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|  | | | | JOB DESCRIPTION | | | Form JD1 |
| **JOB TITLE****:** Support Worker – Temporary Accommodation & Travellers Sites | | | | | **POST NUMBER:** | | |
| **REPORTS TO (Job Title):** | | | | | Temporary Accommodation Supervisor | | |
| **DEPARTMENT:** Homeless Services | | | | | **GRADE:** 6 | | |
| **JE REF:** | | | 3971  B01240 | | **PANEL DATE:** | 10/04/2018 | |
| **1.** | MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB  * To provide high quality appropriate housing support to all customers to enable them to complete actions in Personal Housing Plan or support plan with a view to helping people move on into permanent accommodation suitable for their needs. Housing support is provided to all customers at relief stage of Homeless Reduction Act, living in temporary accommodation, on the 3 City of York Council Traveller Sites, B&B accommodation and in YorHome properties as appropriate. This will also include Travellers living in Bricks and Mortar accommodation or on the roadside * To Assist in the prevention of homelessness by providing relevant accommodation and preparing people for independent living. To work in a multi-disciplined team including Statutory and Voluntary agencies in order to provide a comprehensive service to customers. * To manage the accommodation for homeless families and travellers in conjunction with works department and contractors and to ensure that this is maintained at the highest possible standard. * To carryout housing management talks (rent accounts etc) effectively and efficiently. | | | | | | |
| **2.** | **CORE RESPONSIBILITIES, TASKS & DUTIES:**  The post holder is expected to pay due regard at all times to the Council stated policies relating to Customer Services and equal and fair treatment for employees. | | | | | | |
|  | 1 | To build on the housing assessment and Personal Housing Plan (PHP)by providing relevant support to complete PHP actions and update Housing Options Worker accordingly. To provide other assessed support needs for all customers in Temporary Accommodation and in tenancies where required, write a Support Plan with agreed actions. Facilitate and assist in individual and group sessions. Make referrals / signpost to specialist agencies as appropriate. Review the support regularly and record outcomes of support needs and action points on the Support Plan, individual files, and computer systems. | | | | | |
|  | 2 | To hold a caseload and provide high quality individual support to customers including work around budgeting, self esteem, independent living skills, assistance with benefit claims, risky behaviour(alcohol, drugs, unsafe sex, offending behaviour) motivational work, anger management and relationships. | | | | | |
|  | 3 | Make referrals / signpost to specialist agencies as appropriate and where necessary prepare and accompany customers to services to assist with take up / transition to universal / specialist services. | | | | | |
|  | 4 | To work alongside health professionals to support customers with learning difficulties, mental health or physical health needs. | | | | | |
|  | 5 | To facilitate or assist in group sessions / training for customer development. | | | | | |
|  | 6 | To complete on site (where possible) all lettings of accommodation, advising the customer of their Licence Agreement conditions and responsibilities. Completing all paperwork associated with lettings and terminations of accommodation and updating the computer system as necessary. | | | | | |
|  | 7 | To ensure that all communal areas and facilities are maintained and cleaned to a high standard including external areas. | | | | | |
|  | 8 | Supervise and assist with moves out of accommodation ensuring that homes are inspected, cleaned and repaired prior to allocation. On occasions some physical / practical assistance will be required (eg carrying bags, moving furniture) To ensure the return or collection of keys following a customer leaving the accommodation and if necessary to personally carry out a void clean. Update computer systems as necessary. | | | | | |
|  | 9 | To be involved in customer consultation’s as required through a variety of means including residents meetings and customer satisfaction surveys. | | | | | |
|  | 10 | To ensure that temporary accommodation agreements or tenancy agreements are adhered to, taking appropriate action when conditions are breached. Ensure that any breaches and action are clearly documented. To issue letters and or notices where breaches occur and prepare court papers and attendance at the court hearings as and when required | | | | | |
|  | 11 | To visit all customers living in any accommodation (including B&B) where there is an agreed support / PHP provision , ensuring that the customers maintain the accommodation to a reasonable standard and any problems are identified and dealt with quickly. Occasionally visits may be necessary outside of normal working hours. | | | | | |
|  | 12 | To ensure that customers benefits (including HB and UC) are maximised. This will include debt advice, income maximization, benefit advice and involvement of other agencies such as Citizens Advice York | | | | | |
