

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Head of Housing Solutions
GRADE:	16
DEPARTMENT:	Housing and Modernisation Services
DIVISION:	Customer Experience
REPORTING TO	Director of Customer Experience

JOB PURPOSE

As a member of the Customer Experience management team:

- Lead a portfolio of services in line with departmental and corporate aims and priorities, building a high performing, innovative, customer focused culture that delivers quality and embraces change.
- Lead the delivery of a quality, intelligent led customer demand service that improves services and customer experiences whilst delivering efficiencies and value for money.
- As a member of the Departmental Management Team work collegiately to deliver services that meet the needs of individuals and families and to actively contribute to the strategic direction, policy, planning and delivery of services.
- Support the Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation and the five Directors of the Housing and Modernisation department to secure the continuous development, improvement, efficiency and success of the department.
- Accountable for the undertaking of market analysis, business and financial planning for the effective and efficient delivery of customer experience.
- Contribute to the wider development and delivery of Housing, Community Wellbeing, cross-Council and partnership strategic initiatives and priorities.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Work collegiately with colleagues on the Departmental Management Team (DMT), and make a proactive contribution delivering departmental and corporate objectives.
- Lead and manage a customer focused services in alignment with both corporate and departmental aims and priorities.
- Work closely with the Director of Customer Experience to support effective working relationships with relevant elected member portfolio holders, Directors and Heads of Service across the council.
- Support and develop partnership working, including acting as an effective ambassador and advocate with external organisations
- Strategic leadership of the Housing Solutions service and a clear and strategic approach to frontline customer facing Housing Solutions service which complies with regulatory standards relevant legislation and Government guidance, is underpinned

by reliable evidence, regular review and clear plans are in place to continually improve the services managed and deliver value for money

- Management of four core functions including (A) Homelessness Prevention Advice, Assessment and Support, Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Placement, (B) Housing Choice, Applications and Re-housing, (C) Financial Inclusion, Private Rented Sector, Homeless Reviews and Resources, (D) Strategic and Service Improvement Function (including performance, change management and customer engagement leadership)
- Provide challenge within and across the functions and across the Housing services to ensure they deliver services that meet the needs of residents, customers and communities
- Responsible for ensuring that all core functions are driven by, and respond effectively to customers needs, ensuring that all functions make best use of resources from customer insight data to customer and community engagement
- Lead on the procurement, commercial negotiations, delivery and contract management (ensuring risk is mitigated) of externalised services such as all temporary accommodation procurement services, including developing procurement strategies for changing services
- Provide challenge within the teams but also across the Housing and Modernisation directorate to develop the Housing Solutions services and this challenge underpins and makes the Housing Solutions service a success for individuals, families, and communities.
- Lead the Housing Solutions service in alignment with corporate and departmental aims and priorities, including:
 - Robust financial management to ensure value for money
 - Setting and monitoring clear and ambitious service performance requirements to deliver top quartile performance against relevant benchmarks for Southwark Council's Housing Solutions service.
 - Managing people to deliver an environment which fosters innovation and continuous improvement in service commissioning and delivery and this challenge also develops each member of the team beyond the officer's current capabilities.
 - The development and delivery of innovative new models for commissioning and service delivery.
- Ensure the Strategic Director, the five Directors Lead Member, DMT and the Corporate Management Team are briefed and kept up to date on those aspects for which the post holder has lead responsibility, including highly sensitive matters likely to have a major impact on the Council.
- Provide clear, balanced and accurate advice and guidance to the Director of Customer Experience and Lead Members on the strategic and operational service issues and challenges facing the Service.
- Responsible for planning, controlling and deploying financial, staffing and physical resources to best effect to deliver agreed service priorities and to continuously improve the quality of the service for the benefit of customers.
- Provide leadership to the front line upwards gaining ownership of and commitment to the Council's overall aims and values.

- Liaise with central Government on a regular basis to influence legislation, ensure the Housing Solutions service is at the forefront of the development of best practice and to obtain the maximum level of central Government funding allocated for homelessness and related services.
- To be the lead officer for the council liaising with London Council's and the Local Government Association to develop new initiatives for the service area.
- To develop the services to comply with the funding agreements entered into with central Government.
- Deputise for the Director of Customer Experience as required.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all employees are required to act in such a way that at all times safeguards the health and well being of children and vulnerable adults.
- Carry out duties with due regard to the council's customer care; equal opportunities; information governance, data protection and health and safety policies and procedures.
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the general level of responsibility of this post.

JOB CONTEXT

- This position will have a wide range of internal and external contacts including directors, senior managers, elected members, professional bodies, partner organisations and government functions involving the use of a wide range of interpersonal skills.
- This position will partner other local authorities, public sector organisations and agencies, local businesses, the voluntary sector and other stakeholders to continuously improve the quality of the service and develop innovative solutions.
- This position will be responsible for developing partnership working with key external stakeholders across the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- This position will be responsible for the management and leadership of a high performance team.
- Lead role in the development of the council's services in this area.
- This position will operate within a framework set by Corporate and Departmental Management teams but with considerable freedom to shape services.
- Leads on policy and development and ensures implementation of new legislative requirements.
- The position will ensure high professional standards.
- To significantly increase housing supply through the provision of temporary accommodation
- To promote wellbeing and reduce economic and social exclusion through an integrated approach to housing and wider service provision
- To improve the quality of the Housing Solutions service and ensure its efficient in all areas of work
- To maximise the contribution of the private rented sector to meeting housing need and demand through the provision of decent and well-managed accommodation

