

<b>Post Title</b>	<b>Case Worker (Tenancy Sustainment)</b>
<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Homes First</b>
<b>Team</b>	<b>Housing Needs and Standards</b>
<b>Grade</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>Reports to</b>	<b>Team Leader</b>
<b>Date prepared</b>	<b>June 2017 (updated April 2019)</b>

### **Job Purpose**

- Assist the efficient, effective and consistent processing and resolution of customer case work, identifying and meeting customer needs and ensuring the sharing and dissemination of best practice, particularly in supporting clients in temporary accommodation to find accommodation in the private rented sector, and to sustain those tenancies.
- Assist with the understanding of customer need and enabling a speedier, simpler, more responsive customer journey contributing to the continuous improvement in the delivery of the Council's outcomes, particularly the prevention of homelessness and reduction of households in temporary accommodation, and ensuring high levels of internal customer satisfaction.
- Supporting customer self-serve and spotting opportunities for the Council to initiate further enabling and self-serve.
- Manage rule-based customer cases and issues effectively and understand when to consult with others, including specialists. Maintain confidentiality in line with agreed policy and relevant data protection legislation.
- To support the continuous improvement of processes and procedures within the service using best practice from others where appropriate.
- To provide support for the escalation of service issues.

### **Key Tasks**

1. Casework or supporting leads in partner agencies on a range of cases, assessing the risk and vulnerability of customers and considering all aspects of the customer's situation in order to provide the best avenue of support out of temporary accommodation and into private rented tenancies.
2. Assist in the design and development of tools and guidance notes for the area of specialism to enable the team to self-serve and widen their knowledge.

3. To promote, create and implement best use of available social media channels to help increase awareness of the councils' presence in the community.
4. Access and accurately update all relevant information systems, both customer and back office ensuring that the Golden Customer Record is updated and maintained through verification and validation, and in accordance with Data Protection principles.
5. Actively develop and maintain a working knowledge of Lewes and Eastbourne Council's services, processes and procedures.

### **Corporate Accountabilities**

1. To promote equality of opportunity in service delivery in line with strategic commitment and corporate policies.
2. To promote a culture that is supportive of the Council's purpose, aims and values, and to take all reasonable steps to maintain good employee relations.
3. Staff are encouraged to participate fully in promoting a safety culture to protect the safety and health of themselves, colleagues and other people affected by the Council's activities.
4. To understand and apply the council's Data Protection and Data Quality policy and procedures.
5. Any other duties commensurate with the nature of the post.
6. You will be required to support the Borough Councils' corporate priorities and to ensure business continuity eg emergency response, elections, deployment to critical services.
7. Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils' are committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy and Procedures provides a framework within the Council, setting out responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk.

The policy applies to all employees, councillors, volunteers and service providers that are commissioned by the council.

8. To work within the Council's Core Competencies Framework. Central to the delivery of the role are the values and behaviours set out below. These are shared by all employees and applied to everything we do. The bullet points for each competency are examples of performance required:

### **Core Competencies**

Sharing the Vision - Shaping the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the Council's purpose, context, goals, objectives and values, and is willing to behave consistently with them.</li> <li>• Knows the strategic direction of the Council and acts in support of it.</li> </ul>
Communicating Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes to and participates in an organisation where high quality information</li> </ul>

	<p>flows smoothly both internally and externally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works positively to gain understanding from others.</li> </ul>
Driving Improvement Performance & Results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes responsibility and ownership for decisions, actions and results.</li> <li>• Takes actions to improve skills, knowledge and level of contribution.</li> <li>• Seeks and delivers high standards for self, team and Council</li> </ul>
Self Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-motivated and professional.</li> <li>• Is organised and uses time and technology efficiently.</li> <li>• Adopts a flexible approach to change</li> </ul>
Delivering for our Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a desire to identify and give priority to meeting and exceeding the needs of internal and external customers, generating high levels of customer satisfaction</li> </ul>
Working Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively contributes to team working, sharing information, valuing the input of others.</li> <li>• Works co-operatively and is committed to building, productive, positive relationships.</li> <li>• Demonstrates commitment to achieving overall team objectives</li> </ul>