|  | 13 | To use SX3 / IT systems to monitor all rent accounts, both current and former, to action and resolve rent arrears on an individual case basis while following policies and procedures in order to maximise revenue in accordance with defined targets and to minimize customer debt. This will include personal visits, phone and letter contacts serving of legal notices, preparation of Part 55 paper (court referrals) and attending evictions. To collect and monitor rent payments and. Input records and update computer system as required. | | | | | |
|  | 14 | Regularly inspect all properties for H&S and repair issues, reporting these as necessary, monitoring to ensure repairs are completed to a high standard and within agreed time scales as per Neighbourhood Services. To work closely with Housing Management Officers, building services,, suppliers and contractors and other external agencies to ensure that all accommodation is well maintained. | | | | | |
|  | 15 | To visit the Travellers Sites on a regular basis to, provide support as above, monitor and order repairs and ensure Accommodation Agreements are adhered to . To be involved in statistical collection bi monthly (caravan counts). To audit site conditions and development. | | | | | |
|  | 16 | To read the main electricity and gas meters regularly on all sites sending meter readings to the TAM and monitoring for fraud purposes. To take appropriate action where fraud is suspected or detected. | | | | | |
|  | 17 | To ensure that fly tipping and rubbish dumping is monitored and prevented where possible and all sites are well maintained including the regular removal of rubbish | | | | | |
|  | 18 | To respond positively and appropriately to complaints from customers, the general public and adjoining residential or commercial occupiers to all Temporary Accommodation and Travellers Sites in accordance to CYC policy. This will include personal visits, phone and letter contacts and joint visits with Housing Management Officers, Community Safety Team, Police and the Environmental Protection Unit to seek resolution at an early stage. To work with the Anti Social Behaviour Team and the Legal Team to facilitate successful legal solutions where necessary. | | | | | |
|  | 19 | To place customers who present out of normal working hours in council emergency accommodation or Bed and Breakfast accommodation when necessary. | | | | | |
|  | 20 | To keep updated the computer held Housing Management system (SX3), Homeless system inputting data accurately, as necessary and to use the rent and housing benefit system, spreadsheets, E-mail and other computer systems as required. To provide any statistics as and when necessary. | | | | | |
|  | 21 | To work to an agreed rota and provide a flexible response to rota requirements 365 day per year from 8am until 8pm (Security Services provide cover overnight). This will involve cover at the resettlement service hostels. | | | | | |
|  | 22 | Liaison across the Authority and with external agencies involved in the provision of services for our customers who are likely to have complex needs, high social care issues, substance abuse and experience of social deprivation/discrimination. | | | | | |
|  | 23 | To offer consistent information to customers in respect of duties under Homeless Reduction Act to help them find accommodation under relief duty and homeless decisions working closely with other agencies to find alternative housing. | | | | | |
|  | 24 | To participate in the office based duty cover to ensure a responsive customer service is met. | | | | | |
|  | 25 | To encourage and facilitate customer involvement though eg residents meetings, consultation events, exit surveys, newsletters | | | | | |
| **3.** | **SUPERVISION / MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE**  **Direct:**: not responsible for direct line management of other staff.  **Reporting** : Direct to Temporary Accommodation Supervisor .  **Indirect**: assist with on the job training, support of new recruits, relief staff, students, volunteers, colleagues and other professionals. Formal co-working | | | | | | |
| **4.** | **CREATIVITY & INNOVATION**   * Housing legislation and welfare benefits are constantly changing and as such the staff within the Temporary Accommodation Team must be able to learn and adapt to new legislation, policies and procedures. They must be able to adapt their working practices to meet these needs and to deliver a relevant service. * The service is a responsive service but all aspects are guided by legislation mainly (The Housing Act 1996, and the Homeless Reduction Act). Council processes, policies, and good practice mean that new work processes are integrated into policy to reflect the current working environment. When making unfamiliar decisions there are generally other staff on duty who can support / act as reference points when issues / problems arise. There is an informal on-call manager system (generally phone contact) when supervisor is not on duty within the Housing Options and Support Team services. * Fundamental that post holder is able to adapt method of working to suit a wide range of vulnerable customers with complex needs. While the customer group displays a variety of issues there are numerous procedures and risk assessments in place and training available to prepare staff to deal with incidents and problems as a matter of course. On occasions staff will need to make decisions without management