

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

Role Profile Template

Role Title:	Move On (Rent Deposit) Officer
Job Family:	Technical
Service:	Housing Services, Housing & Communities
Location:	Town Hall
Reporting To:	Housing Solutions Manager

<p>Role Purpose:</p> <p><i>Why the role exists and its contribution</i></p>	<p>To provide personalised move-on and resettlement support to homeless households in interim and temporary accommodation, and those threatened with homelessness, with the aim of finding alternative housing solutions.</p> <p>To provide effective service delivery of all of the functions of the Council's Rent Deposit scheme (RDS). This includes assisting homeless households to find and secure private rented accommodation; working with tenants, private landlords & agents; giving information, advice and guidance on welfare benefits and tenancy issues and providing tenancy support and sustainment during the tenancy.</p> <p>As a member of the Council's team, contribute to the achievement of the Council's corporate vision, behaviours and priorities and the development of the Council's positive high performing culture</p>
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Main Duties and accountabilities

<p>Service Specific</p>	<p>Securing Private Rented Accommodation</p> <p>Be the lead officer in proactively seeking and securing suitable accommodation from private landlords and letting agents under the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme (RDS).</p> <p>Publicise, increase awareness of the scheme and build effective working relationships with private sector landlords and letting agents in order to increase access to the private rented sector for households in housing need.</p> <p>Provide information, advice and guidance to landlords letting their properties through the RDS on their obligations and responsibilities as a landlord.</p> <p>Provide information, advice and guidance to customers to enable them to find and secure suitable private rented accommodation.</p> <p>Proactively assist the customer to find and access private rented accommodation and match suitable customers to available properties.</p> <p>Accompany and support customers to attend property viewings and where appropriate to encourage the customer to represent themselves.</p> <p>Negotiate tenancy contractual arrangements & financial details such as inventories, fees, rent in advance, deposits, and suitability assessment of properties and landlords.</p> <p>Ensure that all RDS properties: are visited before, during and at the end of the tenancy; are suitable in terms of their condition (HHSRS); meet the current health and safety requirements (i.e. gas safety certificates, carbon monoxide testers, electricity safety</p>
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certificates); have valid Energy Performance Certificates and that the landlord has the relevant paperwork for ownership and permission to rent.

Rent Deposit Scheme Administration

Take referrals from the Housing Options team and undertake a full assessment of each client's suitability for the RDS.

Case-manage RDS referrals and cases, maintaining regular communication with customers to encourage, motivate and support them in searching and securing private rented accommodation.

Undertake affordability and property suitability assessment as required under the code of guidance and be responsible for issuing standard private rented sector offers and discharge of duty letters as required under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and the code of guidance.

Keep the customer, landlord/agent, and Housing Options team informed and up to date on the progress of a case, payments, and other relevant issues.

Assist landlords and tenants to complete their tenancy agreements and supporting documents and ensure that both parties understand their responsibilities.

Arrange/undertake viewings of properties to assess suitability and to undertake check in and check out inventories with landlords/agents and tenants

Ensure that any scheme documentation is completed.

Assist client to complete Housing Benefit/Universal Credit applications where applicable. Work with the Housing Benefit/DWP Teams to ensure the smooth processing of tenant's applications and answer any queries from landlords regarding Housing Benefit/UC payments. Assist customers to apply for Discretionary Housing Benefit where appropriate.

In conjunction with the Housing Solutions Manager, be responsible for coordinating and organising any financial payments for deposits, rent in advance, fees and incentives.

Maintain accurate information on all tenancies created through the scheme to include financial commitments of fees, rent in advance, bonds and deposits.

Tenancy sustainment and housing related support

Support customers to undertake e-learning pre-tenancy training.

Assist customers in developing budgeting, tenancy management and social skills necessary to maintain a tenancy effectively, working towards independence.

Support the customer to access education, training and employment opportunities by referring into the Council's Skills Hub and Employment Training Housing Options Service (ETHOS).

Provide practical support to enable customers to successfully move into temporary, supported, private rented, or settled accommodation, e.g. assisting with tenancy sign-ups, ensuring that the customer understands their license/tenancy agreement, accessing furniture projects, setting up utilities, claiming welfare benefits etc.

Refer customers who require additional support to appropriate agencies. Work with these agencies to help support and sustain the tenancy.

Undertake property/welfare visits on a regular basis and address any issues that may arise during a tenancy which may threaten its sustainability.

	<p>Mediate between tenants and their landlords/agent and provide information, advice and guidance to both parties regarding tenancy and management issues.</p> <p>Provide a flexible approach to solving housing problems.</p>
Generic Duties	<p>Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieves individual targets and objectives to support the delivery of service plans • Provides work statistics to section timescales. • Maintains a good knowledge of service in order to give correct advice to customers. • Deals with enquiries regarding service related matters • Ensures an efficient service is given whilst being polite, courteous and understanding • Complies with the Council's complaints procedure <p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adheres to service related processes and manages workload to deliver services • Constantly review procedures to ensure efficient working • Keeps abreast of changes to service related legislation • Assists in the achievement of any annual Performance Indicators targets / service delivery plan and contributes effectively to My Performance Conversations <p>One Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates in a clear and concise manner • Liaises with other services across the Council • Liaises with outside bodies where necessary • Contributes to effective teamwork

The key decision-making areas in the role
<p>Judgment or decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make decision on the suitability of clients to be assisted through the scheme • Make decisions on securing suitable private rented accommodation • Make decisions on the standards of private rented accommodation taken on under the scheme • Make decisions on deposits/rents/fees to be paid for accommodation taken on under the scheme. <p>Organisation of workload and priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Rent Deposit Scheme administration is undertaken within the appropriate timescales and in accordance with legislative requirements, local guidelines and procedures.

