**Job description**

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| **Post number:** |  |
| **Service Unit:** | Neighbourhood & Housing Management Services |
| **Job title:** | Specialist – Neighbourhood Housing (Income) |
| **Grade:** | 5 |
| **Responsible to:** | Income Manager & Deputy to Neighbourhood Housing Lead |
| **Responsible for:** | N/A |
| **Date last reviewed:** | June 2025 |
|  **Job purpose** This post plays an important part in the Council’s intention to provide a high-quality service to its customers. This is a ‘front-line’ post dealing at times with sensitive issues within a pressurised environment. The post holder will be responsible for the recovery process keeping arrears levels to a minimum in turn maximising income for the organisation and considering the needs of the customer.To prevent and minimise customer debts and provide opportunities for people to maximise their income and to develop money management skills.The role will provide a vital link to other service units enabling the Council to deliver a comprehensive housing and rents service. |
| **Main duties**  1. To have sole responsibility for all aspects of rent arrears recovery for properties within a defined area, acting as the first point of contact for customer enquiries. To advise on all aspects of rent and other related charges and to ensure effective collection of arrears whether by personal visits to the customer’s home, by telephone or by written correspondence. To deal appropriately with enquiries and to negotiate repayment agreements with tenants and their representatives. Make referrals for money advice and outside agencies. To setup and calculate direct debits via the Allpay system ensuring compliance with the Direct Debit regulations.
2. To monitor rent accounts and take appropriate action when payments due haven’t been made, ensuring that all accounts in arrears are actioned in accordance with procedures and that cases are escalated in a timely fashion when arrears increase. To maintain clear and accurate records on the IT database for every case and ensure that all documentation conforms to current procedures. To make tenants fully aware of the action being taken and the consequences of such action and to use, when appropriate, the services of other agencies e.g. CAB, Social Services, Probation Service etc.
3. To advise tenants on the management of their tenancies and rent accounts, giving basic debt management/counselling advice to customers in arrears with their rent and refer them to specialist advisors (e.g. CAB) where appropriate. To explain to customers the amount of rent and other charges due and how they have been calculated. To advise on possible housing benefit/Universal Credit and other types of benefit entitlement and on the different payment methods available. To be proactive with any future changes to welfare benefits under the welfare reform. In appropriate situations to notify Housing Benefit/Universal Credit of any suspected fraudulent claims.
4. To prepare and submit all legal documentation for County Court proceedings relating to rent arrears and to represent the Council at court hearings. To prepare all documentation for County Court proceedings for rent arrears cases, ensuring all pre-court visits to tenants are undertaken and that tenants are fully advised of the action being taken. All such actions should have regard to County Court procedures, the Human Rights Act and Data Protection and to comply with the Pre court action protocol ensuring that all documents are served in line with the protocol.
5. To monitor all cases where court judgments and possession orders have been obtained and to initiate any enforcement action. Where appropriate, to prepare and submit all warrants for possession, notifying tenants of any eviction dates and attending evictions as necessary. To represent the Council at any application to suspend warrant hearings and any appeal hearings.
6. To take part in the duty arrangements to provide office interview and telephone answering service as may be required.
7. To provide landlord references for tenants having regard to Data Protection, Freedom of Information requests and complaints.
8. To ensure that proper financial controls are maintained within the Income Collection team and that accurate records are kept. To bring to the attention of the Income Management & Deputy to Neighbourhood Housing Lead immediately any concerns that arise about financial controls.

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| This job description reflects the core activities of the post. As the service and the post-holder develop, there will inevitably be some changes to the duties for which the post is responsible, and possibly to the emphasis of the post itself. We expect that the post-holder will recognise this and will adopt a flexible approach to work. This could include undertaking relevant training where necessary. The line manager will consult the post-holder if significant changes to the job description become necessary. Any changes will be reflected in a revised job description. |

