

## Job Profile Information: Senior Welfare Rights Adviser

**This supplementary information for Senior Welfare Rights Adviser is for guidance and must be used in conjunction with the Job Capsule for Job Zone 1 Level 4 Camden Way Category Housing and Tenancy**

**It is for use during recruitment, setting objectives as part of the performance management process and other people management purposes. It does not form part of an employee's contract of employment.**

### **JOB PURPOSE:**

Camden is investing more in employment support to ensure that residents can access good work that enables them to live secure, sustainable and happy lives.

Through Good Work Camden, we're designing and delivering Job Hubs that provide accessible and relational employment support, testing innovative approaches to supporting residents, investing in our employment and skills partners and giving businesses the support they need to enhance their recruitment practices. It's an exciting time to join this work in Camden!

This is a key role within Good Work Camden as we scale up our approach to reach and support more Camden residents. A significant proportion of residents that access support through our Job Hubs seek support with their financial situation. This reflects wider trends we see in Camden. Whilst by many traditional indicators of economic success Camden is in a good place, both quantitative and qualitative data shows that there are many residents that are not sharing in that success.

This role provides both a second tier support to colleagues working across the council as well as providing a trusted service to our residents, to:

- Provide a high quality welfare rights advice service to residents across the Good Work Camden caseload.
- Undertake specialist welfare benefits advice and casework service,
- Carry out a range of activities to ensure complex or sensitive cases are appropriately managed, and assist with reviews of claims, and lodge appeals, prepare evidence and submissions and represent /advocate on behalf of residents at Social Security Appeal tribunals including to the Upper Tribunal and other hearings where appropriate; including supporting vulnerable adults to maintain their tenancies and live as independently as possible,
- To take a designated or shared role in working with other services
- To provide specialist welfare rights advice and support to colleagues across Good Work Camden, advising on matters relating to area of expertise to ensure relevant policies, regulations and legislation is understood and correctly applied, so they can provide accurate, up to date advice to service users on welfare benefits and money management and financial inclusion related issue;
- Undertake financial responsibility for assessing entitlement to benefits, and making decisions awarding grants/money to people in crisis where appropriate
- Provide a specialist welfare rights support service to staff to support their development and assist in the resolution of complex issues and problems; working across Good Work Camden and within the Job Hubs, and other non-statutory and voluntary sector services; identifying training needs and delivering training
- Feed into a holistic approach to delivery of services, thinking strategically, reviewing working practises and working flexibly across the organisation on an ongoing basis

The role will embody, keeping the residents at the heart of service provision - challenging and ultimately changing where required the root causes of how we deliver the best outcomes for our residents.

Flexibility to adapt and make informed, creative and robust decisions in challenging situations to obtain the best outcomes for our residents and the borough is crucial in delivering this role. This role involves relationship building and problem solving for colleagues and our residents across a range of functions; challenging existing processes, systems and barriers through continual learning and gathering of evidence relating to trends.

**Example outcomes or objectives that this role will deliver:**

- To work collaboratively with colleagues providing welfare rights advice in the team; and with the Job Hub teams and other services to resolve resident demands
- To support residents to solve problems at their root cause to build future strength in our communities and individuals;
- Provide detailed advice and support to staff in the resolution of complex issues and problems, being a support when needed to resolve residents issues in partnership with other officers, services and organisations, e.g. advice on making claims for benefits, resolving problems when benefits stop, carrying out complex financial calculations; and working on tribunals and assisting with grants and money management, as appropriate
- Keeping abreast of changes and developments (for example legislation, local/national policy and practice), and make recommendations and inform development and delivery of training, seminars and talks on the full range of benefits and related areas including financial management
- Ensure accurate advice is provided to service users within appropriate timescales; carrying out specialist advice to residents on all aspects of welfare rights advice, for example:
- Assist with reviews of claims, and lodge appeals,
- On behalf of residents, prepare appeal cases, for example gather evidence such as medical reports, analyse legislation and research case law to draft submissions challenging DWP decisions and other relevant bodies decisions i.e. HMRC,
- Advocate on behalf of residents in person and in writing to the First-tier Social Security Tribunal, including up to the Upper Tribunal and other hearings where appropriate;
- Liaise with appropriate statutory bodies, tribunals and courts as required
  - Undertake in-depth casework and negotiating by letter, telephone or in person, with all the agencies that affect the residents requiring welfare benefits advice, e.g. government departments, her Majesty Courts and Tribunal Service etc.
  - Assist with identifying entitlement to benefits, completing forms, advocating on behalf of residents by letter, telephone or in person, with all the agencies that affect the residents requiring benefits and money advice, e.g., DWP, government departments, Tribunals, charities, health professionals etc.
  - Advising on maximising income and minimising expenditure and financial inclusion
- Take responsibilities in line with Camden procedures for monies received on behalf of residents i.e. charity grants and for petty cash transfers, and to make decisions about awarding grants where appropriate.

