

# LUTON IRISH FORUM

## Welfare Case Officer

### Job Description

**Hours:** 35 hours per week, occasional evening and weekend work may be required for which TOIL will be given.

**Responsible to:** Welfare Case Supervisor

#### Summary of Post:

This post will be responsible for providing culturally sensitive advice and advocacy services in accordance with the Advice Service Quality (ASQ) Mark. The service will be based at the Luton Irish Forum Centre and provide outreach to disadvantaged, excluded and hard to reach Irish, Irish Traveller, other BME and British communities across Luton and surrounding Counties.

#### Responsibilities:

1. To be responsible for providing emergency drop in advice sessions, one to one appointments, outreach, telephone and email advice, primarily on welfare benefits, housing, debt, community care and Irish specific advice.
2. To ensure clients are claiming all the benefits they can, and support them to fill in forms.
3. To prepare clients for and provide representation at medicals and tribunals.
4. To ensure that the case load is adequately prioritised.
5. To attend supervision, appraisals, team meetings and training to ensure the work of the advice service is that of the ASQ General Help with Casework Standard required and that any necessary training is identified and addressed.
6. To contribute to the development of an electronic database of user case files accessing the service and ensure paper base files are to the ASQ General Help with Casework Standard.
7. To implement advice service objectives in accordance with the business plan and contribute to the report on progress within the monthly advice service report for the Board of Trustees and be available to attend Trustee meetings if required.
8. To contribute to the compilation of the annual Welfare Service review.
9. To contribute to the securing of funds to resource advice service delivery and compile reports/ evaluations for funders as required.
10. To foster partnerships with statutory and voluntary sector agencies and promote the needs of our users as appropriate.
11. To contribute to local and national policy development and keep abreast of legal changes and practices through subscribing to the email bulletins, local and national media, relevant handbooks, training, sector newsletters, email updates and attending forums.

# Person Specification

## Experience

- At least 2 year's experience of giving welfare advice in a voluntary or paid capacity.
- Experience of supporting people who are experiencing crises and are distressed.
- Experience of negotiation and liaison with welfare and housing agencies and statutory bodies.

## Skills/abilities

- Able to interview users in need from all backgrounds in a sensitive manner.
- Able to communicate clearly verbally and in writing with users, the general public and other statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Able to represent and advocate for users with a range of agencies.
- Able to deliver outreach services at user homes and in community setting if required.
- Able to record and maintain user information on case files and in computer monitoring systems.
- Able to gather and maintain information on relevant legislation, support services and rights.
- Able to write reports on the work of the post and the needs of the users.
- Able to work on your own initiative and as part of a staff team.
- Able to work collaboratively with other agencies and advice workers.
- Computer literate.

## Knowledge

### *Essential*

- Benefits legislation and benefits system.
- Housing legislation, housing systems, policies and procedures.
- Statutory and voluntary sector support services across Luton relevant to the needs of the users.
- The Irish and other communities in Luton and surrounding counties and issues relating to their experience.
- Promoting equal opportunities and diversity.

### *Desirable*

- Irish Pensions.
- Repatriation (to Ireland).
- Advice Service Quality (ASQ) Mark.
- Law and services for disabled people.
- Family law.