- The position will be the council's lead officer to significantly reduce levels of homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation.
- The Council is continuing a program of modernisation and change to deliver on a number of key objectives with the aim of facilitating the Council in moving to become an efficient, modern, customer-oriented and learning organisation.
- The post holder will be required to provide dynamic and visionary leadership to drive forward this agenda and to ensure that the council and its partners commission effective and efficient services that meet the needs and aspiration of our communities and residents.
- Oversee the delivery of an intelligent led customer demand service that improves services and customer experiences and delivers core services based on customer demand and quality of service.
- Ensure that service activities are carried out to the highest standards of integrity and professionalism and align with strategic objectives and in accordance with legal, regulatory and statutory requirements.
- Accountable for strategic priorities and plans for the Housing Solutions services functions, ensuring intelligent led customer service, achievement of plans and targets and delivering a comprehensive range of services to meet identified needs and aspirations.
- As a member of the Departmental Management Team, to adopt a collaborative and supportive approach, maintaining up to date professional knowledge and providing advice and assistance to colleagues as required.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

- Direct, motivate and inspire all staff in the Housing Solutions service to high performance levels and standards, ensuring year on year improvement of services by engaging and responding to customers.
- The Head of Housing Solutions will manage four managers who directly report to this position. In addition to this the Head of Housing Solutions will manage Indirect reports (established post numbers) = 136 positions.
- To manage and lead the frontline customer facing Housing Solutions service, delivering a contemporary, digital, seamless services which works for customers, and is delivered by professionals who are equipped, engaged and efficient.
- The post holder will be directly responsible for budget in excess of £14.2 million per annum.

CONTACTS

- As the professional lead for the service area, the post holder will be responsible for influencing and negotiating with Members, the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors, Directors, Service Managers and Contractors on a wide range of service improvement issues that relate to the service.
- The post holder will work with Members, the Chief Executive, Chief Officers Heads of Service and senior representatives.

- The post holder will be required to maintain and promote liaison with internal and external stakeholders in order to enhance the Council's performance, reputation and image.
- The post holder will represent the Council at meetings ensuring that the Council's interests are properly protected.

EQUALITY

- The post holder must demonstrate commitment and enthusiasm to promote the principle of equality in employment and service delivery. The post holder must be familiar with and promote the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- The post holder must promote equality in the workplace and set the tone for the behaviour between colleagues.
- To develop and maintain effective relationships with key partners, service providers, stakeholders and the wider community in order to facilitate the delivery of high quality services that meet user needs

Grade / Conditions of service

This post is politically restricted under the terms of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

The employment is subject to a probationary period of twenty six weeks from your start date of employment with Southwark Council, during which time you will be required to demonstrate to the council's satisfaction your suitability for the position in which you are employed.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person specification is a picture of skills, knowledge and experience required to carry out the job.

Knowledge, including educational qualifications:		Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	How assessed (S/ I/ T)
1.	A degree or equivalent professional qualification or relevant work experience at a senior level	E	I
2	Thorough understanding of the government's agenda on homelessness and welfare reform.	E	S, I
3	Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of housing needs issues, legislation, and case law, including lettings, and the housing register.	E	S, I
4	Knowledge of the wider organisation and business context to enable effective contribution to operational and strategic issues	E	S, I
5	Knowledge of the Governments modernisation agenda and the implications for enhanced customer access and service delivery	E	S, I
6	Knowledge of programme/project management techniques	E	T
7	Knowledge of customer experience measurements, analysis and reporting.	E	S
8	Understanding of mechanisms for dispute resolution and systems of redress within the local government setting	E	S
Experience:			
9	Experience of successfully leading significant change programmes/projects working collaboratively to drive and successfully support change	E	I
10	Experience of effectively running a front line service to homeless households	E	S, I
11	Experience of communicating effectively to customers and at all levels of the organisation	E	I, T
12	Experience of developing and implementing successful customer care strategies and standards	E	I
13	Experience of building strong internal and external relationships to focused to deliver corporate business objectives	E	I
14	Experience of managing and delivering multiple and complex dispute resolution services	E	S, I
15	Planning and prioritising own workloads and those of your teams to achieve tasks within a tight deadline	E	I, T
16	Experience of having worked effectively at a senior level in a political environment; skilled in taking a cross organisational perspective	E	S
17	Demonstrable skills in research and evaluation,	E	T

	identification of trends, customer insight analysis; ability to translate this information to maximise potential service improvement.		
18	Experience of managing resources to ensure financial and service objectives are met within your own area.	E	I, T
Aptitude, Skills and Competencies:			
19	Ability to lead and develop a diverse team, ensuring consistent performance and strong succession planning	E	I, T
20	Resilient in overcoming challenges and shows energy, pace and self confidence	E	I
21	Ability to aspire, foster and champion innovation	E	I
22	Outstanding communications skills, coupled with developed networking skills that inspire trust and involvement	E	I, T
23	Ability to think, plan and act strategically; develops operational plans to align with corporate and departmental business objectives	E	S, I
Special Conditions of Service:			
24	To work outside normal working hours to respond to emergencies or attend meetings		
25	Must demonstrate an understanding of the issues relating to equal opportunities in service delivery and provision and to actively promote ways of eradicating racism, sexism and other forms of negative discrimination through the Council's policies and procedures.		
26	To comply with the Council's Health & Safety Policy.		

Key:

D	Desirable	S	Shortlisting criteria
E	Essential	I	Evaluated at interview
		T	Subject to test