

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

Designation:	Property Negotiator	Grade: PO2
Reports to (Designation):	Accommodation Supply Manager	Grade: PO5
Directorate:	Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm	Division: Housing Services

Main Purpose of the job:

To be responsible for negotiating and procurement of good quality accommodation of suitable type, size and location across the private sector both Temporary and Private Rented Sector Accommodation, including Private Sector Leasing (PSL); Private Managed Accommodation (PMA); Lewisham Letting Scheme (LLS); Nightly Paid (NP) for homeless households and prevention on behalf of Housing Needs and other Council departments to meet individual and business targets, raising early alerts on any procurement risks.

Ensure effective implementation and administration of all new supply initiatives and contract administration ensuring effective planning, resourcing and delivery across the service.

Ensure effective monitoring of all service provider contracts to deliver the objectives required from various service delivery contracts and proactively anticipate future needs as well as reacting to situations that arise.

To deliver a first class, one stop customer focused service relating to the procurement of good quality accommodation from landlords, developers and letting agents demonstrating good practice, delivering an economic, efficient, and effective service whilst meeting local and corporate objectives and targets.

To actively contribute towards meeting annual budget targets and other local and corporate financial targets by procuring high quality accommodation that represents value for money.

To successfully promote and market key private rented sector schemes to landlords, letting agents, developers and other external partners, with ongoing high quality relationship management of all key stakeholders.

Provide a focus on quality, data integrity, governance, value for money, probity, compliance and good practice in relation to contract management and payments.

To effectively report, as required, on performance, against local and corporate targets.

Summary of Responsibilities and Personal Duties:

1. Actively market the various private sector accommodation procurement initiatives to landlords, letting agents, managed accommodation providers, portfolio landlords and developers using all available tools and methods of communication to meet individual, team and service procurement targets.
2. Organise and/or participate in key stakeholder meetings, like Lewisham Landlords Day, landlord exhibitions, property auctions and other fora.

3. Work with private sector landlords, letting agents, managing agents and other internal and external partners to identify, develop and implement a range of new initiatives to increase the supply of good quality accommodation within the private rented sector for households in housing need.
4. Develop and maintain cutting edge advertising and marketing promotional materials for all private rented sector initiatives, continually assessing their impact and reviewing as necessary.
5. Signpost inexperienced landlords to existing support services, like the National Landlords Association and the London Landlords Accreditation Scheme.
6. Deliver a one stop, high quality customer focused service to ensure all telephone calls, e-mails, letters and complaints from customers, landlords, lettings agents, elected members, MPs or other key stakeholders are answered promptly and fully to the highest possible standard within corporate guidelines or as instructed by the service manager.
7. Work with landlords, agents and other accommodation providers to ensure they are aware of all of their contractual responsibilities including but not limited to repairs, voids, tenancy management, insured risks, repairs in default etc.
8. Communicate effectively with all internal and external stakeholders and partners to deliver an excellent customer focused service.
9. Working with the Accommodation Supply Manager, contribute to the development of an annual accommodation procurement plan, liaising closely with staff across Housing Services and other Council departments like Children and Young People (CYP) and Adult Social Care (ASC) regarding current and projected demand for accommodation types, areas and sizes to meet housing need, monitoring and reporting weekly/monthly on individual progress against locally and corporately set targets.
10. Develop and maintain a healthy pipeline of good quality temporary and private rented sector accommodation of suitable type, size and location for Lewisham Council's various client groups from Housing Services and Social Services to meet individual procurement and the wider service targets, at all times demonstrating value for money.
11. Inspect all accommodation as necessary or as instructed by the service manager in order to ensure accommodation is fully compliant with the Council's minimum standards and meets health and safety requirements including energy efficiency standards.
12. Establish, develop and maintain close working relationships with private landlords, letting and managing agents & other accommodation suppliers in order to encourage them to provide good quality, affordable accommodation that meets the needs and aspirations of our customers.
13. Actively negotiate with landlords, letting and managing agents & other accommodation providers to procure good quality accommodation at competitive rates.
14. Undertake regular operational meetings with accommodation suppliers or as instructed by the service manager
15. Ensure all accommodation suppliers are meticulously vetted to ensure they are fit and proper landlords.
16. Ensure all accommodation/property files are kept fully updated and complete at all times to comply with audit requirements and inspection regime.
17. Liaise with the Council Grants Team regarding the provision of grants or loans to encourage landlords and accommodation providers to provide the Council with good quality accommodation.
18. Ensure all the required documentation is completed in a timely fashion in order to meet agreed landlord payment deadlines.
19. Agree payment of cash incentives & rental amounts to landlords and other accommodation providers, liaising with the Payments Team to make accurate and appropriate payments in accordance with Council procedures.

