

Job Description

Job title	Head of Housing Needs
Directorate	Regeneration, Culture and Environment
Division	HOUSING – Strategic
	Service Manager
Reports to	Chief Housing Officer

Main purpose of the job:

Medway Council's One Medway Plan provides a strategic vision and priorities from 2024 – 2028, focusing on community engagement, economic growth and quality services for residents while outlining our key values and behaviours. Housing is an important determinant of health, wellbeing and stability and is an embedded commitment within Priority 5: Living in good quality, affordable homes. Head of Housing Needs will play a key role in delivering this priority, with specific commitments to assisting people with specific accommodation needs including older people, people with disabilities, people needing specialist support and those who find themselves homeless.

As the Head of Housing Needs, you will have responsibility for deliver an effective, legally complaint and outcome focussed service to Medway residents who have a need for intervention or support from the Council in respect of their housing circumstances. You will be accountable for the delivery of programmes, plans, priorities, and outcomes in (a) specialist area(s). Ensuring the Council performs its statutory duties and functions in relation to the specific service area [housing advice, homelessness (all forms), operations and management of the Council's housing waiting list, temporary accommodation provision, including the day to day management of the TA owned portfolio, private sector housing and partnerships and commissioning of housing related services] advising senior officers of their obligations and duties arising from the statutory/regulatory framework.

Accountabilities and Outcomes:

Lead the strategic and operational delivery of the Housing Needs Service, developing local and national links to influence and improve strategic development and delivery of the service area, adopting best practice through benchmarking and networking with other local authorities.

Develop and implement long -, medium -, and short-term strategies demonstrating an ability to contribute to the ongoing development and achievement of the strategic vision for the service, using a range of information on future trends to set measurable performance objectives and inform strategic thinking.

Manage and monitor budgets to ensure financial control, accurate forecasting, and value for money, supporting the delivery of a balance budget and meeting corporate priorities [with a key priority of reducing the financial burden of providing temporary accommodation]. Strategic awareness of the financial structure of the Council and the implications of decisions on the delivery of value for money.

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Ensure full compliance with statutory requirements ensuring the Council performs its statutory duties and functions in relation to the delivery of the Housing Needs service. Advise senior officers on their obligations and duties arising from statutory/regulatory framework where appropriate.

Lead and motivate a multidisciplinary team of staff and consultants, demonstrating strong leadership with integrity, whilst also promoting equality. Encouraging creativity, innovation and improvement while having the ability to influence decision makers to facilitate progress and achievement of objectives.

Maintain accurate customer data and implement robust processes to support the development of a strong service culture, managing and measuring service plans and objectives. Demonstrating the ability to develop resource plans to meet service requirements and using information effectively.

Stakeholder management - demonstrate an ability to build sound, productive working relationships with colleagues, partners and employees. Seek opportunities for partnership working that will benefit the service area. An ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing, adapting style to suit different needs. Initiate and maintain local accountability for outcomes of programmes and plans through the engagement and liaison with a range of internal and external partners and stakeholders, seeking ways to remove obstacles for delivery.

Service effectiveness and leading change, create, monitor and review frameworks of performance measures and quality standards to be applied in the delivery of services in their area of expertise. Strong analytical skills and with the ability to use data to interpret and forecast patterns and trends.

Champion strategic stakeholder engagement to advance the [One Medway Council Plan](#) ensuring our [values and behaviours](#) are consistently modelled and embedded across all levels of the organisation.

Key Corporate Accountabilities:

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

To understand and actively keep up to date with GDPR responsibilities, including completing regular refresher training.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all employees are required to act in such a way that safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

As a corporate parent, all council employees are responsible for ensuring the well-being and positive outcomes of Medway's care-experienced children and young people.

To participate in the Performance Appraisal process and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs utilising the Career Progression Framework.

