

## **Appendix 2**

### **Roles of Housing Advice and Homelessness team**

There are 2 distinct work streams to deliver the modernised service Homelessness and Advice Service

**Work stream 1 –The front end same day contact.** The aim is to deliver the functions for homelessness prevention, housing options and housing applications and homelessness assistance through a Property Shop team front facing that would be responsible for delivering advice and actions for the cases at the first point of contact. **The case load will be fast tracked at a maximum of 48 hours turnaround.**

This team will continue to manage the Housing Register and oversee the Allocation and Local lettings Policies.

**Work stream 2 – consists of the casework function** responsible for ‘complex or time consuming’ casework. This would be the more complex cases where possible more investigatory work where home visiting functions are delivering:

- Complicated Part 7 homelessness enquiries, decisions and reviews.
- Complex homeless prevention casework for debt, mortgage arrears and similar complex cases and cases where success is more likely to depend on time consuming direct or telephone intervention with landlords, parents or work with applicants themselves.
- Placements into temporary accommodation, move on and resettlement.

**The case work will have a target of 33 days to complete**

<p align="center"><b>Housing Advice Team</b>  <b>Delivered at the Front End same day office based</b>  <b>48 hours Target for Decisions</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Homelessness Team</b>  <b>Dealt with through Casework</b>  <b>33 working day target for decisions</b></p>
<p>Housing Applications and Lettings</p>	<p>Housing Applications and Lettings</p>
<p>Verifying identity and address            Undertaking telephone or face to face interview to assess housing register application and priority            Banding applicants, confirming band and registration date</p>	<p>Any home visits required to confirm housing application circumstances            Complex assessments involving eligibility, social or welfare issues, where preference is to be reduced, complex medical requirements or any other applications that require discretion.            Complex verification issues</p>
<p>Receiving, assessing and actioning any change of circumstances            Position bands/points and housing prospects and options re areas of choice, PRS alternative, mobility, etc.            Options through mobility and prospects if they were to join housing register of another provider or council</p>	<p>Appeals and Reviews under Part 6 Housing Act.</p>
<p>Identifying whether notice is correct or incorrect notices for ASTs section 21 and any discretionary grounds for seeking possession on ASTs            Identifying other forms of tenure including licences and tenancies and whether notice given is correct            Identify presenting problem that has led to the notice by talking to customer, landlord and third parties and negotiating and taking any actions to resolve problems.</p>	<p>HMO regulations and licensing breaches            Threats of illegal eviction or actual illegal eviction            Protection from eviction cases where landlord is not prepared to follow advice given by front end team.            Complex</p>
<p><b>Homelessness Prevention</b> Assist in Private Rented accommodation through prevention route, bond and rent in advance referrals</p>	<p><b>Homelessness Prevention</b> Assist in Private Rented accommodation through prevention route, bond and rent in advance referrals</p>

<p><b>Homelessness Applications, Assessments and Decisions</b>  Keeping the service safe from legal or Ombudsman challenge by recording whether any initial approach for housing assistance has led to a Part 7 Homelessness application being triggered using standard outcome form.</p> <p>Where applications triggered and enquiries can be conducted same day and decision straightforward assessing and issuing a decision on the application. Issuing all straightforward negative homeless decisions. All decisions within 48 hours from initial interview</p>	<p><b>Homelessness Applications, Assessments and Decisions</b> - More complex homeless applications, enquiries and decisions within 33 working days.</p> <p>Placements into temporary accommodation</p> <p>Offers of 12 month PRSO to discharge duty</p> <p>Homelessness assessment if re approach in 2 years</p>
<p><b>Defending possession cases</b> - Identifying that possession action is at a stage where emergency action to mount a defence is required and referral into casework.</p> <p>Where a conflict of interest brought about by possession action from the council itself advising customer on list of solicitors or agencies who may be able to assist in defending possession.</p>	<p><b>Defending possession cases</b> - Court representation</p> <p>Interviews and investigating whether a defence can be mounted to possession and eviction.</p> <p>Completing paperwork to provide a defence against possession and entering paperwork into court.</p> <p>Negotiation with landlords on resolution.</p> <p>Possession proceeding against tenants of mortgage defaulting home owners.</p>
<p>Identifying any <b>disrepair problem</b> that results in risk of homelessness, talking to customer and landlord and negotiating and taking any actions to resolve problems.</p> <p>Referral to Private Sector Housing or Environmental Health for HSSA inspection</p>	<p><b>Serious disrepair</b>, HSSA cat 1 hazards, closing orders, etc where urgent action is required.</p> <p>Complex or time consuming negotiations with landlords</p> <p>Joint visits with private Sector Housing or Environmental Health</p> <p>Casework where rent have been withheld by the tenant to offset against lack of action on repairs</p>
<p>Identifying HB problem that results in risk of homelessness, talking to customer, landlord, Housing Benefit service and negotiating and taking any actions to resolve problems.</p> <p>Helping applicant to make a claim for backdating of HB claim</p> <p>Verifying paperwork for HB and fast tracking documents to get</p>	<p>Any on-going casework arising from responses from HB service to any of the initial actions taken.</p>