20. Undertake budget monitoring, including initial procurement costs and future budgetary commitments, providing reporting information on a regular basis, immediately identifying any potential shortfalls to the individual and service procurement plans.
21. Support the Accommodation Supply Manager to develop and implement comprehensive contract management and review processes for the procurement and contract management of temporary accommodation, ensuring that all documentation is up to date, legally compliant and fit for purpose.
22. Investigate, analyse and respond promptly to feedback received concerning temporary accommodation, taking appropriate action to resolve problems, address any procedural deficiencies and ensure that future service developments reflect lessons learned.
23. Represent the Council on a variety of forums and working focus groups for the purpose of exchanging information, improving joint working, developing strategy, delivering better outcomes for service users, and improving the Council's reputation.
24. Act as the main point of contact for all landlords and accommodation supplier enquiries relating to all private sector accommodation initiatives and be responsible for managing all complaints or queries.
25. Provide private landlords with expert advice and guidance on all aspects of letting (including housing benefit and how to successfully establish, manage and terminate tenancies) in order to encourage good practice, increase the supply of private rented accommodation and reduce the risks involved in letting, in line with Council policy.
26. Work with landlords, agents and other accommodation suppliers to promote best practice in provision of accommodation.
27. Liaise with the Accommodation Assessment and Lettings service and other staff in Housing Needs & refugee Services to provide a seamless service to customers in temporary accommodation who wish to move into the private sector, ensuring efficient processes are put in place to discharge the authority's housing duty by facilitating the offer of private rented sector accommodation.
28. Through effective communication and joint working across different teams and departments deliver a customer focussed service.
29. Maintain written and electronic (spreadsheet and database) information on private rented properties and temporary accommodation all landlords, general contacts and any other relevant information associated with the procurement process keeping this information up to date at all times, and providing detailed reports as requested.
30. Maintain detailed records to ensure that up-to-date data and statistics are maintained in accordance with agreed reporting arrangements and that Management has the information it needs in order to monitor performance, forecast future needs for the service and improve services.
31. Ensure that all payments, including deposits and cash incentives are properly recorded, monitored and, where appropriate, recovered from the landlord, accommodation supplier or tenant in accordance with the contractual agreements and the Council's financial regulations.
32. Ensure performance targets are met, including those relating to procurement of properties for all private sector initiatives.
33. Contribute to the review and development of all monitoring, data reporting and IT systems relevant to the Homelessness Prevention and Refugee Service.
34. Develop and maintain a landlords database which can be centrally accessed.
35. To arrange and accompany clients to viewings of properties and pre-inspect properties when necessary.
36. To adhere to policies and procedures relating to the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults.
37. Ensure compliance amongst private landlords with health and safety requirements under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

38. Carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council's Equal Opportunities and Data Protection policies and core values.
39. All employees are required to comply with the Council's Health and Safety policies and procedures at all times, taking due care for themselves, colleagues and members of the public.
40. Assist in carrying out the Council's environmental policy within the day to day activities of the post.
41. Undertake any other duties commensurate with the post, including administrative and clerical duties.

Internal Contacts: These include officers from across the Housing Services Division, officers from across the Council eg Housing Benefits, Strategic Development, Childrens Young People Directorate, Corporate Procurement Team

External Contacts: This will include Lewisham Homes and other Registered Providers, Landlords, Landlord Agents, Capital Letters

To carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council's relevant codes and procedures.

