



**Job Capsule Supplementary Information:  
Service Manager – Housing Needs**

<b>Position</b>	Service Manager – Housing Needs
<b>Department/ Location</b>	Housing Options
<b>Reports to</b>	Assistant Director of Operations
<b>Staffing reports</b>	6- Direct Reports 20+ Indirect Reports

**Role Purpose:**

The key purpose of the Service Manager – Housing Needs is to lead a highly efficient and high performing team within Housing Options Service to deliver a high-quality customer focused service in line with Barnet Homes' business objectives with a primary focus on homelessness prevention and the delivery of effective housing options.

The Service Manager – Housing Needs is responsible for refocusing the Housing Needs Service on homelessness prevention in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act, for Housing Options and Barnet Homes.

This role is expected to deliver the following outcomes;

- Deliver service targets for the following portfolios; housing needs assessments and reviews, offending, medical assessments and allocations through effective leadership of the teams.
- Provide strategic leadership of partnership relationships with other Council services, and external organisations in regard to the full range of Housing Needs Service responsibilities.

- Design implement and embed procedures and training to ensure front line officers make effective decisions in line with the Homeless Reduction Act provisions.
- Produce statistical data returns to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government are completed accurately and on time.
- Collect, collate and analyse statistical data to provide insight that enables creative strategic management planning and performance improvements.
- Take responsibility and control for supporting and submitting bids for grant funding and making business cases to central government and other agencies for funding for homelessness services.
- Work with external partners to deliver positive homelessness prevention outcomes, accounting for the additional challenge associated welfare reform
- Lead operational improvements to TA admissions, to improve the quality and timeliness of homelessness decision making.
- Apply a creative, innovative approach to the development of new initiatives that will be incorporated into Barnet Homes policies and procedures.
- Ensure that new legislation is implemented in full, and integrated into existing operational practices, through effective systematic change management.
- Provide regulatory statistical returns, management and performance data, and contextual information, to demonstrate achievement of service standards and inform operational and strategic decision making.

Continuous improvement is a key focus of the Service Manager – Housing Needs role, and the post holder will be responsible for ensuring the teams deliver excellent services and seek to exceed service standards and, performance targets. The work of the Service Manager – Housing Needs is set in a dynamic environment of change, requiring the post holder to be proactive to resolve conflicting priorities and meet challenging deadlines.

The role will support the Assistant Director of Operations to deliver service objectives and meet performance targets and can expect to act as their deputy when required.

**Main duties and responsibilities:**

- Responsible for the delivery of the Housing Options Service priorities for; housing needs, including homelessness prevention (including effective delivery of medical assessments and discharges). This includes planning, coordination and management of managers and staff working across a wide range of different activities and priorities within the Housing Needs, Homeless Appeals and Tenancy Sustainment teams.

- Provide strategic leadership for the housing needs portfolio including; housing needs assessments and reviews, offending, medical assessments and allocations.
- Provide technical expertise and operational insight to commissioners within the Council to inform and guide their policy decisions in respect to Housing Needs Assessments and the Allocations Policy. This will include attending senior project boards ensuring Barnet Homes objectives are represented and heard.
- Analyse management and performance information to understand the impact of change driven by external influences including new legislation. Present this insight to senior project boards, management and staff team meetings.
- Influence the shape and direction of Barnet Homes' overarching housing needs strategy, underlying policies, procedures and work plan. This will be achieved through analysis, understanding the impact of change, and making robust decisions that have a major impact on service provision, in line with Barnet Homes business objectives and industry good practice.
- Provide expertise across a range of subject matters, and exercise creativity and innovation to influence, shape and make decisions that will have a major impact on Barnet Homes, London Borough of Barnet, London Councils and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government policies and activities relating to homelessness and housing needs.
- Monitor, evaluate and review core Barnet Homes policy and procedures and practices relating to a range of subjects making recommendations for change, and managing the implementation of these changes.
- Design and develop innovative solutions and new models (along with the review and refinement of existing models) for managing the ongoing challenges of the housing needs process (i.e. development and continuous improvement of housing needs initiatives) and ensuring the right resources are in place to deliver an effective and high performing service.
- Ensure that the Housing Needs and Tenancy Sustainment teams are compliant with the Homeless Reduction Act and produce a high level of data integrity to enable robust H-CLIC returns to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- Communicate changes in policy, strategies and working practices both internally and to partner organisations/stakeholders via a range of mediums including; presentations at meetings and conferences, and written reports for a range of audiences.
- Provide specialist housing needs advice, information and analysis to the board, executive, management and operational staff as required.
- Be responsible for financial planning of the Housing Needs, Homeless Appeals and Tenancy Sustainment teams, ensuring that budgets are set, monitored and managed. This also includes responsibility for management of a number of external contracts and SLAs (service level agreements).
- Manage key relationships with a range of partners across the council, in the voluntary and registered landlord sector and in the private sector. This includes working effectively with LBB, Capita, Police, Health, DWP, Probation, HAB, North London Housing Partnership, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, London Councils, Greater London Authority etc. to achieve joint outcomes for customers.
- Provide leadership and represent Barnet Homes' (acting as an effective ambassador) internally and externally in relation to all aspects of housing needs and assessment. This also includes representing Barnet Homes interests in a wide range of forums and when meeting with external organisations.