on site or on duty eg an immediate decision is required where there is a violent incident staff will decide if they need to contact the Police * Staff should be able to deal with potentially violent or aggressive individuals or groups, to be able to break down barriers where customers are reluctant to engage, using a variety of techniques to impart or extract information and agree solutions and actions. In addition customers may have learning difficulties, literacy problems and need to communicate using a variety of techniques. To work with customers to resist inappropriate peer pressures, address discrimination and bullying issues, deal with anger management and nuisance behaviour without alienating the customer from support process * To break down barriers to enable customers to access and retain accommodation and to access other services as identified by the needs assessments. Involved in the development of new resources to assist this eg. producing a newsletters, setting up residents welcome meetings, encouraging customers access universal services (eg accessing a Children’s Centre) or community provision * To be able to think on feet regarding numerous situations i.e. to de-escalate a situation which could become volatile. Need to be creative in approach, handling of situation, group dynamics, long term impacts. Relevant training and procedures are in place to guide / prepare staff. * Flexibility and willingness to work across CYC hostels if required. | | | | | | |
| **5.** | **CONTACTS & RELATIONSHIPS**   * **Customer group** is varied including families, young people, people with severe mental health problems, people with substance abuse issues, care leavers, Looked After children and Gypsy Traveller and Roma community. . * Front line service for vulnerable customers including housing support and advice and encouragement. * Tenancy enforcement work where necessary including issuing of appropriate notices including Notice to quit the accommodation. The contact can be informal, in office, or around site or can be more formal interview, support sessions, intensive support. It can be with an individual or household. * On travellers sites, contact often involves extended family member or neighbours. * Customer contact may be face to face or on the telephone and is often daily * **Internal** – Contact is fundamentally in relation to an individual customer to gather or pass on information, arrange meetings or appointments, discuss solutions to housing issues, make referrals, report or chase repairs with a variety of internal departments on a daily basis – primarily with Homeless Services staff, Social Workers, Children’s Services, Travellers Education Service, building services, discussing and making decisions regarding support or services required. Specialist contact with Youth Offending Team. * **External agency contact** - Contact is fundamentally in relation to an individual customer to gather or pass on information, arrange meetings or appointments, discuss solutions to housing issues, health issues, emotional support issues. Contacts include but are not limited to, Homeless Agencies, Housing Associations, Travellers Agencies, advice and mediation services, National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)NY Police, PCT, DWP. * Contact may also be in multi-agency meetings , training or networking sessions | | | | | | |

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| **6.** | **DECISIONS – discretion & consequences**  **Discretion:**   * Temporary Accommodation Support workers provide advice and information and support to customers which will have implications, some serious, on their future housing (eg advising them to pay rent or face risk of eviction). Support Workers make decisions daily in line with procedures on non payment of the accommodation charge, anti social behaviour, risk assessments and risk management. * Statutory duty under the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 to contribute to completing actions of Personal Housing Plans regarding homeless prevention / relief of homeless, consequence of inappropriate support is a legal challenge via section 202 or section 204 appeal.   **Decisions;**   * Appropriate advice and support regarding both temporary and permanent accommodation informed by legislation, Council policies and procedures and individual support needs of customers. * The commencement of court proceedings for infringement of tenancy conditions and attendance as necessary. There are internal policies to guide staff but each case is individual and all information needs to be considered and agreed with manager. There is a need for consistency and boundaries * Contacting Social Services and/or other services as necessary if feel people are at risk ie children or adults.