**MEDWAY COUNCIL - JOB PROFILE**

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| **JOB TITLE** | Specialist Housing Advisor |
| **DIRECTORATE** | Children and Adults |
| **SERVICE** | Children’s Services – 16+ Care Leavers service |
| **RESPONSIBLE TO** | Team Manager |
| **GRADE** | Medpay Range 4 |
| **JOB FAMILY** | PSE0726 |

**AIN PURPOSE OF JOB**

## **MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB**

The Medway 16+ Care Leaver Service works to advise, support and befriend young people from the age of 16 who are in care and those young people who have left care (up to the age of 25) with a diverse range of complex needs to enable them to manage the transition into adulthood and independence.

The Specialist Housing Advisor will support Personal Advisors and Care Leavers within the 16+ service, who require additional support to address their accommodation and independent living needs, with a focus on those at risk of homelessness and those ready to move onto independent accommodation.

The role will require the post holder to provide assistance, advice, encouragement and support to Care Leavers to ensure they actively participate and contribute to their Housing Plans / Pathway Plans to enable them to move successfully into independent living. This role will focus on those Care Leavers at high risk of homelessness, due to inactivity, vulnerability or other factors. The Specialist Housing Advisor will be expected to keep up-to-date with government guidance and regulations in relation to accommodation, as well as all involved processes and resources, to facilitate the delivery of expert advice on all areas of in independent accommodation.

**ACCOUNTABILITIES**

Facilitate the delivery of bespoke Housing Plans, outlining all of the possible solutions to the young person’s accommodation needs and the best ‘next steps’ to the young person being able to achieve these, in line with their identified accommodation goals.

To be actively engaged in challenging and supporting young people in order to present them with the best chance of ‘real’ success in finding and sustaining accommodation.

Provide individual, regular and consistent support to Care Leavers to meet the goals and objectives of the Care Leaver’s Pathway Plan / Housing Plan in respect of accommodation.

Work with other colleagues in the 16+ service to ensure the provision of a seamless service to the Care Leaver in respect of their planned moves between provisions of accommodation.

Support and encourage Care Leavers to play an active part in their local communities, liaising with community groups and individuals to aid transition into independent accommodation.

Support and encourage young people to understand the value of and link in with appropriate education, training and employment provisions so as to ensure that they have adequate opportunity to be in the best possible financial position and therefore have the greatest level of stability in their accommodation in the future.

Liaise with other local authorities when a Care Leaver is residing outside of Medway to ensure Pathway Plans are updated and reviewed in line with Medway policy and procedures for Leaving Care services.

Take a lead role in respect of working together in a multi-agency approach with the Local Housing Authorities, to develop close and effective working relationships to facilitate joint housing meetings using coordinated multi-agency, area-based response to the identified needs of Care Leavers and of the 16+ service, as per the Medway Joint Housing Protocol.

To have excellent working knowledge of relevant homelessness legislation, including the Homelessness Reduction Act and its implication for Care Leavers and to have the knowledge to understand when and how to challenge in relation to this legislation in practice.

To provide shared understanding of the above point to staff across the service for the purposes of upskilling and improving practice service-wide.

Ensure that information systems and client records are effectively maintained in order to provide up-to-date and accurate information, upon which decisions affecting service delivery can be made.

Have a good understanding of the financial entitlements available to Care Leavers via the Medway Local Offer and ensure support for the case holding Personal Advisors to understand and make accurate and timely requests for these provisions including Setting Up Home Allowance, Rent in Advance and Deposit, so as to increase the young person’s ability to access accommodation as swiftly as their situation determines.

To actively engage with landlords, estate agents and other involved parties, to support the activities already underway within the Medway Council in respect of moving young people from supported accommodations into suitable, affordable PRS (Private Rented Sector) Accommodation or Social Housing.

**KEY CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITIES**

To participate in one-to-one Performance Development Reviews and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs

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

To actively promote the Council's Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc 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 Section 17 of the duty of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time may be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

**ACCOUNTABILITIES TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The children and young people of Medway have said the following qualities are really important to them:

* Be a good listener
* Be non-judgemental
* Be consistent and Stable
* Be contactable
* Understand me
* Be honest
* Be Focused
* Be realistic
* Be a good timekeeper
* Be resourceful in your approach

Be ambitious for young people and promote others to share the same drive.

Champion Children and Young People’s views and rights in everything you do.

Ensure Children and Young People’s voices are listened to and acted upon.