Work in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Promoting equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and improving the quality of life and opportunities for everyone living and working in Medway.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

Promote the Medway Carbon Neutral by 2050 commitment; supporting the Council action plan to ensure we play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

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Medway Council is a Category One responder in relation to the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and as a result all staff working for the Authority may be asked to carry out Category One response duties or stand in the role of another member of staff who is responding to a Major Civil Incident.

Organisation:

This role reports to the CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER

Initiative and independence

The postholder will be expected to use their initiative and independence to identify solutions, make informed decisions, and drive improvements without constant supervision. They will proactively assess risks, anticipate challenges, and implement strategies that ensure compliance, cost efficiency, and service quality. By exercising sound judgment and autonomy, the individual will balance competing priorities, respond effectively to emerging issues, and seize opportunities for innovation and funding. This independence is critical to delivering strategic objectives, maintaining high standards of service delivery across all housing need workstreams, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Supervision and Management of Staff

The postholder will provide clear leadership and direction to senior managers, each responsible for their own specialist division within the Housing Needs service. They will set expectations, monitor performance, and offer guidance while empowering these managers to operate with autonomy in their areas of expertise. By fostering collaboration and ensuring alignment with strategic objectives, the postholder will create a cohesive leadership team that delivers consistent, high-quality outcomes across asset management, compliance, repairs, and development. This approach ensures accountability at all levels while promoting innovation, efficiency, and a strong performance culture throughout the service

Number of people managed by postholder: 4

Job Context

This role operates within the Housing Services Team, and is pivotal in supporting the Council's key statutory, regulatory and corporate priorities in supporting vulnerable residents of Medway, as the postholder you will have responsibility for overseeing the delivery and continuous improvement of:

- Homelessness prevention, leading and guiding a team committed to maximising homelessness prevention and relief.
- Management of the Council's temporary accommodation portfolio, in addition to all other forms of TA as and when required.
- Management and maintenance of the Council's Housing Register, addressing the strategic challenges relating to accommodation provisions and operating a legally compliant allocations scheme.
- Private Sector Housing, shaping the Council's approach to improving the standards of accommodation in the private sector and operation a robust statutory licensing mechanism for HMOs and park homes.
- Management of the Council's Selective and Additional Licensing Scheme – Summer 2026.
- Development and ongoing delivery of the Council's Housing Strategy and Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping activity.
- Commissioning a range of support services that enable residents to live independently
- Leading the Council's delivery of its Rough Sleeping initiative and wider partnership working.

Resources

The postholder will manage resources through robust workforce planning, budget control, and data-led prioritisation to maximise value for money across the service. This includes the overall management of the temporary accommodation budget, Disabled Facilities Grant, housing standards, allocations and access and

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management of all housing related support services, e.g. housing advice, homelessness, private sector housing disrepair. Ensure clear leadership across the four senior managers ensuring their teams effectively manage and monitor service KPIs, performance and risk management of their service areas while improving outcomes for Medway residents accessing housing related services.

Work Environment:

Working Style

[HYBRID - a flexible working arrangement whereby an employee can undertake their work either in the office and/or partially or mainly from home on a temporary or permanent basis.]

Work Demands

Political and public scrutiny: Operating in a visible, politically sensitive environment with expectations for transparency, timely outcomes, and demonstrable value for money.

The post holder will frequently need to work to deadlines and the resolution of issues that may arise at short notice. This will require the post holder to work flexibly, reviewing of resourcing requirements and the management of potentially competing priorities.

Local travel and site presence will be required, regular visits across the TA portfolio, commissioned services and partner locations.

Physical Demands

The post is likely to encounter long periods of time working at a desk utilising a keyboard and mouse. Attendance at meetings, site or property visits will necessitate a low level of physical activity.

Working Conditions

The post holder will frequently need to work to deadlines and the resolution of issues that may arise at short notice. This will require the post holder to work flexibly, reviewing of resourcing requirements and the management of potentially competing priorities.

Due to the nature of the role, there will be, on occasion a need for the postholder to respond to issues that do not fall during the normal working day

Work Context

[This role operates within the Council's Housing Service forming the strategic portfolio with a high statutory, regulatory, financial, and public-accountability pressures.

