QUALIFICATIONS/ EDUCATION / TRAINING / EXPERIENCE	3 x A levels or equivalent or experience in a similar role	A/I	Housing Qualification/member or fellow of Chartered Institute of Housing Degree or equivalent or considerable experience in a similar role.	A/I
	Experience of working in a frontline Housing Register/Allocation/ /Housing Options/ Lettings Service	A/I	Management qualification Line management / team leader experience	A/I
KNOWLEDGE /TECHNICAL SKILLS	Excellent understanding of Social Housing, Housing Register, allocations work and legislation and overlap with homelessness / housing options	A/I/E	Excellent understanding of homelessness / housing options and Housing Register/Allocations legislation	A/I
	Excellent IT skills including Microsoft packages, other database systems and able to learn to use electronic document scanning systems	A/I	Knowledge and experience of using Orchard, Civica and Abritas housing systems	A/I
	Excellent attention to detail and an understanding of affordable housing issues and the impact of social welfare and medical factors on customer's housing needs	A/I/E	Knowledge of Safeguarding	A/I
COMMUNICATION	Excellent negotiation	A/I		

	and communication skills; able to speak to customers at all levels in an assertive but diplomatic manner			
	Excellent written and verbal communication skills and able to think strategically and see the wider context of housing within the community.	A/I		
	Attention to detail and ability to prepare and assess and present statistical and service information	A/I		
CUSTOMER SERVICE	Understanding of and commitment to promoting equality and diversity in service delivery and employment.	A/I		
	Ability to apply knowledge and expertise in sensitive cases such as domestic abuse, learning disability, vulnerable adults/children, violent offenders, frail/elderly etc.	A/I		
TEAM WORKING	Ability to work on your own initiative and without direct supervision balanced with a commitment to work as part of a wider housing team	A/I		
	Able to see the overlaps between different areas of housing and to work co-operatively and in partnership with other teams and external service providers	A/I		
	Adaptable, friendly approach	A/I		
MANAGING SELF AND OTHERS	Self motivated and able to inspire and develop team members to	A/I		

	achieve excellent performance and customer service			
	Use initiative and work proactively to achieve results and manage conflicting priorities.	A/I		
	Ability to motivate others, able to deal with customers in stressful circumstances and able adapt positively to change	A/I		
CAN DO APPROACH / ACHIEVING RESULTS	A genuine enthusiasm to develop the Council's Homechoice service and to forge positive partnerships with statutory and voluntary partners.	A/I		
	Very competent in performance management, meeting targets and deadlines and excellent motivational skills and ability to deal with difficult/sensitive situations (Staff/Customer)	A/I		
	Ability to adapt service priorities to reflect changes in legislation and corporate priorities, whilst maintaining team commitment through this process.	A/I		
SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS	For business continuity purposes you are required to have access to the internet at home via broadband on a PC, laptop or tablet. item	A		
	Full driving licence and car available for work purposes	A		
	Able to work outside of normal office hours when required	A		

How assessed

- A = Application CV/Personal Statement
 C = Certificates/professional Registration
 D = DBS police check
 E = Exercise
 I = Interview
 M = Medical assessment

Disclosure and Barring Service

Due to the nature of the work, this post involves a check on an individual's criminal background. The check is carried out through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS, previously CRB). Any offer of employment will be subject to receiving satisfactory clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

or

Basic Disclosure Clearance- Government Requirement for Accessing Council and Government Data

To comply with the Public Sector Networks (PSN) "Code of Connection", Waverley Borough Council, like other public organisations, need to undertake basic disclosure checks for unspent convictions only, in respect of those staff that will access our IT systems. As a result, a Police Act Disclosure form, together with Guidance Notes, will be sent to you if you are successful in the appointment of this post.

For Official Use only			
Job title:	Senior Homechoice Officer	Post no:	HC06
Service:	Housing Strategy & Delivery	JE score:	
Team:	Homechoice	Pay band:	7
Location:	The Burys Godalming, Surrey GU7 1HR	Position type: (if part time, working pattern)	Full time Mon-Fri
Competencies: (level 1 – 4)	Communication:	3	
	Customer Service:	3	
	Team Working:	3	
	Managing Self and Others:	3	
	Can do approach/Results	3	
REVIEWED BY:		DATE:	
CHECKED IN:	Employee Services	DATE:	
LAST UPDATED:	Jan 20	DATE:	