- Raise the profile of the service internally and externally (including promotion of homelessness prevention and relief initiatives)
- Monitor and evaluate core Barnet Homes' policy and procedures and practices relating to a range of subjects (such as homelessness prevention, reviews, medical assessments and discharges), making recommendations for change, and managing the implementation of these changes.
- Provide expert advice, guidance and support on highly complex/sensitive issues, and proactively anticipate and mitigate problems.
- Exercise a high level of discretion and maintain data protection protocols in all aspects of the Housing Needs Service delivery.
- Use initiative in deciding the correct course of action to resolve complex and contentious matters that arise within the service, requiring; support, persuasion, advocacy, or negotiation, while working within operational guidelines.
- Lead on responses to all issues relating to homelessness prevention, homeless reviews, medical assessments and discharges, including politically sensitive subjects such as changes to the Allocations Scheme.
- Scan the horizon for best practice, changes to policy and/or legislation (for example the Homeless Reduction Act), and other relevant information, ensuring this feeds into service improvement plans within the Housing Needs Service functions and at a corporate level.
- Monitor and report on performance against internal and external performance indicators. (e.g. PRS supply performance, Voids & Lettings performance, contract monitoring, TA initiatives, CPI, KPI, MPI, LOPI monitoring, IBAA analysis) highlighting risks and putting measures in place to address issues impacting on delivery.
- Develop use of software systems (principally QL and Jigsaw) to enhance management information, financial control, monitoring and reporting of all aspects of housing needs and medical assessments and reviews.
- Monitor and analyse risk for any aspect of our homelessness assessment functions that is controversial, political, strategic, financial or otherwise of a sensitive or highly complex nature.
- Ensure robust financial, legal and quality controls are in place within the services managed. Maintain up to date and effective policies and procedures and ensure they are followed by all members of the Housing Needs Service.
- Develop changes in procedures, systems and operational strategies to maintain efficiency and effectiveness including implementing change to their service area in consultation with staff.
- Manage, motivate, develop and empower the team and individuals to provide excellent standards of service embracing best practice, innovation and continuous improvement.
- Recruit, manage, supervise and motivate managers overseeing the teams delivering the Housing Needs Service. Undertake all personnel duties for direct reports including carrying out 121s and appraisals, alongside supervision that ensures they manage the Housing Needs Service team in line with the Barnet Groups' Values and Behaviours. This includes effective management of under-performance and, taking appropriate capability and/or disciplinary action where required.
- Demonstrate the Barnet Group's Values and Behaviours when managing motivating, developing and empowering the team and individuals to provide excellent standards of service, embracing best practice, innovation and, continuous improvement.

- Proactively respond and adapt to change, and effectively manage conflicting priorities and deadlines that may arise within the team
- Take overall responsibility for health & safety and training of the staff in the Housing Needs Service team – managing and mitigating risks associated with the personal safety of staff.
- Ensure the service is compliant with legislation and best practice, and proactively working towards developing an awareness of safety within the workplace.
- Deputise as required for the Head of Housing Options.

### **General Obligations:**

#### Performance management

- Ensure that performance targets are met and a culture of performance management, customer care, value for money and resident / service users' empowerment is embedded across the Group

#### Flexibility

- Work with a degree of flexibility required to perform work not specifically referred to above although falling within the scope of the post at the appropriate grade.

#### Health and Safety

- All employees have a legal duty to ensure the health and safety of people at work and members of the public in premises or sites controlled by The Barnet Group in accordance with safety legislation and The Barnet Group safety policy.

#### The Barnet Group's commitment

- Deliver The Barnet Group's commitment to equality of opportunity both in the provision of services and as an employer. Promote equality in the work place and in the services The Barnet Group delivers.

Demonstrate commitment to a culture of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

#### Relationships:

- Customers seeking housing advice
- Teams within Housing Options and TBG
- External agencies – Social Care, Health, Education, advice and support services, and voluntary groups

## Person specifications:

### Education, Qualifications, Memberships

#### Essential:

- Degree level education or equivalent through relevant training/experience.

#### Desirable:

- A management or leadership qualification.

### Experience

#### Essential:

- Extensive and successful work history in the social housing sector, demonstrating a thorough understanding and application of the entire housing needs process with a track record of improving performance and delivering outcomes in a housing needs setting e.g. effective delivery of homelessness prevention.
- Experience of managing a multi-disciplinary team in a complex operational environment
- Experience of managing complex budgets and meeting challenging financial targets.
- Experience of representing and promoting your organisation to an external audience

#### Desirable:

- Experience of managing organisational change and performance management -including developing innovative ways of working which deliver against performance targets.

### Skills and Knowledge

#### Essential:

- A specialist knowledge and understanding of a range of legislative frameworks and policies applicable to the Housing Needs Sector, in particular a detailed technical knowledge about all aspects and the complexities of homelessness legislation and case law
- Advanced knowledge of current and future challenges facing social housing and public services in particular how Welfare Reform has and will continue to impact on housing demand

- Advanced negotiating and interpersonal skills and the ability to manage key relationships with commercial partners.
- Excellent analytical skills, along with a high level of creativity, in order to consider difficulties and challenges and find innovative and workable solutions. This includes monitoring and evaluating key policies and practices, making recommendations for change and managing the implementation of these recommendations.
- Advanced decision making skills, with the ability to quickly understand the complexity, sensitivity and potential risks of any given situation, and utilise the information available to assess the possible consequences and impacts, before confidently making a sound commercial decisions. Excellent communication skills with considerable experience in preparing complex reports, strategies, policies and procedures for a range of audiences – board, executive, council members, staff and stakeholders
- Excellent leadership skills, and the effective ability to motivate staff and teams to succeed and generate confidence under challenge
- Track record of management and leadership of a diverse and skilled workforce, including the application of effective disciplinary, performance, attendance and HR policies, managing risks to health and safety, and managing change

**Desirable:**

- Demonstrable experience of leading a performance management culture focused on performance objectives and targets which encourages innovation and achieves continuous improvement
- Strong project management skills with a track record of project delivery and risk management
- Highly IT literate - skilled in all Microsoft packages, QL, Jigsaw, Swordfish