

ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH

JOB DESCRIPTION

DEPARTMENT HOUSING AND SAFER COMMUNITIES

POSTHOLDER SECTION HOME OWNERSHIP SERVICES

GRADE: SO1

DESIGNATION PROPERTY ACCOUNTS OFFICER

Purpose of job

To be responsible to the Property Accounts Manager for undertaking the collection of all income relating to Home Ownership Service (HOS) functions, including all service charges. To be responsible for managing a portfolio of accounts through the entire recovery process, taking effective action, including legal action, in line with Greenwich Council's recovery procedures and relevant legislation.

To provide a high standard of customer service to HOS customers, dealing effectively and efficiently with a wide range of enquiries, disputes and complaints, including MPs and Members enquiries.

Main duties

1. To maximise HOS income by meeting personal and organisational performance targets, objectives and service levels. Work towards supporting Greenwich Council's corporate and performance standards including its vision and values.
2. To advise all HOS customers at all stages of instalment plans, service charge loans, all other available payment options, and where relevant service charge reductions, including calculating and determining the cost. To issue regular statements of account to HOS customers.
3. To deal with and respond to complex correspondence / contacts relating to the work of the post holder including enquires and formal complaints from customers, MPs and Members. Where HOS customers withhold payment because of a dispute/query to resolve the query in conjunction with the appropriate service provider. To reply fully and with regard to customer service requirements in the timeframe specified to all such enquiries as appropriate. To investigate and resolve disputes, including providing advice, assistance and information to HOS customers.
4. To monitor and maintain a portfolio of accounts on a regular basis as allocated by the Property Accounts Manager. To do this in accordance with procedures, by identifying new and existing cases in arrears, by taking early action to minimise arrears, by undertaking administration of the portfolio, by collecting HOS income and by making arrangements with debtors to pay outstanding HOS debts.

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Property Accounts Officer

5. To provide all HOS customers with welfare benefits advice where required, to undertake means testing to assess eligibility for various payment options and to assist with applications to the Benefits Agency for direct service charge payments. In addition, identify arrears cases where HOS customers need additional support and liaise with the relevant sections/agencies to ensure that support is obtained.
6. To assist with enquiries and to ensure the assignment procedures are followed, when a property assigns or upon identifying that a property may assign. To ensure any outstanding debt is recovered when properties assign, including all service charges.
7. To undertake detailed preparation for court action including court documentation in accordance with the Civil Court Procedures. Where necessary attend court for hearings to represent the council's interests, including acting as a witness in defended cases. To monitor adherence to the terms of a Court Order, identifying and reporting any breaches.
8. To assist in the preparation for Leasehold Valuation Tribunals, attend hearings and inform and explain the outcome of any hearing to the customer and other departments as necessary.
9. To have a working knowledge of the legislation (even where complex) relevant to the role including Landlord & Tenant legislation and also relevant regulations and contracts including leases, plus procedures and policies relating to the service.
10. To identify arrears cases suitable for a Voluntary Charge, ensure the leaseholder is in possession of the required application and supporting documentation and respond to enquiries relating to their application.
11. To identify write off cases, cancellations and refunds. Prepare detailed background information and provide evidence for approval and authorisation.
12. To operate the appropriate financial controls when dealing with HOS customers money, by ensuring that accurate records are maintained, including monthly cash reconciliations, daily cash re-allocations, raising credit/debit transactions and maintaining a schedule of customer details.
13. To ensure that Financial Systems are accurate at all times in accordance with guidelines, procedures and any Financial Regulations.
14. To produce accurate reports and information for the Team Manager or Service Manager as and when required, providing information on individual statistics, service statistics and ensuring compliance with performance targets.
15. To undertake site visits, home visits or other outside meetings as required to fulfil the requirements of the post.

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Property Accounts Officer

16. To work effectively with other Council departments and appropriate outside agencies including lenders, solicitors, financial advisers and advice organisations as required.
17. To work in accordance with the HOS Quality Management System, the Customer Service Excellence framework and to utilise appropriate technology to ensure the effective and efficient processing of the role's workloads. To be aware of statutory, corporate and HOS requirements and deadlines and the flexible working arrangements this will require.
18. To be responsible for the preparation and running of customer participation events and other Council meetings, including working occasional evenings or weekends.
19. To carry out all duties with due regard to the provision of health & safety regulations and legislation; the equal opportunities and customer care policies; the New Technology Agreement, Data Protection Act and data security provisions.
20. To undertake any other duties consistent with the scope and functions of the post.

Designation of post to which Post holder normally reports:

PROPERTY ACCOUNTS MANAGER