Information handling

- Understand and comply with the Data Protection legislation and with the council's agreed policy and procedure for data security

Developing plans or strategies

- Contribute to the council's, Temporary Accommodation procurement policy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, and Service Plans and lead on identified projects

Customers and contacts**Knowledge of other service areas within the Council/Authority**

- Understand and comply with the Council's responsibilities for equalities under the Equality Act 2010
- Understand and comply with the Council's responsibilities for the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults and comply with relevant internal and multi-agency policies and procedures
- Understand and comply with the Council's responsibilities for healthy and safety and comply with relevant policies and procedures
- Have a good knowledge of other service areas within the council, especially; Housing Benefit, Grants; Environmental Health and Community Services

Contact with clients/customers

- Ensure that the Council's corporate standards are met in respect of customer care
- Deal calmly and sensitively to the needs of people with housing problems who may be vulnerable and/or have complex needs
- Deal effectively with difficult situations & customer in stressful circumstances.
- Provide advice, information and guidance to support customers to make informed decisions on their choice for housing.
- Deal with all temporary accommodation related enquiries on individual cases, face-to-face, over the telephone or replying to correspondence from applicants, MP's, Councillors or other agencies
- Conduct home visits

Dimensions of the role	
Financial	Non-financial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate deposit/rents/fees for private rented accommodation secured through the scheme • Process and reconcile payments for the rent Deposit Scheme for annual expenditure up to c £50,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Council is not in breach of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003 • Ensure accommodation meets current health and safety regulations/standards • Organise approx. 50 Rent Deposit Scheme placements each year • Negotiate Private Rented Sector tenancies and contractual agreements • Emotional stress from the circumstances or behaviour or people • The impact of your decision making on customers • Implementing and enforcing regulations

Person Specification

Qualifications and Training	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	Application	Interview/Assessment
A good standard of general education including Maths/English	E	AP	INT
Knowledge and Experience			
Experience of working in a frontline housing needs & homeless environment at a local authority, housing association or voluntary agency	E	AP	INT
Experience of working with private sector renting	E	AP	INT
Experience of partnership working and influencing and negotiating to achieve successful outcomes	E	AP	INT
A knowledge and understanding of housing law, especially the Housing Act 1996 (Part 6 and 7), the Homelessness Act 2002, Homelessness Reduction Act 1997 and Codes of Guidance. Including Homeless (Suitability of Accommodation) orders.	E	AP	INT
A knowledge and understanding of housing and tenancy law (Housing Acts, Landlord and Tenant Acts, Protection from Eviction Act, Renters Right Act), including property standards under HHSRS	E	AP	INT
A knowledge and understanding of the welfare benefits system and related benefits regulations	E	AP	INT
Knowledge of the private rented sector and the key operational and financial issues that affect securing private sector properties	E	AP	INT
An understanding of the needs of homeless households, working with them to provide innovative solutions	E	AP	INT
Skills			
Strong interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deal with vulnerable and difficult customers in stressful circumstances deal calmly and sensitively to the needs of people with housing problems who may be vulnerable and/or have complex needs establish effective negotiation skills and working relationships throughout the organisation and with partners, suppliers and contractors 	E	AP	INT
Ability to record, collate and interpret statistical data	D	AP	INT
Excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to produce reports, letters and other information for a variety of audiences	E	AP	INT
IT literate with ability to use a range of IT packages and able to help develop systems	D	AP	INT
Understands financial information to provide value for money and ensuring financial propriety	E	AP	INT
Ability to negotiate, think, plan and act with a creative approach to problem solving and innovation	E	AP	INT

Good effective time management with the ability to prioritise tasks and manage own workload in demanding circumstances and with competing priorities	E	AP	INT
Be self-motivated and have the ability to work on own initiative with minimum supervision	E	AP	INT
The ability to work with others, displaying a strong sense of team cohesion	D	AP	INT
Displays commitment to a One Council way of working	D	AP	INT
Commitment to equal opportunities, customer care and data protection	E	AP	INT
Additional Requirements			
Must have access to a vehicle and hold a current driving licence	E	AP	INT
Ability to work flexibly including working after 5pm as necessary, attend occasional evening meetings and respond to out of hours calls	E	AP	INT
Visits are required to applicants throughout the borough and neighbouring areas as an integral part of the duties	E	AP	INT
Must be legally entitled to work in the UK	E	AP	INT
No contra-indications in personal background or criminal record indicating unsuitability to work with children/young people/vulnerable clients/finance (CRB check required as appropriate).	E	AP	INT