Hastings Borough Council

Job Description Questionnaire

## Date

Date

## Job Title

Income Recovery Officer

## Reports to

Income Recovery Team Leader

## Directorate

Housing

## Purpose of the Job.

The Income Recovery Officer will be responsible for providing a highly professional tenant

focused arrears recovery service to temporary accommodation residents.

The duties will include monitoring rent accounts, including service charges, taking appropriate action to identify and manage rent arrears in accordance with HBC procedures and keeping up to date with legislation and best practice.

Managing and monitoring the rent accounts of an allocated number of residents ensuring that all rent accounts are monitored regularly.

The Officer will also be responsible for recovering income related to storage and removals which we will arrange on behalf of temporary accommodation residents.

The Officer will also be responsible for recovering income related to any loans issued by the Council to help people facing homelessness to secure their own accommodation.

Taking the appropriate action regarding rent arrears in line with HBC policies and procedures.

Maintain clear and up to date information and liaise with the Housing Benefit Department and other Service Providers relating to payment of claims and resolution of any problems which may arise.

## Responsibilities

* To provide an excellent customer focused service for all Temporary Accommodation Residents ensuring that tenants are aware of their responsibility to pay their rent on time and regularly.
* Advise TA residents on preventative action to be taken to stop arrears occurring
* Keep up to date on welfare benefit entitlements, particularly housing related benefits and all changes due to Welfare Reform
* Keep up to date with best practice on arrears prevention
* Arrange for the production and distribution of regular rent statements to tenants
* To be responsible for the collection of rental income
* To be responsible for the collection of housing related debts, such as for storage and removal payments and loans provided to help prevent homelessness.
* To liaise with the Housing Benefit section regarding the processing and progress of individual housing benefits claims, liaise regularly with the Benefits Officer about chasing the progress of housing benefit applications and overpayments where appropriate
* Carry out regular home visits in connection with income recovery or arrears prevention and to serve notices of seeking possession
* To liaise with the Finance Department to rectify errors and query missing Payments
* To make referrals to support services where tenants require additional assistance to sustain their accommodation.
* Maximise income from rents and/or services charges by ensuring prompt payment of all income due
* Follow agreed procedures for income recovery for all properties and former tenant

Arrears

* Support and assist residents unable to sustain their rent & service charge payments by directing them to appropriate internal and/or external support
* Provide information to assist in the production of arrears statistics
* Support the organisation in the collection and recovery of all service charges, and other housing related debts due
* Liaise with external agencies regarding residents’ benefit entitlements and applications
* Ensure that residents understand their role in claiming Housing and other benefits
* Promote good liaison and joint working with other relevant agencies across all areas
* Attend meetings to progress joint working or new initiatives in particular Universal Credit or other Welfare Reform
* Understand Welfare Reform changes and their impact on the organisation and residents

**Standard Result Areas**

* Participate in an annual performance appraisal based on agreed objectives that are linked to the Council’s corporate objectives and priorities.
* Ensure that all duties and services provided are in accordance with the Council’s Equalities and Diversity policies and procedures.
* To comply with individual responsibilities, in accordance with work role for health and safety in the workplace
* Ensure that all duties and services provided are in accordance with the Council’s Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection policies and procedures.
* All employees may be called upon to assist with a range of elections duties for the Council on an occasional basis when elections are called. Participation in elections duties is subject to the terms and conditions as determined from time to time by the Returning Officer or Central Government.
* Undertake such other duties and tasks appropriate to the grade and character of work such as changes in information systems and new technology as may reasonably required. Therefore, the above list of key result areas in this job description should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive.

The key result areas to this post are set out in this job description. It should be noted that the Council reserves the right to update the job description from time to time to reflect changes in or to the post after consultation about any proposed changes. Significant permanent changes in duties and responsibilities will require revisions to be made to this job description.

# Person Specification

## Job Title : Income Recovery Officer

## Directorate: Housing

## Essential Requirements

**Qualification**

1. 5 GCSE passes at grade C/4 or above (or equivalent) in Maths and English Language.

**Experience**

1. Experience of recovering income, including rental income (and arrears).
2. Experience of delivering a customer focused service

**Knowledge**

1. Knowledge of the pressures facing people experiencing homelessness and living in temporary accommodation
2. Extensive knowledge of Microsoft Office, in particular of Excel spreadsheets and their application
3. Sound working knowledge of computerised financial systems

**Personal Aptitude and Skills**

1. Good written & verbal skills
2. Good literacy & numeracy skills
3. Competent user of common ICT applications, such as Word, Excel, Outlook or equivalents
4. Ability to analyse financial information
5. Ability to prioritise own workload
6. Organisational skills
7. Ability to use own initiative in understanding and completing tasks
8. Ability to manage and motivate staff in a structured, positive and pro-active manner
9. Excellent interpersonal and influencing skills

**Behavioural Approach**

1. Ability to be empathetic towards people facing homelessness
2. Ability to manage constant and conflicting demands, often to meet tight deadlines
3. A commitment to working as a positive and constructive team member, demonstrating a collaborative and co-operative approach
4. Able to work calmly and effectively under pressure
5. The ability to adapt to change with flexibility and able to acknowledge and act on feedback about own performance and behaviours.

The above qualities will be assessed in the first instance on the application form and again at the interview stage if selected.