

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title: Senior Private Sector Housing Initiatives Officer		Director/Service/Sector: Housing Services / Housing	Office Use
Grade: 8		Workplace:	JE ref:508 HRMS ref:
Responsible to: Private Sector Housing Manager		Date: March 2021	
<p>Job Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the absence of the Private Sector Housing Manager assist in the day to day support of the Private Sector Team, providing effective leadership and a positive contribution to the delivery of the private sector initiatives and the wider housing service across all geographical areas. To develop options for the Private Sector Housing Strategy and assist in the delivery of outcomes and actions, maximising the potential for the existing stock, to meet the objectives of the Northumberland Housing Strategy. To assist the Private Sector Housing Manager to identify areas requiring Housing Regeneration, using legislation, policies, and practices to source effective long-term solutions to reduce the number of empty homes and maximise the use of private sector stock to improve access to housing for vulnerable people. Deputise as the Housing Services subject lead on matters relating to Private Sector Housing Initiatives and Empty Homes services Assist in developing new initiatives, reviewing existing practices and contributing to the broader development and growth of the service functions and drive a performance culture with a focus on continuous improvement, accountability and personal responsibility. Assist in ensuring quality of work and ensure workload is effectively managed in the absence of the Private Sector Housing Manager. Assist in the improvement of services and assist in the development of policies and procedures. 			
Resources	Staff	In the absence of the Private Sector Housing Manager the postholder will deputise, providing support and guidance for other team members.	
	Finance	Some responsibility for allocated service budgets, monitoring significant expenditure/income, raising orders or processing invoices in respect of the operational services when required. Including the monitoring and expenditure of the Homes England Empty Homes Capital Funding Programme with a budget of £550,000 and viability assessments for individual properties.	
	Physical	Responsible for the safekeeping of confidential valuable documents including council tax data, police reports. Responsibility for the case files to the First Tier Property Tribunal for EDMO applications. Assist with statistical and financial returns to Homes England. *Assist to write, develop, review and implement policy and procedure documents. Provide advice, guidance and interpretation on statutory requirements for the private sector.	
	Clients	Some contact with people who have complex needs. Contact with owners of empty properties, tenants and landlords. Including advocacy as required; elected members, MP's; senior managers; partners; support organisations & colleagues; internal and external partners and providers.	
<p>Duties and key result areas:</p> <p>Contribute to the Councils interaction with Private Sector Landlords including introducing initiatives to make improvements in private sector properties. Initiatives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating a system of accreditation, (property and tenant) for the Private Sector to raise standards and ensure a supply of decent private rented accommodation is available to those in need. Operate associated tenant accreditation and rent deposits schemes to maximise the availability of accommodation to those in need. Delivery of educational events and newsletters relevant to the sector to raise the level of knowledge of those working in the sector and to subsequently improve management and property standards. 			

- Assist in the development of a new scheme and ensure periodic change to reflect new legislation when required.

Selective Licensing

- The development and introduction of a selective licensing scheme participating in any scoping papers and consultation exercise
- The inspection of premises, identifying defects and production of statutory notices, schedules of work, technical reports and plans in line with the selective licensing scheme.
- Assist in obtaining and preparing evidence in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- Assist in preparing prosecution case files and give evidence in Court or at Tribunals.

Empty Homes

- Delivering actions from the Empty Homes Strategy, including inspecting and prioritising empty properties, and providing advice and assistance to owners to bring properties back into use.
- Return long term empty properties to occupation for the benefit of communities and individuals with particular emphasis on the provision of affordable housing.
- Working with other Council officers from Legal, Planning, Public Protection and Council Tax, etc to identify problematic long-term empty properties and take the necessary action, including Empty Dwelling Management Orders and enforced sale where appropriate, to bring these properties back into use
- Trace and contact the owner of empty homes in a timely manner and respond to concerns from residents liaising with, planning enforcement, building control, public protection, police and other services as required.
- Complete applications to the First-tier Tribunal in respect of Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO's), and preparing evidence files for submission to the First-tier tribunal, including making statements, obtaining estimates of repair costs, rental income and housing demand.
- Represent the Council at tribunals relating to EDMO's and where permission is granted make resultant Interim and Final Orders in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004.
- Where necessary formulate evidence files and present cases at the Magistrates Court where Power of Entry is sought in accordance with Section 239 of the Housing Act 2004 and execute subsequent warrants in accordance with the legal requirements.
- Assist to use other powers available such as enforced sale and compulsory purchase order.

Illegal Evictions and harassment cases

- Protect the rights of tenants particularly in relation to Illegal Evictions and Harassment.
- Investigate reports relating to illegal evictions and harassment keeping accurate notes PACE standards relating to the cases.
- Investigate cases thoroughly and escalate to the corporate fraud team.
- Liaise with the police where appropriate.
- Undertake interviews under caution with alleged offenders where appropriate and assist in preparing prosecution case file and give evidence in court or at tribunals.

