Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

Customer Relations Team Leader

Salary: Band 7 - £33,119 - £37,562 p.a.

Hours per week: 37 hours per week with office working requirements 5 days a week

Location: Somerstown Area Housing Office, Portsmouth - but can be asked to work from Paulsgrove or Leigh Park if there is a business need

Contract type: Permanent

The Service

Portsmouth Homes is part of Portsmouth City Council's Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services directorate. The social housing sector has seen considerable change, including new and revised regulations and consumer standards. Portsmouth Homes is undertaking a programme of change to respond to this environment and changing expectations from our tenants and leaseholders. The Customer Relations Team provides frontline access to landlord services, helping tenants, leaseholders and other customers through telephone, email, digital and face-to-face contact. The team works with housing managers and colleagues across Portsmouth Homes and the council to provide a consistent, professional, accessible and responsive service, support regulatory compliance and improve the customer experience.

What is the role?

Reporting to the Customer Services Manager, you will provide first-line operational supervision to Customer Relations Officers, ensuring tenants, leaseholders and other customers receive excellent customer service. The role can be complex and requires the ability to work with changing priorities and be flexible in approach. You will organise day-to-day service delivery, coordinate staffing and workloads, and support officers through regular coaching, development discussions and quality assurance. You will work closely with the Customer Services Manager to track and manage demand, contributing to performance information and using the tools available to inform daily priorities and plan work ahead. You will also work with Local Housing Managers, Senior Housing Managers and relevant teams across Portsmouth Homes and Portsmouth City Council to support joined-up services and consistent customer outcomes. You will be responsible for the following duties:

- Make joint day-to-day decisions about work allocation, customer demand and service delivery within agreed policies and delegated authority.
- Provide first-line operational supervision to Customer Relations Officers, including regular coaching, development discussions and performance feedback.
- Manage daily staffing arrangements and duty rotas to ensure adequate telephone, email, digital and face-to-face service cover, responding to leave, sickness, training and changes in customer demand.
- Allocate and monitor operational workstreams, including customer contact forms, compliance appointments, pet applications, garage and parking activities, low-level income work, former tenancy arrears, mobility scooter enquiries and other duties assigned to the team.
- Monitor telephony and customer-contact performance, including availability, waiting times, unanswered demand, work queues and service standards, taking action where performance falls below expectations.
- Carry out call monitoring, case sampling, direct observations and quality assurance reviews, providing clear feedback and agreeing improvement actions.

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- Support the early resolution of difficult, sensitive or escalated customer contacts, communicating decisions with empathy, clarity and authority, and working with the relevant housing team or service where further advice or support is needed.
- Identify training and development needs, support induction and ensure officers understand current procedures, systems, policies and customer service expectations.
- Monitor attendance, conduct and performance, taking appropriate first-line action and escalating formal, complex or high-risk matters to the Customer Services Manager.
- Use service data, customer feedback and the tools available to track and manage demand, identify priorities and risks, inform work allocation and recommend practical service improvements.
- Embed consistent procedures and a single way of working across the team, reducing variation and supporting consistent customer outcomes.
- Create and ensure pertinent and accurate records of customer contacts, management decisions and reasons for actions or non-actions, so that information can be understood and relied upon by others and Portsmouth Homes maintains accurate customer records.
- Provide routine operational day to day supervisory cover in the Customer Services Manager's absence, within delegated authority, escalating strategic, governance or complex employee-relations matters appropriately.
- Actively promote and model the council's desired behaviours, take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of others affected by your work, and undertake other duties commensurate with the post.

Who is the person?

You need:

- Experience of supervising, coordinating or leading individuals and teams within a busy customer-facing service.
- Experience of coaching staff, providing constructive feedback and supporting performance improvement.
- Experience of allocating work, managing competing priorities and adjusting resources to meet changing demand.
- Strong and adaptable IT skills, including Microsoft 365 and customer, case-management or telephony systems.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to interpret information and explain decisions clearly.
- Evidence of commitment to continuing personal and professional development, and willingness to undertake relevant management, housing, customer service or regulatory training.
- The ability to engage effectively with staff, customers and colleagues to maintain high service standards, support development and communicate expectations clearly.
- The interpersonal skills to build effective working relationships with staff, customers and colleagues across Portsmouth Homes, HNB and PCC, providing clear advice and guidance and supporting joined-up Customer Relations service delivery.
- The ability to provide visible, approachable and consistent first-line leadership, developing staff confidence, knowledge, accountability and professional judgement.
- Resourcefulness, adaptability and sound judgement to manage conflicting priorities, respond positively to unexpected problems and make decisions in complex and pressurised situations within the limits of delegated authority.
- The ability to communicate difficult or sensitive messages with empathy and authority, recognise vulnerability and promote fair, accessible and respectful services.
- The ability to support employees through changes to systems, processes and expectations, and contribute constructively to continuous service improvement.

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- The ability to converse at ease with customers and provide advice in accurate spoken English.

The following are desirable, but not essential:

- Experience of quality assurance, call monitoring, case sampling or other methods of reviewing service standards.
- Understanding of social housing landlord services, customer access and the needs of tenants and leaseholders.
- Experience of performance, attendance or absence management, with the ability to escalate formal matters appropriately.
- Knowledge of GDPR, data protection and the secure handling of personal and sensitive information.
- Experience of using performance and demand data to support service delivery and resourcing decisions.
- A relevant supervisory, leadership, management, housing or customer service qualification, or equivalent practical experience.
- English and Maths GCSE, or an equivalent standard of literacy and numeracy.

You will need to demonstrate that you have the Right to Work in the UK. No post will be offered without it.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

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