

Temporary Accommodation Team Leader

Date: January 2018

POST: Temporary Accommodation Team Leader

SERVICE: Housing Choice

SECTION: Housing Solutions

BAND: Band 7

REPORTS TO: Housing Solutions Manager

RESPONSIBLE FOR: Temporary Accommodation Officers x 4.5
Visiting Officer x 1

TYPE: Mobile worker within Basildon Council sites and using secure network

All Council posts are covered by National Joint Council (NJC) conditions of service.

Basildon Borough Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults, and expects all employees, contractors and volunteers to share its commitment to prevent abuse, harm or exploitation.

Please note that the Council applies a robust recruitment vetting process.

Please note that this post is subject to Department of Works and Pensions (DWP), Protection of National Infrastructure conditions, which means that the post holder will be required to undergo further vetting processes to ensure compliance.

Please note that this post will require a standard Disclosure and Barring Certificate.

Please note that this post has been classified by Basildon Council as a Regulated Post as it has contact with vulnerable groups so will require an enhanced Disclosure and Barring {DBS} certificate.

MAIN PURPOSE

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Temporary Accommodation Team is part of the Housing Choice Department (the strategic housing service) and sits within the Housing Solutions Service. Its primary function is to manage the provision of interim and second stage temporary accommodation, ensuring appropriate allocations and flow. The team is also responsible for procurement of accommodation that provides for the Council's interim accommodation duties.

You will manage a customer centred, multi-disciplinary Temporary Accommodation Team that works collaboratively with landlords and suppliers to facilitate the letting of good quality temporary accommodation.

You will provide an efficient, caring and responsive service for homeless households requiring and residing in temporary accommodation, ensuring fairness and transparency in the way in which accommodation is allocated and that every effort is made to minimise void turnaround times and the Council's use of expensive, nightly-rated accommodation.

You will work proactively with local advice, support and accommodation providers to promote the use of the private rented sector, as a viable alternative to social rented housing, in order to encourage independence, improve housing conditions, prevent homelessness, provide settled housing solutions and reduce the use of temporary accommodation.

Your team will also be responsible for the management of a number of temporary accommodation units and the tenants accommodated within them. This will include elements of estate management as well as tenancy management and rent collection.

DUTIES

1. Manage, motivate and develop the Temporary Accommodation Team (TAT) to achieve high standards of customer care, ensuring that work is closely monitored and carried out in accordance with legislation and guidance and the Council's policies and procedures.
2. Provide the direct reports with regular supervision and appraisal, setting professional standards as appropriate, in order to ensure a consistently high standard of work, an equitable distribution of the workload, and the effective monitoring of performance and outputs.
3. Direct and develop the TAT in a way that makes best use of the human, housing and financial resources available to the Council, taking into account local conditions, government priorities, new regulations and legislation, customer care initiatives and the development of housing solutions.
4. Develop and maintain close working relations with all Council services, external organisations and individuals on a wide range of homelessness issues in order to facilitate the flow of information, encourage collaboration and co-operation, and secure the help, advice and support that is needed to empower and enable homeless households to become more independent, make informed choices about their future housing and move successfully into, or move on from, temporary accommodation.
5. Be responsible, on a day to day basis, for managing contracts with external organisations contracted to deliver temporary accommodation services in support of the Council's statutory S188 and S193 duties as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).
6. Ensure that all temporary accommodation offered for letting through the TAT is let as quickly and as efficiently as possible in line with published service standards.

