

POST TITLE: Hostel Manager

DIRECTORATE: Finance and Resources

SERVICE: Benefits and Housing Needs

GRADE: PO1 - honorarium to PO2 currently in payment

LOCATION: Hostels both within and outside London Borough of Hackney

RESPONSIBLE TO: Benefits and Housing Needs Team Manager

RESPONSIBLE FOR: Up to three Hostel Caretakers

PURPOSE OF THE JOB:

To perform all functions within the management and maintenance of temporary accommodation, financial monitoring, payments and collection and the welfare of Hostel residents. This includes induction of new residents, vacations and voids, evictions, property defects, site checks, repairs and maintenance arrangements, furniture and personal belongings storage arrangements, inventories, concerns with suitability and standards of provision comply with Health and Safety requirements.

Provide a standard service 7 days per week, on a rota basis covering the hours of:

Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm

Saturday/ Sunday 10am – 6pm

Assist with borough planning emergencies and respond with a sense of urgency.

Be part of an out of hours duty emergency call out rota as and when necessary.

To deliver an efficient, high quality and customer-focussed service for a diverse client group including high numbers of vulnerable and disadvantaged households.

To line manage the Hostel Caretakers on a day to day basis.

To mentor both new members of staff and staff from other areas in legislation, practice, procedures, performance of duties and guidance.

To protect the public purse and assets of the Council by identifying and preventing fraud and error in all duties.

To apply the relevant legislation, procedures, caselaw, guidance, audit recommendations, to conduct rigorous, robust and accurate service provision.

To identify holistic and cost-effective solutions through casework and joint working with other services, stakeholders, partners and agencies.

To lead on the development of innovative initiatives to meet all aims of the service, including increasing supply of properties, contract management and monitoring, mobility and relocation, with pan-London and regional partners where necessary.

To work cooperatively across the Benefits and Housing Needs Service to promote an effective, efficient and holistic service to residents in the borough.

To offer support and advice to customers and signpost to partners.

To conduct visits to customers and properties to fully carry out statutory and corporate duties, including residency checks and assisting vulnerable members of the community.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES AND MAIN DUTIES:

Management and maintenance of temporary accommodation ensuring health and safety requirements are met at all times. Resettlement and move on to settled accommodation.

Joint responsibility with other Hostel Managers for appropriate usage of an annual building maintenance budget of £250,000 across temporary accommodation sites.

Identify opportunities to contain and reduce expenditure and deliver services more efficiently.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES:

Monitoring all financial transactions within the service area and ensuring that these are consistent with corporate finance policies and procedures. Delivery of safe, secure, prompt and efficient arrangements for devolved income and expenditure processing within the service.

To ensure written replies to complaints and enquiries from the Ombudsman, Councillors, Members of Parliament and other stakeholders are of the highest standard and dealt with in accordance with prescribed guidelines and within agreed timescales, through a “learning from complaints” approach.

Accompany Councilors on Hostel site visits.

Responsible for the welfare of vulnerable residents assisting them with welfare benefits, mental health, medical and safeguarding issues. This involves liaison with many other professionals such as social workers, health professionals, charity workers and police and includes attendance at multidisciplinary team meetings.

To deal with casework and information sensitively and to always observe the need for confidentiality and that information is only disclosed in appropriate circumstances and in regard to Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act and Human rights Act.

Ensure that a high standard of customer care is provided at all times and that customers are dealt with courteously and professionally.

To be self-motivated and have the ability to work on your own initiative with the minimum of supervision, including lone working at times.

To contribute towards the development and achievement of the annual business and service plans as well as policies and procedures to ensure that the service is effective, efficient and of a high standard.

To provide cover for colleagues as and when required.

To represent the Benefits and Housing Needs Service in person and through written communication when necessary, at internal and external meetings, acting as an ambassador for the Council and reflecting Council policies and objectives.

Work to meet personal, team and service targets set during appraisals and contained within the Service plan.

Interview customers to assist, identify, verify and provide solutions including at their home.

Record statistics, case notes and thought processes swiftly and accurately on the relevant databases to ensure comprehensive monitoring can be conducted and audit trails are in place.

Respond swiftly and appropriately to all enquiries, from all channels.

Overall responsibility for diffusing difficult or dangerous situations supporting hostel workers, noting that abuse and aggression is commonplace in the Hostel management environment.

To undertake such additional tasks and/or duties as may from time to time be assigned.

To adhere in full to the Council's Code of Conduct, Diversity and Equality policies and Health and Safety procedures

Knowledge, Skills and Experience:

Extensive knowledge and substantial experience of the following disciplines:

- temporary accommodation management, maintenance, income collection and financial monitoring and payments.
- liaison with other professionals such as social workers, health professionals, charity workers and police including attendance at multidisciplinary team meetings.
- legislation, regulations, policy, guidance, and practice associated with this discipline.

To have a clean and valid full UK driving license

Working knowledge of Part V11 of the 1996 Housing Act and other legislation relating to the provision and management of Emergency Accommodation.

Ability to provide a standard service 7 days per week, on a rota basis covering the hours of:

Monday – Friday 8am-8pm

Saturday/Sunday 10am – 6pm

Able to be part of an out of hours duty emergency call out rota.

Ability to manage conflicting priorities in a pressurised working environment that are subject to frequently changing circumstances in order to achieve targets within challenging timescales.

Good organisational skills and the ability to prioritise your workload to deliver to tight deadlines, targets and performance standards.

Excellent verbal and written communication and presentation skills and the ability to communicate effectively with a range of audiences including partner services and agencies and the ability to explain complex legislation in simple language.

Ability to represent the Council at court.

Experience of effective partnership working with agencies and stakeholders and the proven ability in engaging, negotiating and consulting with a wide range of audiences.

Substantial experience and detailed knowledge of the use of IT systems, including data processing, finance and Microsoft systems.

Ability to mentor staff in relation to all service delivery roles.

Ability to travel around the borough and out of the borough in order to conduct visits to customers and landlords.

Experience of working flexibly to meet the needs of the service and its customers.

Experience of assisting vulnerable and challenging customers.

Ability to mediate and negotiate effectively.

Experience of dealing with and advising customers in a professional manner.

Ability to adapt to new legislative, technological and financial developments whilst maintaining services outcomes in periods of change.

Ability to analyse and understand complex information.

Experience of building positive relationships with a range of both internal and external customers and stakeholders

Experience of cross-organisational working, taking into account the views of others and arriving at solutions of mutual benefit.

Must demonstrate an understanding and be committed to the Council's Equalities policy carrying out all duties with regard to the policy.

Must demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the importance of confidentiality.

Must demonstrate an ability to carry out research independently using electronic communication systems and other sources of relevant information.

Ability to work on projects and contribute to shared outcomes.

Must be aware of and comply with Health and Safety legislation and Council Health and safety Policy as relevant to the post.

Required to undergo/produce DBS disclosure acceptable to the Council.

Desirable

Membership of the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation and/or Chartered Institute of Housing