

**ROLE DESCRIPTION**

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| **JOB TITLE** | **POST NUMBER** |
| **Housing Support Services Officer** | **E1023** |
| **DIRECTORATE** | **LOCATION** |
| Housing & Property Services | Hybrid; office base Hailsham |
| **GRADE** | **OTHER ALLOWANCES** |
| WDC3 | N/A |
| **KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS** | **INTERNAL/EXTERNAL** |
| **Who will I be working with?**  **How will I be interacting with others?**  **This covers JE Criteria G (Relationships)** | Chief Executive, Cabinet Portfolio Holder, Director of Community & Customer Services, Head of Housing Services, Team Leaders & staff in the Housing and other departments of the council such as the Contact Centre.  Government Departments, Suppliers and other external organisations.  Members of the Council. Tenants of the Council. Members of the public. |
| **STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES/LEVEL OF ACCOUNTABILITY** | |
| **What am I accountable for?**  **What are the consequences for me or the council?**  **This covers JE Criteria D (Accountability)** | The post holder will report directly to the Housing Support Services Team Leader.  This is an operational role that works within standardised practices and procedures and where officers must adhere to the current Housing Legislation. On occasion they are required to use discretion and judgement when analysing data and required to interpret and record data accurately. This involves writing legal documentation and tenancies, licences, and correspondence.  This is a key requirement of the Housing Regulatory Standards (Tenancy Standard). Failure to do so would have a negative impact legally and financially, and could lead to an investigation by the Housing Regulator or Housing Ombudsman. A negative outcome would adversely affect the Council’s reputation.  Officers are often the contact for Housing Officers and Housing staff and provide advice and information from enquiries from the public, dealing with it’s entirety where possible.  Managing the expectation of the customer at this point is vital for the reputation of the Council.  Contact with the public requires providing information, liaising with finance and other housing departments to resolve queries, and accurately recording and delivering messages to relevant staff. |
| **DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY** (INDEPENDENCE) | |
| **What actions can I take independently?**  The duties outlined in *responsibilities and level of accountability* are all carried out independently with minimal input from other departments.  This also includes raising purchase orders, writing correspondence with tenants, and dealing with customer queries both electronically and telephone.  The role involves writing up legal documents, tenancies, and garage licences independently.  The post holder will be Identifying service improvements, improving working practices, and digitalising services.  The post holder communicates with tenants, applicants and family members of tenants independently, providing them with guidance and advice as to what is required for processes such as ending their tenancy, permissions for pets or housing improvements, as well as safeguarding queries.  This also often includes speaking with tenants or family members in distressing circumstances, where safeguarding may also be required. They will be making decisions independently as to what is required to assist them and provide the most appropriate service, or refer them to a Housing Offer or another member of the team that can resolve their query.  **When do I need to involve others?**  The limitations of independence within this role are where legal authority is required for approval of tenancies for prospective tenants, authorisation of notices for properties and the tenants, and approval of purchase orders. The post holder will not have authority to authorise any utility invoices for void properties, payments, or make any decisions regarding Council tenancies offered without management approval. This role requires management involvement and oversight for all documentation created and may require advice on some correspondence or complaints. | |
| **JOB PURPOSE** (COMPLEXITY) | |
| **Why does this job exist?**  This role is required to manage all of the administration and recording on corporate systems for Housing Services.  The Housing Support Team carry out a vast range of administrative tasks that are fundamental to the smooth running of the Housing Service. This involves using a large number of different software systems. As a member of the Housing Support Services Team, the role is to provide and maintain a high quality and reliable service to customers seeking access to housing services and other Council services across Wealden district. Accurately recording and process services on the corporate systems whilst ensuring data on systems are up to date. The post holder will be a first point of contact for customers and will be expected to take ownership of issues.  This would also potentially lead to Housing Ombudsman complaints being upheld and investigation by the Housing Regulator.  **How does it contribute to the Council overall?**  The service provides a high profile service to approximately 3,500 tenants subject to scrutiny by Housing Regulator.  This role requires good knowledge on the systems, processes and procedures. Failure in the role can cost the Council hundreds of thousands of pounds of revenue, poor service to customers, and dissatisfaction amongst staff.  The contribution to the Council is that the legal documentation involved with tenancies are produced, recorded and processed in line with procedures at the highest standard of quality.  The post holder is to administer Council systems and provide administrative and clerical support to  other staff within the authority, and to carry out specialist housing functions as  required. Without this post, this would impact the Housing service extensively both financially and in the service the Council provides. | |