‘Do what you say and say what you do’.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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| **QUALIFICATIONS** |  | **Assessment Method** |
| Level 3 Diploma/NVQ in a relevant subject, for example, education, training, guidance, counselling, youth and community work, health or social service work, housing or work in the voluntary sector | Essential | Application |
| A minimum of 5 GCSE’s including maths and English (at grade 6 or above, or equivalent) | Essential | Application |
| 2 x A levels | Desirable | Application |
| A professional qualification in teaching, youth work or a related field | Desirable | Application |
| **EXPERIENCE** |  |  |
| Demonstrable experience in working with partner agencies in Housing related areas, private and social renting schemes. | Essential | Application / Interview |
| Demonstrable experience in advocacy skills to support young people and undertaking direct work with young people. | Essential | Application / Interview |
| Ability to use ‘Signs of Safety’ or a willingness to be trained | Essential | Application  /Interview |
| Demonstrable knowledge of safeguarding protocols and child protection issues and adult safeguarding issues | Desirable | Application / Interview |
| **KNOWLEDGE** |  | **Assessment Method** |
| Demonstrable technical/specialist/policy and procedural knowledge relating to Leaving Care services and Accommodation/Housing sector.  Ability to complete a range of complex tasks such as report writing, presentations, detailed assessments and calculations | Essential | Application / Interview |
| A thorough knowledge of the statutory obligations, specifically The Children Act 1989, Leaving Care Act 2000 and Children and Social Work Act 2017 | Essential | Application |
| Knowledge of The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017), the Housing Act (1996), The Localism Act (2011) and the Protection from Eviction Act (1977) | Essential | Application / Interview |
| Knowledge of the Universal Credit/Housing Benefit process and knowledge of accommodation processes for Care Leavers. | Essential | Application/ Interview |
| Ability to demonstrate awareness of legislation relating to General Data Protection Regulations and Freedom of Information. | Essential | Application |
| **SKILLS** |  |  |
| Demonstrates the ability to work with and support young people who can present conflicting demands, manage deadlines and keep records accurate and up to date. | Essential | Interview |
| Demonstrable ability to use judgement and creativity to assess complex situations and solve varied problems and/or develop short term plans, this involves undertaking needs and risk assessment/preparation of reports and presentations to Panels to request resources to meet young person needs | Essential | Interview |
| Demonstrable ability to use written and oral communication skills to present varied information in an understandable way to a range of audiences | Essential | Interview |
| Demonstrable ability to carry out work which has a high impact on the wellbeing of people, through either assessing needs, implementing appropriate programmes of care/welfare; or  enforcing regulations that have a high impact on the health, safety or wellbeing of people. | Essential | Interview |
| Competent in ICT packages such as Word, Excel and Outlook | Desirable | Application |
| Provides general information, advice and guidance on internal procedures relating to finance | Essential | Interview |
| Ability to maintain confidentiality at all times | Essential | Application |
| **OTHER REQUIREMENTS** |  |  |
| Car driver and use of a car for business purposes | Essential | Application |
| Enhanced DBS check | Essential | Application |

**ORGANISATION**

### **(i) ORGANISATION CHART**

NEW STRUCTURE CHART TO BE ADDED

### **(ii) DESCRIBE HOW AND BY WHOM THE POST IS MANAGED**

The post holder will be line managed by the Team Manager

### **(iii) DESCRIBE THE LEVEL OF INITIATIVE AND/OR INDEPENDENCE EXPECTED OF THE POST HOLDER**

The post holder will work independently within clear guidelines and regularly use initiative to make decisions, referring to more senior officers for advice on policy/resource issues.

### **(iv) DESCRIBE ANY SUPERVISORY/MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The post holder will have no direct line management responsibility, although they will be expected to provide support/guidance to other Personal Advisors.

### **(v) JOB CONTEXT - DESCRIBE THE MAIN CONTACTS, BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AND THE PURPOSE OF THOSE CONTACTS**

Contact with the young person, their families, social workers and any other relevant stakeholders, internally and externally to the organisation, to meet the needs of the young person.

## **FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITIES**

The post holder will be responsible for the handling of monies on a daily basis to support young people to manage their personal finances and advise on budgetary expectations on their journey to independence.

**MENTAL DEMANDS**

This job requires general awareness and sensory attention, with either:

1. Lengthy periods of concentrated sensory attention; or
2. Lengthy periods of enhanced mental attention; or
3. Medium periods of concentrated mental attention; or
4. Considerable levels of work related pressure, for example, from deadlines, interruptions or conflicting demands on the job holder.

**EMOTIONAL DEMANDS**

The job involves contacts with, or work for, people, which through their circumstances or behaviour either:

1. Regularly place significant emotional demands on the jobholder; or
2. Occasionally place intense emotional demands on the job holder

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR PHYSICAL RESOURCES**

The job involves considerable direct responsibility for physical resources where the handling and processing of considerable amounts of manual or computerised information, where care, accuracy, confidentiality and security are important.

## **WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

The post holder will be based in one of Medway Council’s establishments.

**WORKSTYLE**

The workstyle for this role has been assessed as ‘Mobile’. This means the post holder will have a designated base but are generally travelling around Medway or working with clients in their homes or properties. There is an expectation that they will come into the office for meetings or a quick touchdown but are able to undertake duties from an alternative building/touchdown site.