All employees are required to participate in the Performance Evaluation Scheme (PES) and to undertake appropriate training and development identified to enhance their work.

Undertake other duties, commensurate with the grade, as may reasonably be required.

Consideration will be given to restructuring the duties of this post for a disabled postholder

THIS JOB DESCRIPTION MAY NEED TO BE AMENDED BY THE DIRECTORATE TO MEET
THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE SERVICE.

Number of fully managed staff: **None**

Title:	Grade	No of posts
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Number of partially managed staff: **None**

Title:	Grade	No of posts
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PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Property Negotiator

POST NO:

DEPARTMENT: Housing Regeneration and Public Realm

GRADE: PO2

Note to Candidates

The Person Specification is a picture of the skills, knowledge and experience needed to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the shortlisting and interview process for this post.

Those categories marked 'S' will be used especially for the purpose of shortlisting.

Please ensure that Equality and Diversity issues are addressed specifically in relation to the role for which you are applying when addressing the requirements of this person specification where appropriate.

If you are a disabled person, but are unable to meet some of the job requirements specifically because of your disability, please address this in your application. If you meet all the other criteria you will be shortlisted and we will explore jointly with you if there are ways in which the job can be changed to enable you to meet the requirements.

Equality & Diversity

Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community

S

Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post

S

Knowledge

Excellent current knowledge of private rented sector housing market and contracts, particularly the issues affecting private rented sector customers and landlords.

S

Knowledge of how to deliver a first class customers focused service.

S

A good knowledge and understanding of the government's welfare reform and its implications on the private rented sector.

S

Knowledge of the main principles of running a successful commercial operation.

S

Knowledge of private sector housing law, health and safety rating system and other health and safety regulations (gas , electrics and energy efficiency) and legislation relating to the letting of private sector tenancies.

Knowledge of the services provided by the Council for households who are in housing need.

S

General knowledge of good property standards and common building problems.

S

An awareness of the financial implications of decisions and an understanding of the importance of prioritising value for money.

Aptitude

Excellent negotiating, influencing and liaison skills to successfully promote the Council to private sector landlords and agents and market housing options to customers, staff and stakeholders.

Ability to develop and maintain effective partnerships with a wide range of people and organisations.

Competitive, being performance driven and able to meet targets.

Ability to be proactive and response and go the “extra mile”.

Ability to identify business risks at an early stage within the procurement process, alerting appropriate managers and developing possible solutions.

Ability to work as part of a team and take initiative with own cases.

Ability to promote and develop effective joint working practices across services.

Ability to work with private sector partners and respond to the needs of that market as well as understanding how that fits with the requirement to meet housing need.

Commitment to the promotion of a homeless prevention approach.

Flexible, problem-solving approach to service delivery with a positive attitude to change and ability to identify opportunities and develop innovative housing solutions.

Ability to prioritise competing demands in a pressurised environment, recognize service priorities and manage a caseload within agreed targets.

Ability to maintain databases and work effectively with IT systems.

Ability to meet performance targets and deliver positive outcomes

Skills

(Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested)

(To Be Tested – S)

Excellent oral and written communication skills, with an ability to explain complex information clearly to a range of audiences.

S

Experience

Experience of working locally and of local agencies and key landlords

S

Experience of providing an excellent level of customer care and customer service in a comparable customer service environment.

S

Experience of working effectively with private sector landlords and/or within a homelessness context.

S

Experience of successfully developing initiatives and schemes to provide housing opportunities for people in housing need.

Experience of Contract management in terms of performance and KPIs

S

Experience of managing own caseload.

S

Experience of achieving performance targets and meeting departmental objectives.

General Education

A good standard of education, including excellent levels of numeracy and literacy.

Personal Qualities

Circumstances

Able to undertake visits, inspections and meetings both inside and outside of the borough.

DBS Disclosure Required? **No** ☐ **Basic** ☒ **Enhanced** ☐

(Tick as appropriate – guidance available from your HR Advisor)

Physical

Generally candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post.

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