**Job Profile comprising Job Description and Person Specification**

**Job Description**

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| **Job Title:**  Senior Housing Reviews Officer | **Grade**:  PO3 |
| **Section:**  Housing Services | **Directorate:**  HRD |
| **Responsible to following manager:**  Housing Reviews Manager | **Responsible for following staff:**  None |
| **Post Number/s:**  RWHHRO2 | **Last review date:**  April 2020 |

**Working for the Richmond/Wandsworth Shared Staffing Arrangement**

This role is employed under the Shared Staffing Arrangement between Richmond and Wandsworth Councils. The overall purpose of the Shared Staffing Arrangement is to provide the highest quality of service at the lowest attainable cost.

Staff are expected to deliver high quality and responsive services wherever they are based, as well as having the ability to adapt to sometimes differing processes and expectations.

The Shared Staffing Arrangement aims to be at the forefront of innovation in local government and the organisation will invest in the development of its staff and ensure the opportunities for progression that only a large organisation can provide.

**Job Purpose**

Responsible to the Housing Reviews Manager to assist with the overall coordination of the reviews function of applications made under the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and with regard to the Homelessness Code of Guidance 2017 and the relevant Council’s Allocation Schemes.

Working across both boroughs to assist with ensuring that review decisions comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation and to ensure that Housing Reviews Officers are provided with support and guidance during their assistance with the enquiries on review and drafting of decisions for authorisation by the reviewing officer.

Responsible for providing guidance and instruction to Housing Reviews Officers regarding the nature and extent of appropriate enquiries and to act as the controlling mind in relation to final decisions on review which, in accordance with the Review Regulations 2018 must be made by a person senior to the original decision maker.

**Specific Duties and Responsibilities**

Responsible for dealing with a caseload of reviews under both Part VI and VII of the Housing Act as amended and reaching appropriate, lawful decisions and ensuring that written notification is provided to the applicant or their representative on conclusion of review and for ensuring that all records are appropriately and accurately updated so as to reflect the enquiries and outcome of the review.

Responsible for providing guidance and instruction to Housing Reviews Officers regarding the nature and extent of appropriate enquiries and to act as the controlling mind in relation to final decisions on review which, in accordance with the Review Regulations 2018 must be made by a person senior to the original decision maker.

Responsible for maintaining a detailed knowledge of case law as it pertains to Housing Reviews and for ensuring that any considerations relevant to a review are clearly communicated in the written notification and ensuring that Housing Reviews Officers are provided with appropriate direction in relation to case law and other legislative or public law considerations.

To ensure that deadlines in respect of final review decisions are adhered to and where necessary to negotiate extensions to deadlines and to ensure that any such agreement is provided in writing and is compliant with the requirements of the Reviews Regulations 2018

Responsible for producing detailed written notification of the review decision and which are sufficiently robust to meet any additional challenge and for assisting Housing Reviews Officers in producing draft notifications to a sufficient standard.

To assist the Housing Reviews Manager in ensuring that all review decisions are legally robust and issued within statutory guidelines and where the Council is further challenged by way of s204 appeal you will act as a lead officer with subsequent and other litigation in the client role.

To attend Court as a representative of either Council in response to litigation and to provide assistance and guidance to counsel on behalf of the authority and for such guidance to be in relation to the interpretation of the Council’s procedures and policies as well as detailed information on the matter under litigation.

To authorise and negotiate settlements on behalf of the Council either prior to Court or at Court hearings and to notify or seek approval from the Housing Reviews Manager.

To assist the Housing Reviews Manager in the day to day allocation of work to the Housing Reviews Team and to provide guidance on the interpretation of complex legislation and the statutory duties of the Council on relevant legislation and enactment of law and ensure implementation of any subsequent changes arising from amendments in statute and guidance.

To assist the Housing Reviews Manager with coordinating the reviews function and ensuring that decisions are robust, high quality and transparent. To ensure that reviews are conducted in compliance with the statutory timescales, regulatory framework and the Code of Guidance.

To consider requests to provide interim accommodation pending the outcome of review and where that decision is not in the client’s interest, to produce a detailed notification to the client setting out the council’s decision and to deal with any Judicial Review that arises as a result of that refusal.

In cases where the review upholds the original decision, to determine whether an applicant should be provided with financial assistance to assist them to secure accommodation in the private rented sector and to determine both the level of assistance that can be provided and any limiting time scale applicable to that offer of assistance. The cost of any such assistance must be balanced against the potential cost(s) to other departments of failing to provide such assistance.

To be fully aware of and understand the duties and responsibilities arising from the Children Act 2004 and Working Together. To also be fully aware of the principles of safeguarding as they apply to vulnerable adults in relation to the work of the Housing Reviews Team and to ensure that any enquiries or outcomes involving decisions that confirm no ongoing housing duty are referred to the relevant Social or Childrens Services as appropriate.