Other

- Protect communities by taking actions and formulating evidence files in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014. To remedy

cases of ASB where appropriate issue Community Protection Warning and Notices in cooperation with the Public Protection Officers.

- As required, draft and submit Requisitions for Information in accordance with the Local Authority Misc Provisions Act 1976 and take action appropriate to the circumstances based on the information received.
- To assist with the preparation of project submissions in relation to private sector initiatives including assisting with funding bid where necessary.
- Developing options to increase the numbers of decent homes in the private sector with a particular emphasis on those occupied by vulnerable people.
- Liaising with the public protection, and homelessness and housing options teams to ensure appropriate access to the Private Sector to address housing need and prevent homelessness.
- Promoting monitoring and reporting progress to targets including affordable warmth initiatives

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Work Arrangements

Travel to work sites, area offices or training venues throughout the County on a routine basis and further afield on occasion.
Normal working week, Monday to Friday, with occasional early mornings, occasional evening, weekend
exposure to some difficult situations involving customer complaints and disputes.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Post Title:	Director/Service/Sector:	Ref:508
Essential	Desirable	Assess by
Knowledge and Qualifications		
<p>A good standard of education to NVQ Level 4 or equivalent In depth working knowledge of the main operational, procedural, and practical issues relating to Private Sector Housing An understanding of the key health and safety issues relating to the service. In-depth working knowledge of professional theory, practice, and procedures. Knowledge of current international laws, regulations, policies, procedures, trends, and developments. Commercially aware and understands the relationship between costs, quality, customer care and corporate performance assessment. Demonstrates an awareness and commitment to proactive customer care and services. Evidence of ongoing personal development.</p>	<p>A relevant management qualification or Degree A relevant housing qualification.</p>	<p>(a), (i) & (r)</p>
Experience		
<p>Experience in applying a range of relevant supervisory methods, tools, and techniques. Experience in working collaboratively with service users. Experience in engaging effectively with others and building productive partnerships. Experience of implementing and monitoring safe systems of work to comply with Health and Safety policies. Experience of managing finance and staffing resources to deliver services within agreed budgets.</p>	<p>Experience in using Microsoft applications. Understanding of client/contractor relationships Operational Risk Management Experience in conducting staff appraisals. Experience in a particular relevant specialist area. Supervising staff and their productivity.</p>	<p>(a), (i) & (r)</p>
Skills and competencies		
<p>Effective IT skills and able to use ITC to achieve work objectives. Ability to prepare concise and accurate risk assessments. Ability to plan annual work schedules for multiple teams and have the ability to vary these at short notice. Prepares written, verbal, and other media that are rational, convincing, and coherent. Effectively expresses own views using appropriate means depending upon the audience.</p>	<p>Skilled in the use of Microsoft 365 Committed to continuous professional development. Committed to continuous service improvement. Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to build excellent working relationships.</p>	<p>(a), (i) & (r)</p>

<p>Numerate and able to prepare business related statistics. Applies a methodical approach to problem solving. Negotiation skills and able to persuade others to an alternative point of view. Remains calm and logical in stressful and difficult situations. A strong corporate orientation and a commitment to tackling issues in a non-departmental manner. Dependable, reliable and keeps good time. Models and encourages high standards of honesty, integrity, openness, and respect for others. Helps create a positive work culture in which diverse, individual contributions and perspectives are valued. Proactive and achievement orientated. Able to apply own initiative to overcome day-to-day operational problems.</p>		
Physical, mental and emotional demands		
<p>Normally works from a seated position but with regular need to walk, bend or carry items. Need to maintain general awareness with ongoing periods of enhanced concentration. Extensive contact with public/clients in dispute with the County Council. Ability to deal with situations and information which may place significant emotional demands on the postholder. Be able to work under pressure.</p>		(a), (i) & (r)
Motivation		
<p>Dependable, reliable, a good timekeeper and effective guide/mentor to subordinate staff. Customer focused and able to deliver within tight timescales. Demonstrates and encourages high standards of honesty, integrity, openness and respect for others. Helps to create and encourages a positive work culture, in which diverse, individual contributions and perspectives are valued. Proactive and achievement orientated. Able to work with minimum supervision.</p>		(a), (i) & (r)
Other		
Able to meet the transport requirements of the post.		(a) & (i)

Able to work outside of normal office hours including weekends, evenings where necessary.		
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Key to assessment methods; (a) application form, (i) interview, (r) references, (t) ability tests (q) personality questionnaire (g) assessed group work, (p) presentation, (o) others e.g., case studies/visits.