- in line with Safeguarding policies. This is a statutory responsibility and follows strict guidelines. * Liaising with multitude of various specialist agencies to initiate and ensure comprehensive service to customers. * Devising of behavioural contracts with customers. * Arranging payment agreements with customers for current and former arrears. * Deciding on extending agreements as appropriate. * Making decisions regarding emergency accommodation, protecting property in emergency situations. * To investigate low level complaints and liaise as necessary with internal and external agencies in order to resolve this. * Providing information affecting decisions at NAG meetings, Case Conferences (child protection) including submitting factual reports about past and present tenancies/ incidents and making up to date assessments. * Expectation that staff are able to make ‘on the spot’ decisions especially when working with individual customers or lone working or ‘out of hours’ work when is a manger is not on site (but available for consultation). Service is located across 4 buildings and cover is, 365 days per year including accepting EDT emergency placements * Responsible for health and safety of self, colleagues and building * Responsible for all statistical recording * Policies and Guidelines are available for consultation * Staff are guided by legislation -Primarily Housing Act 1996 regarding emergency placements, Homeless Reduction Act 2017, Crime and Disorder Act 1998 regarding offending behaviour and sharing of information / granting access to Police, Safeguarding and also by internal policies and procedures. |
| **7.** | **RESOURCES – financial & equipment**  *(Not budget, and not including desktop equipment.)*  Description Collect rent monies over the phone  Requisition and pay into treasury all monies collected from the onsite laundry  Use petty cash responsibly ensuring VAT receipts are collected, monies spent recorded and replenishment of the petty cash collected from West Offices.  Value: Generally responsible for amounts of up to £500 to be banked  Responsible for 2 pool bike’s  Responsible for 2 laptops,  *In addition responsible for general condition and security of 4 hostels and dispersed properties.* |
| **8.** | **WORK ENVIRONMENT – work demands, physical demands, working conditions & work context** Work demands:Targets – Voids, Rents (current and former) Temporary Accommodation. Deadlines – Personal Housing Plans, support plans, paying in, signing customers up, internal mail, welfare and housing benefits, notices, completing Part 55’s papers for legal action,, voids including cleans, repairs, rent arrears, emergency placements.Most significant deadlines regarding statistics , budgets, rents and voids are monitored monthly with quarterly reporting to senior managers.  * Need ability to work unsupervised and at own initiative. * Proactive and Reactive role meaning that daily and hourly demands for work which is not planned into the day. * Work with vulnerable customers who are under a high level of stress or have mental health problems, substance misuse etc. * Difficult to provide support to customers when they have received negative decisions from other departments i.e. intentionally homeless.  Physical demands:Some lifting and bending, significant / daily standing, for some staff walking reasonable distances (3 miles) and some will travel by bicycle up to 10 miles per day.  * Required to change locks, type, clean, some staff drive and computer work  Working conditions:Visit properties, carry out empty property checks (void) in cold/hot/dirty/dark conditions, visit travellers sites in all weathers, work with dogs/children/potentially violent customers, customers with mental health problems. On occasions staff will lone work and have to make on the spot decisions in accordance with procedures and risk assessments.Work context:Many customers present with high risk factors – history of offending, arson, violence and aggression, mental health problems, learning difficulties, drug and alcohol issues, history of domestic violence or abuse, sex offenders, and risk of post holder being subject to abuse (primarily verbal but with threat of physical) is high as there are numerous occasions when staff re involved / witness to volatile explosive situation or working with high risk customers. Additional risk from dogs, rats, and although minimised physical injury (eg needle stick injury). |
| **9.** | **KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS**  **Required:**   * Knowledge of the specific issues facing Travellers. * Knowledge of the specific issues facing people that are homeless * Knowledge of the Housing Act 1996, Homeless Reduction Act 2017, Caravan Act 1960 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. /Licence and tenancy legislation , * Understanding of housing management * Knowledge of welfare benefits system * Literacy and numeracy skills, computer skills * Telephone skills, interpersonal skills, diplomacy, tact, sensitivity and objectivity. * Risk assessment awareness, prioritisation, life skills, ability to make decisions based on complex situations in a potentially volatile situation. Work in a proactive manner, use own initiative and work as a team.   **Ability to converse and provide advice and guidance to members of the public, in spoken English, to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) - level C1** - Effective operational proficiency or advanced - Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.  This post requires the post holder to undertake a basic criminal record check via the Disclosure and Barring Service. |
| **10.** | **Position of Job in Organisation Structure**  Job reports to:  Temporary Accommodation Team Leader  THIS JOB  Support Worker  Other jobs at this level; Resettlement Support Workers  Jobs reporting up to this one:  None |