JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: HOUSING OPTIONS ASSISTANT

POST NUMBER: HO04

GRADE: E

RESPONSIBLE TO: HOUSING OPTIONS MANAGER

RESPONSIBLE FOR: NONE

LIAISON WITH: Housing applicants, registered providers of social housing, other colleagues within the Housing Service, elected members, officers of other housing authorities and other partner agencies

KEY CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITIES:

1. To assist in the delivery of the housing options service including assessing the housing need of applicants and liaising with other agencies, both voluntary and statutory, to verify eligibility for housing in accordance with the provisions of the Devon Home Choice scheme, the provision of housing advice and assisting in the prevention of homelessness

KEY SERVICE ACCOUNTABILITIES:

1. To act as the first point of contact for general enquiries about rehousing in Mid Devon, receiving, recording and responding to enquiries by establishing the nature of the enquiry, gathering relevant background information and providing appropriate advice, in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

2. To signpost clients to relevant statutory and voluntary agencies, in relation to benefits, debt advice, food bank etc.

3. To provide efficient administration and clerical support to the Housing Options Service.

4. To maintain databases, spread-sheets and filing systems (electronic and other systems)

5. To process official orders and prepare invoices for payment

6. To assist in the collection and analysis of statistical information

7. To provide face to face and telephone appointments for customers regarding DHC queries and general homelessness enquiries

8. Manage the homeless@middevon.gov.uk and devonhomechoice@middevon.gov.uk mailboxes on a daily basis.

9. Set up client accounts on Jigsaw and upload all information as it is received to the case.

10. To receive, process and asses applications for housing in accordance with the Devon Home Choice (DHC) policy. Awarding priority as appropriate.

11. To process DHC appeals and forward to Senior Housing Options Officer.

12. To undertake periodic reviews of the cases registered on the Devon Home Choice scheme in Mid Devon to keep the register up to date. This may include bulk mailings/email communication and dealing with responses.

13. To keep abreast of relevant changes in legislation, case law and good practice relating to housing options and DHC

14. Check DHC proposed property adverts are correct and meet policy requirements before preparing the advert to go on line and emailing it to DHC contact list.

15. Ensure awareness and compliance with the Council's policies, Code of Conduct and Constitution.

OTHER DUTIES:

In order to deliver services effectively, a degree of flexibility is needed and the post holder may be required to perform work not specifically referred to above. Such duties, however, should not normally exceed those expected of an employee at that grade.

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

The Council has a Health and Safety Policy, which outlines its responsibilities as an employer, and the responsibilities of its employees in respect of health and safety. All employees need to be aware of this policy and comply with its content.

RISK MANAGEMENT:

All employees need to have an awareness of risk management and are responsible for ensuring that they manage risk effectively in their job and report hazards and risk to their Head of Service or Senior Manager.

DATA PROTECTION:

It is the responsibility of the Post holder to ensure that the section's requirements for compliance with the Data Protection legislation are met.

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME:

The Council has a Single Equality Scheme which gives clear guidance on the responsibilities of both the employee and the employer. All employees must be familiar with and comply with all aspects of the Scheme.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS:

The Council has a Safeguarding Policy, which outlines its responsibilities and the responsibilities of its employees. All employees need to be aware of this Policy and comply with the contents.

Date: February 2024

PERSON SPECIFICATION

HOUSING OPTIONS ASSISTANT

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Qualifications and Experience:	• NVQ 3 in Business and Administration • Good standard of education, GCSE A-C or equivalent in Maths and English • Demonstrable experience of working in a busy customer services & office environment. • Experience of dealing with caseload and records management • Experience of customer services and successfully resolving complaints by finding solutions • Experience of making appointments for staff visits and scheduling work	• Experience in housing admin and technical support • Experience in using: - Orchard and Jigsaw, document management and scanning systems or similar IT systems • Experience of minute taking & recording agreed actions at meetings • Experience of working with customers with complex needs
Knowledge and Expertise:	• Understanding of issues relating to data protection • Understanding of the Equality Duty and of the diverse needs of different sections of society • IT Literacy e.g. using Word/PowerPoint, Access/Excel/Publisher • Knowledge of working in a customer focused service	• Experience of using financial management and/or electronic ordering/requisition systems. • Knowledge and understanding of choice based lettings policy and practice
Skills:	• Good communication skills, verbal and written, with a focus on customer care • Ability to write file notes, letters and reports to a high standard with minimal supervision • Ability to work with vulnerable people or those who may be challenging • Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines and targets • Ability to work on own initiative and with a diverse workload • Negotiation and problem-solving skills	
Personal Attributes:	• Capable of working on own initiative • Team Player • Flexible approach to work and ability to respond to deadlines	

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
	• Reliable • Flexible problem solving approach to duties • Ability to deal with all customers and sensitive/challenging situations • Committed to equality and diversity & able to deal with customers sensitively • An awareness of the importance of Health & Safety • Capable of prioritising and organising workload • Change your communication style to best meet the needs of the audience and regularly check there is mutual understanding	
Special Requirements:	• None	• Full driving licence or access to transport across the district

Date: February 2024