7. Work proactively with Essex County Council's Social Services to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and ensure that the temporary accommodation provided for homeless teenage parents and 16 & 17 year olds, and people with children and/or special needs, meets their housing and support needs.
8. Ensure that all members of the TAT are familiar with Basildon's policies and procedures for safeguarding children, vulnerable adults and people affected by domestic abuse, and they alert the relevant teams where they suspect that a child or vulnerable adult might be being abused, neglected or harmed, or that a child is residing with a perpetrator of domestic abuse.
9. Ensure that accurate records are kept of all lettings, tenancy nominations and home visits, as well as movements of homeless households in and out of temporary accommodation, and that all statistical returns are completed in an efficient and timely manner, in order to make full use of the Council's tenancy nomination rights to registered social landlords and comply with the law and the Council's policies and procedures.
10. Ensure that homeless households living in temporary accommodation are helped and encouraged to comply with their licence or tenancy conditions but, where there is a serious breach of the conditions or the Council has discharged its homelessness duty, the accommodation is withdrawn or recovered as quickly and as efficiently as possible.
11. Supervise the effective management of temporary accommodation tenancies monitoring and supporting officers dealing with issues of anti-social behaviour or other tenancy breaches, signing off on reports recommending possession action through the Courts.
12. Authorise appropriate legal action in relation to rent arrears in a timely manner including possession action and attend Court where required to ensure any financial loss to the Council is minimised.
13. Act as an expert witness for Basildon Borough Council at Court in relation to possession action when required to do so.
14. Work with the Housing Solutions Manager to assess applications for urgent management moves from people residing in temporary accommodation and affected by domestic abuse, harassment and hate crime, ensuring that, where an application is approved, suitable alternative accommodation is provided as quickly as possible.
15. Provide Management and members of the TAT with expert and specialist advice on a wide range of matters (including legislative requirements, case law and good practice) in order to assist service development and improve performance.
16. Contribute positively to the development of new working practices and initiatives that maximise the opportunities to prevent homelessness, reduce the Council's

use of temporary accommodation, and assist the successful and timely implementation of Basildon's Homelessness Prevention Strategy.

17. Develop effective procedures for ensuring that all members of the TAT have the necessary skills, training and experience to help service users make informed choices about their future housing.
18. Devise and implement new ways of monitoring and improving the performance of the TAT and of assessing its effectiveness in meeting the housing and support needs of service users, preventing homelessness, delivering settled housing solutions, and addressing the issues relating to diversity and equality.
19. Work with the Housing Solutions Manager to set, manage and monitor budgets in a way that makes best use of resources in accordance with good practice, the principles of Best Value, and the Council's financial regulations.
20. Work proactively with colleagues to research, develop and evaluate methods of consultation, including customer focus groups and satisfaction surveys, and use this information to improve the quality of the Service.
21. Ensure the accurate collection and analysis of data and information relating to the work of the TAT to assist the monitoring of performance, forecast future need for the service and implement agreed service improvements.
22. Investigate, analyse and respond to customer complaints and suggestions, Freedom of Information requests and enquiries from Councillors and MPs concerning the work of the TAT, taking appropriate action to address procedural deficiencies and ensuring that future service developments reflect the lessons learned.
23. Represent the Council on a variety of forums and working parties for the purpose of exchanging information, improving joint working, developing strategy, delivering better outcomes for service users, and improving the Council's reputation.
24. Maintain professional competence and keep abreast of developments through research and reading, attendance of courses and briefings, and the use of established networks, ensuring all policies and procedures are updated to reflect such changes.
25. Ensure all members of the TAT are fully conversant with all relevant legislation and are informed of good practice and case law developments, and that a comprehensive induction and training programme is successfully implemented.
26. Research information and prepare reports on the activities of the Team, making recommendations as appropriate, in order to comply with Council policy, keep Officers and Members informed, and meet statutory requirements.

27. Ensure that key areas of the Team's performance, agreed in consultation with the Housing Solutions Manager, are monitored and the results reported regularly in the agreed format.
28. Be accountable for a corporate credit card in order to procure out of hours, emergency accommodation for homeless applicants.
29. Ensure that all members of the TAT have a safe working environment and are aware of their health and safety obligations and cooperate in all matters relating to Health and Safety and implement all procedures for your job role. The identification of Health and Safety related risks within the working environment must be highlighted to your management.
30. Ensure that Management is provided with early alerts in the event of poor or failing performance, or a suspicion of fraud, corruption or impropriety.
31. Undertake all the duties within the framework of Equal Opportunities and ensure that the TAT is culturally sensitive, challenges discrimination and is delivered in a manner that is welcoming and accessible to vulnerable adults, people whose first language is not English, and people who have a disability, a learning difficulty or find it difficult to read or write.
32. Provide cover for the Housing Solutions Team Leader and Private Rented Sector Team Leader in their absence as required by the Housing Solutions Manager.
33. Any other duties appropriate to the post: These other duties must be equivalent to or below the salary and status of the role and, where appropriate, under the Equality Act 2010, due consideration must be given to any employees with a "protected characteristic".