**This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time it was drawn up. Such details will vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility involved.**

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### QUALIFICATIONS

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good standard of general education including GCSE at grade C or above (or equivalent) in English and Maths, or qualified by strong relevant experience.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Institute of Customer Services (or equivalent).</li></ul>

### TRAINING

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commitment to undertake continuing professional development.</li><li>• Commitment to undertake a Customer Services qualification.</li><li>• Equalities.</li><li>• Willingness to undertake relevant training.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Customer Service.</li><li>• Health and Safety.</li></ul>

### SKILLS & ABILITIES

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Able to communicate effectively, (face to face, written and telephone) with customers, colleagues, council officers and external agencies.</li><li>• Ability to deal with challenging, vulnerable and distressed customers and difficult situations.</li><li>• Ability to actively listen in order to extract and assess important information to ensure that the appropriate arrangements are made to support the customers' needs.</li><li>• Ability to work calmly and sensitively.</li><li>• To be confident, flexible and the ability to work on own initiative.</li><li>• Customer focused.</li><li>• Ability to use IT systems to gather, store and process information.</li><li>• Ability to work, support and deliver services within the Councils Equalities Policy.</li><li>• Ability to use IT systems to gather, store and produce reports and process information.</li><li>• Negotiation skills.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Able to exploit the use of new technology.</li><li>• Able to work with teams across an organisation to improve services.</li></ul>

## KNOWLEDGE

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data protection.</li><li>• Equalities.</li><li>• Working knowledge Microsoft Office.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowledge of working in a Customer Services environment.</li><li>• Working knowledge of current housing and benefits legislation</li></ul>

## EXPERIENCE

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dealing with people who maybe in crisis.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience of working in a Customer Services Environment</li></ul>

## PHYSICAL, LEGAL AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to undertake site visits.</li><li>• DBS Clearance.</li><li>• Willingness to work within the councils' Management and Core competency frameworks</li><li>• An engaging, enthusiastic and positive manner with a strong "can do" approach</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to travel across Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough</li></ul>

***All staff must be prepared to have an understanding of the Equal Opportunities, Customer Care and Health and Safety policies. Managers in particular, must have a commitment to implement and abide by these policies***

## **Caseworker Housing Needs and Standards – Role Descriptor**

This role is focussed on managing a range of cases and records, undertaking related co-ordination and administration duties in relation to allocation of social housing through choice based lettings, housing standards, the prevention of homelessness, statutory homeless applications and finding housing solutions that will include:

- Processing and verifying housing register applications, assisting to addressing standards in the private rented sector, assisting with processing applications for disabled facilities grants, processing payment requests, undertaking site or home visits as necessary, helping prepare cases for formal or legal action.
- Liaising with internal and external colleagues to assist a customer through referrals, signposting or joint working
- Handling cases and requests for a single customer, assessing risk, identifying potential fraud and supporting Specialists with complex cases.
- Assessing applications and cases against a scripted set of requirements.
- Assisting to produce notices and licences to deliver the housing standards service.
- Verification of information, document checking and checking against information already held in the councils' systems.
- Handling casework related correspondence using template letters and forms.
- Collating data and producing reports, including providing and collating data required by other agencies.
- Contributing to preparation of legal cases and attending court, where required.
- Finding housing solutions by helping to source accommodation in the private sector (including emergency accommodation)
- Assisting to closely monitor the use of emergency accommodation to ensure it is occupied and that people are aware of the requirement to make regular payment, and consequences of non payment.
- To maximise the income from emergency accommodation placements by ensuring Housing Benefit is in payment and any change of circumstances dealt with immediately.
- Encourage social mobility by ensuring the allocations policy is adhered to and the correct advice given to transfer tenants to enable them to find housing solutions.
- Undertaking activity to prevent homelessness as directed by the Specialist advisor. This will include advice on welfare reform, housing options, financial assistance and tenancy sustainment.
- Provision of housing advice options by working with households to achieve the outcomes in their personalised housing plan and flag any risks or problems with a Specialist Advisor.
- Keeping customers informed will include:
  - Acting as the single point of contact for all related transactions and activities or providing support to the lead caseworker when other cases or processes are already underway.
  - Proactively interacting and responding to customers through multiple channels, ensuring their preferred method of contact is captured and maintained.