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| **ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| **What are the most important things I will be doing?**   * To receive, record, administer and process enquiries from members of the public and others in connection with the Housing service. * To maintain accurate records relating to customer enquires, to organise work patterns to respond to customer needs, and to work with others to benefit the customer. * To negotiate and instruct tenants in relation to their tenancy responsibilities. * To negotiate with tenants on tenancy start dates, minimising void rent loss for the Council. * To communicate with customers and ensure that all accurate and relevant information is elicited from and received by customers and others making enquiries of the council’s service. * To ensure methods of communication are adapted to customers needs. * To develop positive personal image to customers and respond sympathetically to feelings and needs expressed by customers. * To be responsible for ensuring details are accurately recorded and maintained within the corporate systems. * To communicate and coordinate with internal departments as well as external providers where appropriate * To be familiar and comply with Data Protection legislation. * To administer all departmental and Council wide systems for services provision and monitoring. To include all systems for Void Management, Repairs, Lettings, Finance and Estate Management activities. * To be responsible for maintenance of accurate records, to include customer enquiries, files, file notes, written correspondence and electronic communications, storage and retrieval of data, for performance, audit and financial monitoring purposes. * To undertake duties in relation to office administration including ordering of supplies and stock. To be responsible for administering systems for creditors, debtors and purchasing. * To undertake this work requires detailed working knowledge of 4 bespoke computer systems; MRI, Northgate, ReACT, and Locata. |
| **What other activities will I be responsible for?**   * Managing three inboxes with communication from both internal and external persons. * Managing post received addressed to the department. * Organising meetings and taking minutes for senior management meetings. * To identify, interpret and resolve problems affecting customers and generate and deliver solutions. To work with others to take action to deliver those solutions. * Provide appropriate and essential support to departments when they have a scheduled event for example for Elections and Emergency Planning. |
| **Will I be managing others?**  No. |
| **Who do I report into?**  Housing Support Service Team Leader. |

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| **PROGRESSION & DEVELOPMENT** |
| **What are the development opportunities for me?**   * Opportunity to develop knowledge in Housing Law and complete professional qualifications relevant to such. * Opportunities to progress within the department and potential for promotion into high roles with relevant experience. * Training offered to improve skills relevant to the role. |
| **How will I know I am being successful in this role?**   * Excellent service to customers, our tenants, and support provided to Housing department. * Smooth running of day to day administrative tasks. * Minimal financial loss to council through loss of revenue or through delays. * Yearly appraisals with senior management. * Regular 1-2-1 meetings with manager measuring performance. |
| **What is the required learning for me in this role?**   * WDC Learning Pool Modules. * GDPR. |

This is an outline job description designed to summarise the key responsibilities of the role and is not intended to cover every task that may be required. It may be subject to change to meet the evolving needs of the organisation.

