

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Head of Advice
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Chief Operating Officer - Islington
HOURS:	21 hours per week (excluding lunch), worked across 3, 4 or 5 days during Monday to Friday 9am-5pm
SALARY:	£44,736FTE which is £26,841.60 for 21 hours per week
CONTRACT:	Permanent
LOCATION:	Hybrid including 222 Upper Street, Islington, N1 1XR

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

JOB PURPOSE:

To lead and manage the Citizens Advice Islington (CAI) core services that provide social welfare advice to Islington residents, working with the Chief Operating Officer-Islington (COO) to ensure the delivery of our strategic and business plan objectives.

To provide management to a team, currently consisting of the Welfare Benefits Specialist Caseworker, Housing Caseworker, two Advice Session Coordinators, and volunteers, to enable them to effectively perform their duties and responsibilities.

To monitor and lead on the quality standards of advice at CAI through Quality of Advice Audits (QAA), Independent File Reviews, and developing our volunteer and training strategy in response to quality and demand.

Citizens Advice Islington is a service provided by RCJ Advice – Citizens Advice & Law Centre (www.rcjadvice.org.uk). The role will collaborate with colleagues across the organisation to enable our clients to access the support and advice they need.

Key Tasks Areas

Service delivery

- Line manages the work of designated staff to ensure that standards meet Citizens Advice requirements.
- Identify and respond to advice needs, in particular the needs of disadvantaged groups and our vulnerable clients.
- Maintain adequate cover from available staff and volunteers to ensure core service delivery including covering for supervisor (Advice Session Coordinators) on a rota basis.
- Monitor the quality of advice given to clients and following QAA and provide constructive feedback.
- Ensure that appropriate systems developed are maintained for case recording, statistics, follow up work and quality control.

- Ensure remedial and developmental issues are identified and acted on to develop individuals to always improve the quality of advice.
- Assist the COO on compliance with the Citizens Advice membership scheme and Financial Conduct Authority requirements, including complaints, Subject Access Requests, data retention and/or deletion.
- Investigate and handle complaints in accordance with CA and FCA requirements.

Staff & Volunteer Management

- Create a positive working environment in which equality and diversity are centre, dignity at work is upheld and staff and volunteers can do their best.
- Ensure the effective performance management and development of staff & volunteers through regular supervision sessions, the appraisal process and training development plans.
- Plan recruitment and selection activities of staff and volunteers.
- Encourage good teamwork and lines of communication between all members of staff and volunteers.
- Arrange and participate in regular meetings for your core teams.

Planning and Development

- Following QAA results implement the development & training plan as required.
- Advise the COO on volunteer, staffing, and service delivery issues.
- Support the strategic development of the core service to ensure its management and services to clients reflect and support our equality and diversity policy.
- Ensure compliance with quality and statutory standards which requires maintaining a working knowledge of current local and national legislation qualities and key areas of advice.

Research and Campaigns

- Contribute to research on social policy issues for the benefit of our clients and community.
- Share key findings from Citizens Advice and other publications and newsletters with team.
- Monitor reports for key trends in enquiries to identify potential local issues.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of current issues and priorities for evidence collection.

Professional development

- Identify and implement own learning and development needs.
- Identify the learning and development needs of designated staff & volunteers through support and supervision. Contribute towards the core advice development plan in response to demand and trends.
- Contribute to learning and development activities of our team.

Other duties and responsibilities

- Support the COO as needed with attendance at meetings or to deputise if required.
- Conduct any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.
- Ensure safe and efficient delivery of service by achieving exacting standards of health and safety and reducing risks.

Person Specification

Listed below are the minimum essential requirements to do this job:

1. Knowledge and Experience

- 1.1 Experience of managing and/or supervising within a Citizens Advice service.
- 1.2 Experience of managing people including the ability to develop and motivate staff and volunteers.
- 1.3 Knowledge of current advice guidelines and legislation including the Citizens Advice Performance Quality Framework
- 1.4 Proven record of monitoring and evaluating outputs and outcomes.
- 1.5 Experience and ability to monitor and maintain casework systems and procedures.
- 1.9 Experience of compliance with data protection.

2. SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- 2.1 Proven ability of monitoring and maintaining service delivery against agreed targets
- 2.2 Knowledge of Quality of Advice (QAA) monitoring, sampling, and checking systems
- 2.5 Excellent organisation skills with the ability to monitor, analyse statistics and to check accuracy of calculations.
- 2.6 Ability to communicate effectively verbally and in writing.
- 2.7 Ability to work with a variety of organisations, to earn and maintain the trust of those people with whom the organisation deals.
- 2.8 Strong people skills with the ability to respond sensitively to clients.
- 2.9 Ability to collaborate with members of the public and deal with challenging situations in a calm and professional manner.
- 2:10 Ordered approach to managing own workload, and ability to plan and prioritise activities efficiently.
- 2.11 Familiarity with Microsoft Office 365 applications; excellent keyboard skills and the ability to use IT

3. Personal Qualities & Attributes

- 3.1 High levels of enthusiasm, self-motivation, and a self-managing 'can do' attitude.
- 3.2 High levels of determination and willingness to take on new challenges and responsibilities
- 3.4 Effective team leader and collaborator.
- 3.5 Willing to challenge stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination.

4. POLICIES OF RCJ ADVICE

- 3.1 Commitment to the Aims and Principles of the Citizens Advice service
- 3.2 Commitment to implementing the RCJ Advice's Equal Opportunities Policy and an understanding of what this means for people providing a service to the public.