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Position Title:	Temporary Accommodation Team Leader	Date Prepared:	January 2018
Department:	Housing Choice	Band:	7

AF= Application Form	I = Interview	T= Test
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	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
1.	EXPERIENCE			
1.1	At least 3 years' extensive experience of working in a service that provides specialist housing advice and practical assistance to homeless households or those at risk of homelessness.	✓		AF/I
1.2	Proven experience of developing and sustaining effective working relationships and communications, both internally and externally, with a range of contacts.	✓		AF/I
1.3	Evidenced experience of collating and evaluating monitoring and performance information including the use of IT applications such as spreadsheets and databases.	✓		AF/I/T
1.4	Practical experience of effective service user consultation and involvement.		✓	AF/I
1.5	Experience of managing staff and delivering a casework management service.		✓	AF/I
1.6	Experience of budget management.		✓	AF
2.	KNOWLEDGE			
2.1	Detailed understanding and awareness of housing issues, the initiatives designed to tackle and prevent homelessness, and of government policy relating to housing need and homelessness.	✓		AF/I/T
2.2	Expert knowledge of all aspects of temporary accommodation, including varying tenure types (assured shorthold tenancies, licenses, non-secure) and the appropriate legal recourse to manage rent arrears and respond to other tenancy breaches.	✓		AF/I/T

	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
2.3	Proven technical expertise and knowledge in relation to property inspections including the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.	✓		AF/I/T
2.4	An understanding of the principles of managing performance and what is required to ensure that services meet the required standards and achieve agreed objectives and targets.	✓		AF/I
2.5	Working knowledge of current homelessness legislation and its application.	✓		AF
2.6	Knowledge of the criteria used to assess applicants' affordability including eligibility and entitlement to means-tested benefits and tax credits.	✓		AF/T
3.	EDUCATION AND TRAINING			
3.1	A Level or equivalent indicating an aptitude for mathematics and English language	✓		AF/T
4.	OTHER			
3.2	An understanding of, and commitment to the Council's equal opportunities policy.	✓		
3.3	Ability to work evenings and weekends when required.		✓	
3.4	Ability to travel around the borough	✓		
5.	COMPETENCIES			
1.2	Leading and Supervising a. Provides others with clear direction b. Sets appropriate standards of behaviour c. Delegates work appropriately and fairly d. Motivates and empowers others e. Provides staff with development opportunities and coaching f. Recruits staff of a high calibre	✓		AF/I
3.1	Relating and Networking a. Establishes good relationships with customers and staff b. Builds wide and effective networks of contacts inside and outside the organisation c. Relates well to people at all levels d. Manages conflict e. Uses humour appropriately to enhance relationships with others	✓		AF/I

	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
4.2	<p>Applying Expertise and Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Applies specialist and detailed technical expertise b. Develops job knowledge and expertise (theoretical and practical) through continual professional development c. Shares expertise and knowledge with others d. Uses technology to achieve work objectives e. Demonstrates appropriate physical co-ordination and endurance, manual skill, spatial awareness and dexterity f. Demonstrates an understanding of different organisational departments and functions 	✓		AF/I
5.1	<p>Learning and Researching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Rapidly learns new tasks and quickly commits information to memory b. Gathers comprehensive information to support decision making c. Demonstrates an immediate understanding of newly presented information d. Encourages an organisational learning approach (i.e learns from successes and failures and seeks staff and customer feedback) <p>Manages knowledge (collects, classifies and disseminates knowledge of use to the organisation)</p>	✓		AF/I
6.2	<p>Delivering Results and Meeting Customer Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Focuses on customer needs and satisfaction b. Sets high standards for quality and quantity c. Monitors and maintains quality and productivity d. Works in a systematic, methodical and orderly way e. Consistently achieves project goals 	✓		AF/I
7.2	<p>Coping with Pressure and Setbacks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Works productively in a high pressure environment b. Keeps emotions under control during difficult situations c. Balances the demands of a work life and a personal life d. Maintains a positive outlook at work e. Handles criticism well and learns from it 	✓		AF/I