**Person specification**

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| This section describes the knowledge, experience and competence required by the post-holder that is necessary for an acceptable standard of performance in carrying out this role. |
|  | **Assessment method(A, I, T or P)\*** | **Essential/desirable** |
| Qualifications |  |  |
| GCSE English and Mathematics at grade C or above, or equivalent. | A | E |
| HNC or BTEC in Housing Studies or equivalent (or studying towards them) such as Level 3 Cert in Money Advice.  | A | D |
| Knowledge and experience |  |  |
| Previous work experience in a busy office environment. | A/I | E |
| Some relevant experience of housing related work, particularly income collection and/or estate management. | A/I | E |
| Experience of providing a customer orientated service dealing with confidential and personal matters. | A/I | E |
| Practical experience of giving debt advice and/or welfare benefit advice. | A/I | E |
| Awareness of welfare benefits and/or debt recovery. | A/I | E |
| Skills |  |  |
| Strong written communication skills. | A/I | E |
| Strong verbal communication skills | A/I | E |
| Good numeracy skills. | A/I | E |
| Strong IT skills. | A/I | E |
| Strong negotiation skills with the ability to be assertive in difficult situations. | A/I | E |
| Strong customer service skills with a commitment to providing high quality service. | A/I | E |
| Good team working skills | A/I | E |
| Good organisational skills with the ability to maintain accurate records and work on own initiative. | A/I | E |
| Special requirements (e.g. working hours, driving licence etc) |  |  |
| Ability to travel to homes around the borough to attend appointments. This would normally involve provision of your own vehicle and holding a driving licence valid to drive in the UK. | A | E |
| **Behavioural competencies** This section details the level of competency required to carry out this role (please see below for an overview of the framework and refer to the full [Organisational Culture Framework](http://loop.guildford.gov.uk/BPBC/Culture/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx) for clarification where needed). | **Level** |
| Embraces change | 2 |
| Innovation and creative thinking | 2 |
| Effective communication | 2 |
| Customer focus | 2 |
| Problem solving and decision making | 2 |
| Focus on efficiency | 2 |
| Performance and learning | 2 |
| Team working | 2 |
| Builds relationships | 2 |
| Commitment to the organisation | 2 |
| Please note that the criteria specified on this form will be used as guidance when short-listing all applications and again at interview. Please ensure you provide evidence within your application giving examples, where appropriate, as to how you meet the specified requirement for the job.\*Assessment criteria A = Application form; I = Interview; T = Skills based test; P = Presentation |

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| **Mission** | **A forward looking, efficiently run Council, working in partnership with others and providing first class services that give the community value for money** |
| **Cluster** | **Transformation**Forward looking. The focus on our ability to respond to ever changing needs of our customers and bring about new ideas to ensure value for money. | **Delivering excellence**Efficiently run. The focus on the values and behaviours (in addition to internal systems) that ensures efficiency and effectiveness at every level across the Council. | **Our people**To ensure that individuals at all levels of the organisation are supported, committed and engaged in the pursuit of our mission and work in a collaborative manner to fulfil our objectives. |
| **Values** | **Challenge ourselves** We strive to improve what we do by seeking out new ways of working, encouraging innovation and enabling change. | **Customer care** We put the customer at the heart of what we do by engaging in clear, honest, and meaningful communications to deliver professional services shaped around their needs. | **Quality focus**With customer insight, we provide high-quality services and find ways to improve. We aim to get things right first time, drive out waste and exceed expectations whenever possible. | **Organisational learning**We strive to create a work environment where everyone is valued, trusted, and supported. We encourage and facilitate growth and learning at individual, team, and organisational levels. | **One Council**We work together collaboratively, recognising that we are one organisation, working to achieve a common mission. |
| **Behavioural competencies** | **Embraces change**Has a positive attitude to change, adapts to meet new challenges, and introduces changes to improve organisational performance. | **Innovation and creative thinking**Proactively generates and develops innovative ideas, opportunities or improvements in order to meet organisational objectives more efficiently and effectively. | **Customer focus**Puts the customer first, builds effective relationships and seeks feedback to address their needs. | **Problem solving and decision making**Understands and analyses issues in order to identify the most appropriate solutions. Makes effective decisions based on thorough analysis and the needs of the organisation. | **Performance and learning**Demonstrates personal commitment to meet agreed performance standards and objectives. Learns from experience and takes responsibility for identifying and addressing personal development needs. | **Team working**Proactively cooperates and interacts with colleagues, internal and external partners across the Council. Encourages others to develop a collaborative approach to share information, knowledge, and ideas.  |
| **Effective communication**Communicates effectively. Uses communication methods and standards, together with well-reasoned arguments to convince and persuade where necessary. | **Focus on efficiency**Meets or exceeds the Council’s standards by monitoring the quality of own work, team or service delivery. Continually looks for areas of improvement to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money. | **Builds relationships**Presents a professional image; uses interpersonal skills to form positive and productive working relationships within and beyond the organisation. | **Commitment to the organisation**Consistently supports and demonstrates an understanding of and commitment to the Council’s vision and values. Acts with integrity and accountability.  |