To work in close conjunction with the Housing Reviews Manager and managers and deputies across the wider housing options service to develop and maintain good joint working protocols and robust procedures and to keep those procedures and joint working practices under review.

To provide coaching, training and facilitating the acquisition and development of skills and knowledge within the Housing Reviews Team and across the division ensuring that officers are better equipped and self-reliant in dealing with policies and procedures when either making decisions under s184 or when assisting the s202 decision maker who is the controlling mind on review.

To represent the Housing Reviews Team by attending meetings both within and outside the Council to promote the work of the Housing Reviews Team and to provide advice and guidance on the work and remit of the Housing Reviews Team as well as the Council’s responsibilities and duties pertaining to housing legislation, Allocation Schemes and housing policies.

To lead on the preparation of cases being passed to the Council’s legal services for prosecution under the Protection from Eviction Act 1977, where criminal proceedings may ensue. To attend Court in such cases and present cases in the Magistrates, County and Crown and other Courts as and when required.

To respond to complaints, Members and Councillor enquiries within agreed timescales.

To maintain accurate and up to date case files and housing case notes using the systems provided for that purpose and to ensure that Housing Reviews Officers assisting with enquiries on review complete full notes of their actions in timely manner.

**Generic Duties and Responsibilities**

* To contribute to the continuous improvement of the services of the Boroughs of Wandsworth and Richmond.
* To comply with relevant Codes of Practice, including the Code of Conduct and policies concerning data protection and health and safety.
* To adhere to security controls and requirements as mandated by the SSA’s policies, procedures and local risk assessments to maintain confidentiality, integrity, availability and legal compliance of information and systems
* To promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, maintaining an awareness of the equality and diversity protocol/policy and working to create and maintain a safe, supportive and welcoming environment where all people are treated with dignity and their identity and culture are valued and respected.
* To understand both Councils’ duties and responsibilities for safeguarding children, young people and adults as they apply to the role within the council.
* The profile is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the duties the post holder will carry out. Other reasonable duties commensurate with the level of the post, including supporting emergency and priority situations, will form part of the role.

**Additional Information**

**Team structure**

Housing Reviews Manager

Housing Reviews Officers x 2

Senior Housing Reviews Officer

**Person Specification**

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| **Job Title: Senior Housing Reviews Officer** | **Grade**: PO3 |
| **Section: Housing Services** | **Directorate:** Housing and Regeneration |
| **Responsible to: Housing Reviews Manager** | **Responsible for: Not applicable** |
| **Post Number/s: RWHHRO2** | **Last Review Date: April 2020** |

**Our Values and Behaviours**

The values and behaviours we seek from our staff draw on the high standards of the two boroughs, and we prize these qualities in particular:

**Being open.** This means we share our views openly, honestly and in a thoughtful way. We encourage new ideas and ways of doing things. We appreciate and listen to feedback from each other.

**Being supportive.** This means we drive the success of the organisation by making sure that our colleagues are successful. We encourage others and take account of the challenges they face. We help each other to do our jobs.

**Being positive.** Being positive and helpful means we keep our goals in mind and look for ways to achieve them. We listen constructively and help others see opportunities and the way forward. We have a ‘can do’ attitude and are continuously looking for ways to help each other improve.

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| **Person Specification Requirements** | | | | **Assessed by**  **A/I/T/C**  **(see below for explanation)** |
| **Knowledge** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Assessed** | |
| Detailed knowledge of relevant legislation across a number of disciplines | **x** |  | **A/I** | |
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| **Experience** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Assessed** | |
| Experience of decision making at s184 & s202 Housing Act 1996 as amended and under the Council’s Allocation Scheme | **x** |  | **A/I** | |
| Experience of Housing Reviews as they pertain to both Homelessness and Housing Register applications | **x** |  | **A/I** | |
| Experience of dealing with legal representations and providing detailed written decisions having regard to those representations, the relevant legislation and Council policy. | **x** |  | **A/I** | |
| Ability to objectively and swiftly assess the considerations relative to review and to communicate clear direction to officers assisting with enquiries | **x** |  | **A/I** | |
| Problem solving in a fast paced environment and where the consequences of wrong decision making are likely to prove costly both in monetary terms and also that in relation to the reputation of the council. | **x** |  | **A/I** | |
| Exerience of providing detailed guidance to colleagues so as to ensure that decisions are robust. | **x** |  | **A/I** | |
| **Skills** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Assessed** | |
| Excellent communication skills, both orally and in writing | **x** |  | **A/I** | |
| Ability to carry out an objective assessment in a demonstrably fair and transparent manner. | **x** |  | **A/I** | |
| The ability to apply legislative considerations in a practical way so as to ensure that any review decision is balanced and has had due regard to all relevant considerations. | **x** |  | **A/I** | |
| **Qualifications** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Assessed** | |
| Maths and English GCSE grade C and above |  | **x** | **C** | |
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**A – Application form / CV**

**I – Interview**

**T – Test**

**C - Certificate**