

Harlow Council Job Description

Job Title: Customer Advisor **Post Number:** CH0020X

Grade: 9 **Date:** September 2025

Directorate: Corporate Services and Improvement

Location: Civic Centre

Responsible to: Duty Manager

Job Purpose:

To work within a team of Customer Advisors who are the corporate face of the council and provide the focal point through which the Council delivers its front line response service. You will be proactive about customer service and aim to deliver a quality service which is right first time.

1.0 Generic Duties (*which applies across all main duties below*)

Provide a consistently high quality customer facing service for enquiries, complaints and payments in an efficient, pleasant and helpful manner. Work to rota either in the cash office, telephone call centre, reception, switchboard or face to face.

Main Duties

- 2.0 Develop an extensive awareness of all Council Services, a broad understanding of the main service procedures in order to advise or action reports from Residents/Councillors and specialist knowledge in the core service areas.
- 3.0 Provide a cashiering service which seeks to offer fast, efficient and accurate cash handling within a busy, pressurised environment.
- 4.0 Working in a busy call centre and switchboard environment, answering incoming calls within targets.
- 5.0 Provide a face-to-face service for enquiries with accuracy and speed working within an active and often noisy environment and the main Council Reception.
- 6.0 Other duties appropriate to the role.
- 7.0 Statement of Health and Safety.

Breakdown of tasks:

- 1.0 Provide a consistently high quality customer facing service for enquiries, complaints and payments in an efficient, pleasant and helpful manner. Work to a rota either in the Cash office, Telephone Call Centre, Main Reception, Switchboard or Face to Face.**
- 1.1 Promote a positive image of the Council at all times by delivering the service with a friendly, caring and professional approach to the handling of customer enquiries.
- 1.2 Interpret and apply Harlow Council's policies in order to prioritise customer enquiries and take on responsibility for ensuring that customer requests are met.
- 1.3 Be prepared to work independently and use your initiative to take decisions when presented with unanticipated situations.
- 1.4 Actively listen and communicate effectively, verbally and in writing, with the public, other departments and councillors in order to solve customer enquiries, issues and problems.
- 1.5 Deal professionally with the constant emotional demands of providing customer service. Keep calm and polite when dealing with high volumes of work and be able to defuse difficult situations, dealing appropriately with residents who can become upset, rude, aggressive or abusive in their behaviour.
- 1.6 Ensure the service is delivered in a way, which treats customers equally at all times and is adaptive and sensitive to the needs of all customer groups.
- 1.7 Be competent and confident when using a variety of different software programs and undertake training on new computer systems.
- 1.8 Be precise and accurate when recording and processing enquiries at speed to keep waiting time down to a minimum.
- 1.9 Be supportive and helpful to other team members, passing on information and contributing own ideas as required.
- 1.10 Ensure your own and others health and safety at work and the well -being of visitors to Contact Harlow.
- 1.11 Keep all areas clean, tidy, safe and welcoming for yourself, colleagues and members of the public.

2.0 Develop an extensive awareness of all Council Services, a broad understanding of the main service procedures in order to advise or action reports from Residents/Councillors and specialist knowledge in the core service areas.

- 2.1 Develop a thorough knowledge of the practice and procedures and legislation for all the core service that Contact Harlow deals with. Be able to give advice and apply the policies and procedures of these services in order to deliver a first contact response for these core service areas.
- 2.2 Deliver services in accordance with service standards and individual performance targets and take personal responsibility for ensuring these contribute to achieving the relevant corporate objectives.
- 2.3 Undergo training and development in order to operate I.T. systems set up for specific Council Services in order to deal with and process enquiries.
- 2.4 Knowledge of Data Protection Act in order to comply with requirements.
- 2.5 Maintain up to date knowledge of the Council Structure External Agencies and Organisations in order to deal with enquiries.
- 2.6 Be able to interpret and apply Council Complaints Procedure in order to deal with the process of complaints.
- 2.7 Maintain up to date knowledge of Council internal and external events so that you can give the correct information to residents.
- 2.8 Ensure you keep up to date with information from internal and external services and partners along with local and government information and procedures and ensuring all team members know where information is held.
- 2.9 Identify possible improvements in service delivery, performance and procedures.

3.0 Provide a cashiering service which seeks to offer fast, efficient and accurate cash handling within a busy, pressurised environment.

- 3.1 Be competent and confident in completing a range of tasks within the secure cash environment.
- 3.2 Processing, through the in-house receipting facility, payments received by other council offices and also payments that have been received through the post with precision and speed.
- 3.3 Reconciliation and balancing of accounts for end of day banking under pressure of deadlines.
- 3.4 Develop and maintain a thorough knowledge of the Council's cash receipting software in order to process all Council payments/Income accurately.

4.0 Working in a busy call centre environment and switchboard, answering incoming calls within target.

- 4.1 Quickly identify resident and listen carefully to what is being said in order to identify type of enquiry and service it requires to be resolved.
- 4.2 Access multiple software, including call centre technology, at speed, in order to process the enquiry.
- 4.3 Be fast, accurate and efficient in the response time when handling phone enquiries being mindful of the cost of the call to the resident.

5.0 Provide a face-to-face service for enquiries with accuracy and speed working within a busy and often noisy environment and the main Council Reception.

- 5.1 Work within a pressured environment which is managed via a ticket machine enabling residents to wait and watch the enquiry process.
- 5.2 Read and monitor the environment around the behaviours of residents in a public environment and to ascertain risk of potential physical violence.
- 5.3 Take control of the front desk environment and take action if situations occur which require additional support from other team members.
- 5.4 Interpret individual needs of residents that need handling in a specific and sensitive way and offer alternative access routes.
- 5.5 Effectively communicate with residents from different cultures, with different languages and special needs and resolve their enquiries.
- 5.6 Deal with multiple enquiries from individual residents and to organise the processing of these enquiries.
- 5.7 Concentrate and accurately record enquires on various forms ranging from Benefits, Council Tax, Housing, Parking, Leisure and Community.

6.0 Other duties appropriate to the role.

- 6.1 Identify training and development needs and assist with training new staff.
- 6.2 Provide cover for team members and other services as requires.
- 6.3 Accept and participate in the application of call monitoring to the delivery of Contact Harlow services.
- 6.4 To undertake other duties commensurate with the grade, skills, knowledge and experience of the post holder.
- 6.5 All employees are expected to show a commitment to safeguarding children, young people and adults with care and support needs.
- 6.6 All employees are expected to have regard and operate within the Council's commitment to equality and diversity and customer care.
- 6.7 All employees are expected to adhere to requirements of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) and The Data Protection Act (2018) and comply with measures to protect the confidentiality of information in accordance with Council policies and procedures.
- 6.8 All employees are expected to familiarise themselves with and adhere to all relevant Council Policies and Procedures.
- 6.9 This job description is not intended to be an exhaustive list but to indicate the main responsibilities of the post. It will be reviewed periodically to take into account changes and developments in service requirements.

7.0 Statement of Health and Safety

- 7.1 Harlow Council is committed to the provision of high quality health and safety standards. In order to achieve this all staff employed by the Council have the following specific responsibilities, which are consistent with the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- 7.2
 - To take reasonable care for the health and safety of yourself and of other persons who may be affected by what you do or fail to do.
 - To co-operate with Harlow Council in order to enable statutory requirements to be implemented.
 - Not to intentionally interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.