**People Management Responsibilities: N/A**

**Relationships;**

- To work closely with colleagues in the welfare Rights Team, officers within the Job Hubs, and external employment support providers.
- To pull in colleagues and partners where the skills or knowledge are not available in the Job Hubs;

- To identify patterns in barriers and obstacles to the work and address these collaboratively with colleagues;
- To build close working partnerships in the Job Hub areas and other teams to best deliver for Camden residents in our properties, for example NHS, Police, Domestic Violence, advice agencies and professionals;
- Ability to work collaboratively across Directorates, teams and external partners to deliver our purpose and principles.
- To liaise with and advocate and negotiate with statutory bodies such as the DWP, Her Majesty Courts & Tribunals Service and welfare rights and debt related organisations
- To work directly with a range of residents including vulnerable people with complex needs and support staff to help residents

### **Work Environment:**

The post holder will be expected to:

- Work with a range of internal and external services to advise and support staff, for example explaining regulations and recommending possible courses of action and liaise with local DWP, Inland Revenue and other agencies on policy and practice issues.
- Work proactively in our neighbourhoods involving a significant percentage of visits to residents, and advice in our offices and by telephone
- Work flexibly across the service and council responding to changes in demand; moving location in order to achieve a seamless response
- Manage and maintain a constantly varying workload, handling changing or conflicting priorities as a result
- Attend outreach sessions as required

### **Personal Specification / Technical Knowledge and Experience:**

#### **Knowledge:**

- Proven working knowledge and technical understanding of current legislation and processes relating to welfare rights advice
- Proven knowledge of social security law in areas including: means tested and non means tested benefits such as disability related benefits, housing benefit, tax credits, universal credit, welfare reform and related legislation, policy and administration
- Knowledge of money management, and financial inclusion and how this can be integrated into welfare rights advice processes; and helping people seek employment advice.
- Knowledge of the type of social policy issues facing the local community and with welfare reform changes
- Understand patterns of residents needs and provide a flexible approach according to individual needs, and encourage residents to reach their own solutions
- Trained by a known professional welfare rights organisation. E.g. Advice UK, CPA, Shelter, CAB, Rightsnet/LASA and / or IMA.

#### **Experience:**

- Significant recent experience as an adviser with direct involvement in advising residents and undertaking casework and advocacy on a broad range of benefit issues including securing and preparing evidence for reviews and tribunals,
- undertaking benefit checks and advising on appropriate entitlements,
- advocating on behalf of residents with the DWP and tribunals across broad spectrum of benefits to a specialist level or the ability to do so; and working to legal deadlines,
- An understanding of money management in relation to managing income and bills (financial inclusion) to identify issues and help people seek support
- Experience of working within a team environment, and supporting colleagues
- Experience of working in a fast paced environment

- Experience of, or an ability to share knowledge, skills and experience with colleagues in a range of modes for example, via delivering seminars, talks and training

#### **Skills:**

- Excellent communication skills at all levels, both oral (telephone) face to face, and written, drafting letters/emails, filling out forms etc.
- Good organisational skills and the ability to work independently, able to prioritise work and conflicting priorities as appropriate and manage busy and demanding workload within a pressurised environment
- Experience or ability to research, develop and deliver information for talks, presentations and training for a wide variety of audiences
- Ability to advocate for residents in Court and tribunals where appropriate (this involves analysing complex legislation and preparing legal submissions)
- Strong Analytical skills to enable assessment of entitlement to benefits, and to make decisions awarding grants/money to people in crisis where appropriate
- Numeracy skills to understand statistics and assist with financial benefit calculations and checks, and manage grants/monies where appropriate
- Proficient in the use of IT systems in the provision of advice, and recording advice following advice quality procedures and keep data secure
- Ability to use initiative to meet residents demands creatively and innovatively to explore possibilities for improvement and more effective delivery
- Ability to develop skills, knowledge and expertise in one or more areas such as health and support, tenancy law, and resolving disputes
- Willingness to work outside normal hours as required

#### **Camden Way Five Ways of Working**

*In order to continue delivering for the people of Camden in the face of ever increasing financial pressure, we need to transform the way we do things. We call this the Camden Way. The Camden Way is a key part of our transformation strategy often referred to as the transformation triangle which links the Camden Plan, the Camden Way and the Financial Strategy together.*

The Camden Way illustrates the approach that should underpin everything we do through five ways of working:

- Deliver for the people of Camden
- Work as one team
- Take pride in getting it right
- Find better ways
- Take personal responsibility

For further information on the Camden Way please visit:

<http://www.togetherwearecamden.com/pages/discover-jobs-and-careers-in-camden/working-for-camden/>

## Structure

