

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Service Manager Homefinder		
Directorate	General Fund Housing		
Reporting to	Head of Prevention, Homefinder, and Accommodation		
Grade	9		
Evaluation ref:	RP300	Job Family ref:	
Role Purpose			
<p>To lead and Manage the Choice based lettings service, including Senior Officers, and Officers, ensuring efficient resourcing and management of demand.</p> <p>The role is accountable to meeting timescales as set out by the Homefinder Partnership Management and Monitoring Board.</p> <p>To ensure the Council follows the Homefinder Policy, and review and the develop the policy as required.</p>			
Accountabilities			
Service Leadership & Governance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate and lead the Choice-Based Lettings Working Group, driving improvements in allocation processes and ensuring compliance with policy and legislation. • Challenge Registered Providers (RPs) constructively to maintain high standards of service delivery and partnership working. • Oversee direct let requests, ensuring fair and timely decisions in line with agreed protocols. • Oversee and uphold the integrity of the Homefinder Somerset Policy, and Partnership • Inform and approve Local Lettings Plans, balancing community needs with statutory requirements. • Develop and implement strategies to manage workflows into the service. • Apply discretion confidently within policy frameworks to deliver fair and customer-focused outcomes. 			
Operational Oversight			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as the escalation point for complex cases, including reviews, Stage 2 complaints, MP and Councillor enquiries, Ombudsman responses, and sensitive customer issues. • Monitor and raise emerging trends and issues to inform policy reviews and service improvements. • Deliver training sessions to internal teams and external partners to ensure consistent understanding of processes and compliance. 			

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- Work closely with Affordable Housing teams to stay informed about new developments, disposals, and the net gain/loss of properties on the housing register, ensuring strategic alignment.

Representation & Stakeholder Engagement

- Represent the service at key meetings such as Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee, Tenant Forums, and other strategic boards.
- Prepare and deliver Member briefings and attend internal partner meetings to drive service improvements across the wider council.
- Work collaboratively with the Communications team to develop proactive messaging for the Homefinder audience via the website and social media channels.
- Chairing workshops and leading working groups to continually develop and improve policy and procedure related to Choice Based Lettings in Somerset.
- Prepare and present quarterly reports to the Homefinder Management and Monitoring Board.

Compliance & Investigations

- Follow through on cases involving suspected fraud or requiring further investigation, ensuring appropriate action and reporting, in partnership with registered landlords.
- Ensure adherence to statutory and regulatory requirements across all service activities.
- Implement change driven by local and national policies into working practices.

Team Leadership

- Manage staff effectively through regular one-to-one meetings and personal development planning.
- Foster a positive and collaborative team culture, ensuring workload prioritisation and resilience in a dynamic environment.
- Lead recruitment and onboarding processes, promoting professional growth and team engagement.
- Managing priorities at both team and individual levels. Ensures placements align with suitability and risk assessments, oversees recruitment and onboarding, and fosters a positive, collaborative work environment.
- Responsible for workload management, balancing service demands with staff development, and remaining available to support the team when needed. Organises one-to-one meetings, conducts performance appraisals, and supports personal development plans, while adapting to evolving policies and fostering resilience within the team.

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Knowledge / Experience / Skills		
	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Significant knowledge and experience of the development, agreement and delivery of service plans.	x	
Comprehensive understanding of housing legislation and regulations	x	
Familiarity with council procedures and regulations	x	
Understanding of the General Data Protection Regulation	x	
Knowledge of Council Governance and approval processes		x
Understanding of housing legislation and Homefinder policies.	x	
Knowledge of the housing application process and eligibility criteria.	x	
Familiarity with housing management software and databases.		x
Experience		
Demonstrable experience of partnership working including the ability to influence and, where appropriate, lead multi-agency groups and projects to deliver services and initiatives	x	
Sound understanding and practice of inter-disciplinary working	x	
Demonstrable experience of operating equality and diversity measures in the local delivery of services	x	
Demonstrable experience of the effective deployment, continuing development and supervision of professional and other staff resources		x
Demonstrable experience of continuous improvement in a changing environment	x	
Experience of working in a Housing team, either for a local authority or registered social landlord	x	
The candidate should have experience of working with vulnerable customers	x	
Experience of partnership working	x	

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Experience in liaising with external stakeholders	x	
Experience in handling customer enquiries and complaints.	x	
Experience in producing reports and maintaining accurate records.	x	
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
Degree or relevant experience in Housing Management, Social Work, or a related field	x	
Training in safeguarding and child protection		x
Training in customer services or conflict resolution		x
Evidence of continual professional development		x
Skills		
Strong decision making	x	
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.	x	
Strong organisational and time management skills.	x	
Ability to work independently and as part of a team.	x	
Proficiency in using housing management software and databases	x	
Problem-solving skills and the ability to handle difficult situations	x	
Attention to detail and accuracy in record-keeping.	x	
Strong negotiation and conflict resolution skills.	x	
Promotes the need for change and acts as a role model for change.	x	
Positive, committed, adaptable, thorough and confident approach	x	
Ability to work to deadlines and to motivate others to work effectively and demonstrate a duty of care.	x	
Committed to diversity in service delivery and employment	x	
Innovative and creative approach to service development and value	x	

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Customer and Communities- focussed	x	
Drive and self-motivation – “can do” attitude	x	
Sound analysis and decision-making in dealing with complex service delivery and/or policy development matters	x	
Working Conditions		
<p>Hybrid working between office and remote working. Occasional working outside of normal hours to support staff on duty, and/or to help deal with emergencies. Travel across the county for service meetings, partner meetings, and stakeholder presentations This role will mainly be required to work during duty housing hours of 8.30am-5.30pm, but with some flexibility as per the Dynamic Working Strategy.</p>		
Dimensions of the role		
<p>This role will manage the Homefinder team and will report directly to the Head of Service for Prevention, Homefinder, and Accommodation. They will have line management responsibility for 3x Senior Homefinder officers, and 8x Homefinder Officers.</p> <p>The role will manage 11 members of staff directly. The role will help the team to manage approx. (currently) 14,000 Social Housing Applications. The role will not have sole budgetary responsibility but will be actively looking at reducing service spends.</p> <p>They will be planning 3-6 months in advance of delivery, and then co-ordinating the day to day delivery as it happens.</p>		
Working Arrangements		
<p><i>Somerset Council’s Dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.</i></p> <p>The post holder will be subject to DBS check and will require a full driving license</p>		
Corporate Accountabilities		
<p>Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, organisational policy, and professional codes of conduct to uphold standards of best practise.</p> <p>Deliver the aims of the council’s equality, diversity and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do, ensuring team members are also aware of their responsibilities and maintaining their understanding that Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.</p>		