Work is performed in a mixed office/site context, requiring regular estate and scheme visits, contractor meetings, resident engagement, and attendance at governance forums, alongside strategic planning, budget setting, performance reporting, and assurance activity.]

Person specification

For appointment to the role at the entry point of the range all level A1 criteria must be evidenced through the selection process. All new appointments to a senior role in the Council are required to undertake a Medway specific programme of training and learning during the probation period which covers all Level A2 criteria, as detailed in the Career Profession Framework.

Qualifications

Medway Council onboarding training and learning modules for newly appointed Senior Leaders

Level 4 CIH qualification or equivalent

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Commitment to starting a CIH Level 5 within 12 months

Qualified to Level 5 or undertaking a Level 5 CIH qualification or top up modules.

Minimum of 2 years managerial experience.

Ongoing CPD aligned to regulatory/strategic priorities

IMI Level 7 Leadership and Management qualification

Professional body membership

Knowledge

Has a strong understanding of the context and challenges of the role.

Understand relevant statutory, guidance and best practice associated to the role.

Understand the relevant elements of strategic management including budgeting, legal implications and

Sound understanding of the One Medway Plan and how housing services contribute to corporate priorities

Detailed knowledge of housing and homelessness legislation [e.g. Housing Act 1985, 1988, 1996, 2004, Homelessness Act 2002, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017], complaint handling, safeguarding responsibilities, and equality duties.

Understanding of operational risk, compliance and regulatory requirements and service performance management

In depth knowledge and operational understanding of national and local policies and strategies relevant to housing and homelessness issues

Extensive knowledge of local authority statutory housing and homelessness legislation, governance arrangement, and compliance

Good working knowledge of relevant non-housing legislation such as Children's Act, Care Act

Strong understanding of service planning, financial management and performance frameworks

Knowledge of customer insight data analysis and learning from complaints to drive improvements.

Understanding of practical implementation of procurement and commissioning of services and relationship management.

Expert knowledge of housing regulation and legislation, future sector trends and strategic risk affecting the service provision.

Advance understanding of organisational culture, transformation and continuous improvement.

Advance understanding of customer insight, performance data and regulatory assurance.

Experience

Experience of leading and managing projects and programmes at a senior level [related to the job profile] within a large organisation with a proven and successful track record in delivering improved outcomes, savings and effective management of risk.

Experience and successful track record in leading, managing and empowering staff to deliver whole system and tenant focussed approaches to project management.

Managerial experience within housing or similar complex service environment

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Experience leading teams, managing performance and supporting staff development

Experience of contributing to regulatory inspections, audits and service reviews

Experience of leading multi-disciplinary teams across multiple locations [minimum of 3 years]

Proven track record of improving service performance and outcomes for tenants

Experience of managing projects or programmes from design through to implementation

Significant senior leadership experience within housing or a comparable regulatory service [minimum of 5 years' experience.]

Experience delivering demonstrable, sustained improvement in service quality, compliance or tenant outcomes

Experience representing the organisation at senior level and providing assurance on performance and risk

Skills

The ability to understand, translate and implement legislation, guidance and best practice

Can collaborate and engage with relevant stakeholders

Able to balance and prioritise all aspects of the role.

Ability to contribute to service planning, target setting and resource deployment

Ability to interpret performance data and tenant feedback to inform service improvement

Project and change management skills for defined service initiatives

Excellent interpersonal skills

Ability to lead multiple service areas and manage complex operational and strategic priorities

Strong influencing and negotiating skills, including engagement with Members and senior stakeholders

Ability to develop service plans, manage budgets and oversee risk and compliance

Demonstrates a high level of political awareness and links strategies for continuous improvement with the drive to achieve national, corporate and departmental standards and goals.

Strategic leadership skills to set direction, influence across the organisation and deliver sustained service improvement

Ability to lead complex transformation programmes and embed change across the service and organisation

High level stakeholder management skills, including effective engagement with Members, customers, client's partners and Ministerial teams.