<p>claims into payment where this has led to delays.          Helping applicant to make a claim for a Discretionary Housing payment          Making or helping applicant to make a claim for safeguarding rent direct to landlord payment          Identifying any shortfall in rent and rent arrears including negotiation on paying off rent arrears.</p>	
<p>Identifying problem such as behaviour that has resulted in risk of homelessness, talking to customer, landlord, and third parties and negotiating and taking any actions to resolve problems.</p>	
<p>Identifying number of primary and second charge lenders and level of arrears and what stage any possession action has reached.</p>	<p>Undertaking detailed mortgage difficulties interview, taking actions and providing advice on options.          Referral to specialist debt and money advice.          Identifying primary and second charge lender action and whether pre action protocol has been followed.          Negotiation with primary and second charge lenders including agreement to write off debt or convert to an unsecured debt and repayment plan.          Advice on voluntary sale, shared ownership and other options.          Assessing case against criteria for Mortgage Rescue scheme or any other national assistance scheme.</p>
<p>Identifying and clarifying the level of rent or mortgage arrears and checking what benefits the customer is accessing including housing benefit where appropriate.          Undertaking a basic income and expenditure exercise and identifying priority debts.          Helping a customer on HB to apply for Discretionary Housing payment where appropriate and how to access other grants and loans such as budgeting loans, crisis loans, etc</p>	<p>Detailed income and expenditure interviews where level of arrears is a serious risk to homelessness.          Negotiating on customer's behalf with landlords, lenders to reach agreement on managing priority and non-priority debts and paying off arrears.          Detailed consideration of financial circumstances and whether income could be maximised through any unclaimed benefits.</p>

<p>Giving basic advice on debt management and paying rent and arrears where arrears or rent shortfall is small. Referring cases to external or internal debt advice provided on line, by telephone, or 'face to face' such as CAB.</p>	<p>Any follow up liaison for housing and homelessness prevention work arising from formal debt and money advice outcome.</p>
<p>Basic advice on housing rights in relationship breakdown cases Where to see legal advice and support</p>	<p>Full assessment and advice on housing rights and legal remedies in a housing context Advice on obtaining safe accommodation, a refuge or applying to another local authority out of area. Assessment for any sanctuary scheme Homelessness applications and decisions relating to reasonable to occupy and relationship breakdown and domestic abuse cases.</p>
<p>Housing prospect, housing options for alternative accommodation and awareness of lack of social housing opportunities. Referral or signposting to any other agencies that can provide help including self-help information on website Issuing Housing Options information packs and any relevant leaflets and information. Any low cost shared ownership opportunities and assessment against criteria and a financial initial assessment of eligibility followed by referral to Zone Agent RSL. Advice on rough sleeping services and practical help including getting outreach services involved where claim is that the person is sleeping rough or at risk of doing so. Assessing customer against Homeless Prevention Fund Payment criteria where appropriate and filling out application for fund payment, seeking approval and making payment to landlord.</p>	