

## **BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

### **JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION**

<b>Job Title:</b>	Housing Service Adviser
<b>Reports to:</b>	Housing Customer Service Team Leader
<b>Department:</b>	Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities
<b>Section:</b>	Income, Housing Supply and Customer Service
<b>Date written:</b>	December 2019

#### **Purpose of the Job**

To provide advice on and resolve at the first point of contact in at least 80% of cases, requests for action to the council's housing management service, across all forms of contact.

To be responsible for a number of core tasks including; establishing access to tenants' homes for annual gas safety checks, co-ordinating and responding to residents' applications for permissions and discretionary schemes and preparing subject access requests from residents to their data.

#### **Principal Accountabilities**

- 1) Providing a professional housing advice service to customers and stakeholders across the council's landlord services on the telephone, by email and face-to-face in Housing Offices. Using this contact to promote the Council's customer access strategy, directing callers to on-line services and the support available to access these.

The more complex areas of advice include, but are not restricted to:

- 2) Receiving and responding to reports of anti-social behaviour from tenants and leaseholders. Conduct interviews with victims and witnesses to establish facts and complete risk assessments to determine proportionate actions to safeguard victims.
- 3) Providing end of tenancy advice for tenants moving from council properties, to ensure the council receives the property back within set time frames. This includes giving tenants, next of kin and other occupants time sensitive information on their rights in connection with the property, including succession, use and occupancy charges and when to return keys
- 4) Identifying vulnerable tenants and safeguarding issues from all forms of contact, escalating such cases and referring to specialist teams.

- 5) Supporting the tenancy teams by acting as a 'specific point of contact' for residents in their casework and making appropriate referrals to their service.
- 6) Establishing access in hard to reach cases for tenant's annual gas safety check. This is a fundamental role in ensuring the council meets its statutory duty in accordance with the Gas Safety Regulations 1998 and the HSE "Duties as a landlord" in reference to Landlords Gas Safety Records. Where access cannot be achieved in the set time scale, to prepare and co-ordinate forced access to properties. The post holder will also be responsible for using the same procedure where forced access is needed to carry out repairs to keep the council's stock in good condition.
- 7) Let and manage council owned garages and parking spaces within set target times, reducing rent loss and maximising rental income to the Housing Revenue Account. Overseeing rent accounts and collecting debt by taking payments. Serve notices to quit and revoke licences, as necessary.
- 8) Co-ordinate and respond to tenant requests for alterations and other permissions as set out in their tenancy agreement.
- 9) Assess eligibility of tenants' requests to the discretionary gardening and fencing scheme, advising on the outcomes.
- 10) Prepare and respond to Subject Access Requests from residents for access to data held on tenancy records, complying with General Data Protection Regulations when carrying out this work.
- 11) To be responsible for checking equipment, including panic alarm systems and reporting any health and safety/repair issues when working in Housing Office receptions.

## **General Accountabilities**

Your duties will be as set out in the above job description but please note that the Council reserves the right to update your job description, from time to time, to reflect changes in, or to, your job. You will be consulted about any proposed changes.

The list of duties in the job description should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive. There will be other duties and requirements associated with your job and, in addition, as a term of your employment you may be required to undertake various other duties as may reasonably be required.

## **Health & Safety**

To co-operate in the implementation of the council's Health and Safety policy.

In particular, as set out in section 4.7 of the Health and Safety policy:

- To take due care of their own health and safety and that of others, who may be affected by their acts and mistakes at work

- To use equipment according to instructions
- To ensure that they do not use facilities and equipment recklessly or interfere with the safe use of equipment, materials or system
- To report any unsafe act, or condition, any accident or incident according to Health and Safety policy

### **Equalities**

To uphold and carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the City Council's Inclusive Council Policy.

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### Essential Criteria

<b>Job Related Education, Qualifications and Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good level of spoken and written English, evidenced by English GCSE grade C or equivalent, or a comparable level of knowledge gained through experience.</li> <li>• A knowledge of the council's Housing services, including an understanding of its responsibilities under landlord and tenant legislation, the allocations policy and safeguarding vulnerable children and adults.</li> <li>• Knowledge of the General Data Protection Regulations.</li> </ul>
<b>Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of providing customer focused advice in a busy and sometimes pressured front line environment, ensuring fair access for all service users.</li> <li>• Experience of dealing with difficult situations involving customers, investigating and communicating complex issues through to resolution.</li> </ul>
<b>Skills and Abilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent communication, interpersonal and customer care skills, having the ability to respond to customers assertively, tactfully and empathetically whilst keeping calm under pressure.</li> <li>• To analyse significant amounts of information to ensure the most important issues are prioritised and that cases are escalated or referred to specialist teams, as needed.</li> <li>• To work independently from team members and line manager, when providing advice services in local Housing Offices.</li> <li>• To produce clear, non-jargon written responses to queries and complaints and keep clear, factual and up to date records.</li> <li>• To work collaboratively with team members, training new staff and supporting colleagues to develop knowledge and experience.</li> <li>• Excellent keyboard skills and ability to use IT reporting systems and Microsoft applications and Outlook.</li> </ul>
<b>Equalities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To uphold and carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the city council's Inclusive Council policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Other Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to acquiring awareness and knowledge of Health &amp; Safety policy and practice as it applies in their area of work</li> <li>• Ability to co-operate and adhere to Health and Safety Policy, practices and instructions</li> <li>• To work in a number of locations in the course of the working week and be able to start work at 8.45am.</li> </ul>