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| **Additional Role Requirements** | |
| Standards of Conduct | You will be required to comply with the Council’s Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions, and at all times deal honestly with the Council, Members, Colleagues and all those who have dealings with the Council, including customers and suppliers.  You must behave with integrity, act lawfully and demonstrate a strong commitment to ethical values.  To positively demonstrate the Wealden values yourself and to continue to build the culture of the Wealden values through the appointment, management, appraisal and development of staff (as well as third party providers). |
| Health & Safety/Risk Management | Wealden District Council’s Health & Safety Policy and other safety procedures and guidelines are deemed part of this job description. Employees must look after their own health, safety and welfare and be mindful of other persons who may be affected by their acts. Employees must co‑operate and comply with management instructions regarding H&S issues and report all accidents, incidents and problems to their supervisor, manager or other senior members of staff, in line with the H&S policies.  You will need to be compliant with the Council’s risk management policies and procedures. These describe the Council’s commitment to risk management, the recognition that our aim is to protect colleagues and visitors from harm, and stress that all colleagues have a responsibility to minimise risk. |
| Governance Standards | Comply with the relevant governance standards applicable to the Council as communicated to the post-holder from time to time. |
| Data Protection | To comply with Council Policies and the Data Protection Act in all respects, with particular relevance to the protection and use of staff and customer information. |
| Confidentiality | Council colleagues are required to ensure that information about customers and staff is safeguarded to maintain confidentiality and is kept securely in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA18). The Council’s Data Security and Protection policy ICT policies provide guidance on how this can be achieved. |
| Communication | To encourage innovation and positive challenge through effective involvement, motivation and communication with Officers, Members, Partners and other Stakeholders, actively promoting the Council’s reputation and image as an employer of choice. |
| Digital/  Records Management | To direct the identification, development and implementation of digital and other systems and procedures which are aligned to the Council’s Drive to Digital Strategy and are shaped to reflect our customers’ and stakeholders’ needs.  To maintain Council customer and staff records (both paper and electronic) in accordance with Council policies. |
| Freedom of  Information | To provide advice and assistance to all persons who propose to make, or have made requests for information, and to ensure all requests for information are managed appropriately in accordance with Council Freedom of Information procedures. |
| Security | To comply with Council policies to ensure there is a safe and secure environment that protects Members, staff and visitors and their property, and the physical assets and the information of the organisation. |
| Other duties | Participate in such non-routine duties as elections and Emergency Planning as directed by the Chief Executive to include, where appropriate, the setup of a Rest Centre. |
| Freedom to Speak Up  (Whistleblowing) | You have responsibility for customer and staff welfare and should raise any concerns relating to a breach of Council policies and procedures with your manager or refer to HR for alternative options. |
| Environmental Impact | You will ensure compliance with the Council’s environmental management policies and procedures. These describe the Council’s commitment to climate change and carbon management, the recognition that our aim is to protect the environment and the use of natural resources that all staff have a responsibility towards. |
| Performance review | This Job Description will be used as a basis for individual performance review between you and your line manager.  The Job Description covers only the key result areas and, as such, does not intend to provide a comprehensive list of objectives. Specific objectives will be reviewed each April and may develop to meet the changing needs of the service. You will need to take due account, in the way they achieve the key result areas, of Council policies and procedures. |
| Equality and Diversity | To take responsibility and comply with the Council’s Equal Opportunities policy (which makes a commitment to promote equal opportunities and equality of all protected characteristics in Wealden), Officers’ Code of Conduct, Data Protection and other relevant policies, procedures and legislation, to ensure these are embedded and applied throughout the service in both service provision and employment issues. |

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| **PERSON SPECIFICATION** |

| **CRITERIA** | **ATTRIBUTES** | **ESSENTIAL** | **DESIRABLE** | **ASSESSED BY**  **Application Form / Interview / Practical Assessment** |
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| **Knowledge & Experience** | Ability to interpret customers needs and provide solutions face to face and in person. | X | X |  |
| Ability to write letters and deal with general correspondence. | X |  |  |
|  | Experience of dealing with customers in a service environment. | X |  |  |
|  | Ability to work with flexibility in a team. | X |  |  |
|  | Experience of Orchard Information Systems |  | X |  |
| Experience of working in an office environment |  | X |  |
| Experience in a customer services  role | X |  |  |
| Motivated to deliver excellent customer service | X |  |  |
| A good team player | X |  |  |
| Ability to deal with challenging situations in a professional manner. | X |  |  |
| Understands Data Protection Act, GDPR and FOI |  | X |  |
|  | Appropriate knowledge of ICT systems, including Microsoft Office and Outlook | X |  |  |
| Different types of tenancies used at WDC for customers |  | X |  |
| General housing law |  | X |  |
|  | Ability to remain calm and work under pressure | X |  |  |
| **Skills** | Ability to work in silo and deliver in timeframes | X |  |  |
| Ability to prioritise workload | X |  |  |
| Excellent attention to detail and ability to keep accurate computerised and manual records | X |  |  |
| Excellent oral and written communication skills | X |  |  |
| **Qualifications/**  **Education** | GCSE Grade C or above in English Language or NVQ Level 2 Administration | X |  |  |