- Managing customer interactions promptly and effectively and where required, consult with or refer to Specialists or other teams or external agencies.
- Recording of detailed case notes in the relevant systems and providing a summary of the case and any recommendations when making a referral.
- Ensuring all correspondence relating to a customer is imported into their contact record.
- Actively follow up on overdue open cases to ensure they are updated or closed.
- Chase customers where further documentation or information is required.

# TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils are currently on a transformational journey to fully integrate services which has involved integrating staff teams, processes and systems whilst still retaining sovereignty of the individual councils.

The employer will be Eastbourne Borough Council.

## Duration

This is a fixed term 12 month contract.

## Conditions of Service

The conditions of service for this post are for the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services. The post is graded Band C.

## Salary

The spinal column points for the post is as follows:

SCP6	£19,547
SCP7	£19,938
SCP8	£20,337
SCP9	£20,744

## Hours

The hours for this post are 37 a week. These will be worked within operational requirements. Actual starting and finishing times will be agreed with your manager. Within these boundaries the Council operates a flexitime scheme for all but Heads of Service. Details will be supplied to the successful candidate upon appointment.

## Place of Work

Although the Housing Needs team are predominantly based at 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4TW, you will also be required to work at Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes, BN7 1AB. You may also be required to work anywhere within the Shared Services boundary.

## Agile Working

The Councils have been offering flexible working for some years and is committed to extend agile working with the introduction of office based working, mobile working and flexible working.

Working arrangements for home, mobile and flexible workers will vary during the induction/ probationary period and will be reviewed at six monthly intervals.

## Probationary Period

All posts are subject to a six months' probationary period where your suitability for the post will be assessed. During this time your progress will be reviewed and discussed with you at regular intervals.

### Pension

We provide membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to employees aged under 75 who have a contract of employment that is for at least 3 months. The LGPS is a qualifying pension scheme, which means it meets or exceeds the government's standards.

All employees are automatically entered into the Local Government Pension Scheme unless they choose to make alternative provision for pension. Scheme members contribute the percentage of salary as set out in the table below. We will also make an employer's contribution to the scheme.

The contribution bands with effect from 01 April 2019 are:

<b>Pay Range</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
Up to £14,400	5.5%
£14,401 - £22,500	5.8%
£22,501 - £36,500	6.5%
£36,501 - £46,200	6.8%
£46,201 - £64,600	8.5%
£64,601 - £91,500	9.9%
£91,501 - £107,700	10.5%
£107,701 - £161,500	11.4%
More than £161,501	12.5%

The pay ranges will be increased each year from 01 April in line with inflation.

Based on the salary for this role, the contribution will be 5.8%

### Annual Leave

The leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March and entitlement varies with length of service. The current minimum entitlement is 25 days. This increases to 29 days in the leave year following completion of five years' service. Subject to the demands of the post, you will normally receive additional paid leave on each Public Holiday. An employee who starts part way through the year will receive a proportion of the basic holiday entitlement. For operational reasons some Service Areas have to restrict the maximum amount of holiday taken at any one time and its timing in the year. Holiday commitments entered into before taking up an appointment will be honoured wherever possible.

### Notice Period

The contract of employment applicable to this post will specify a minimum period of one calendar month to be given by either side.

### Disclosure and Barring Service

Due to the nature of the work, if you are offered this position you will be required to apply to the Disclosure and Barring Service for an "Enhanced Disclosure". A disclosure provides details of a person's criminal record including convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer. It will also contain details from lists held by the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills and information held by local police forces.

The information received from the Disclosure and Barring Service will be kept confidential and the information will be objectively assessed to establish whether you are suitable for the position. We will ensure that conviction information is not misused and that ex-offenders are not treated unfairly. The Council will pay for the check to be made and you will receive full information about the checks and guidance on how to complete the form if you are offered this position.