

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Job Title</b>	Complaints Resolution Officer		
<b>Directorate</b>	Community Services		
<b>Reporting to</b>	Senior Case Manager		
<b>Grade</b>	Grade 13		
<b>Evaluation Ref</b>	TR0139	<b>Job Family Ref</b>	
<b>Role Purpose</b>			
<p>To undertake full management of the service's stage HRA 1 complaints. To ensure complaints are managed in line with the mandatory Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and with the legal requirements of the Regulator for Social Housing, to mitigate any financial and reputational risk of non-compliance.</p> <p>To triage, investigate and respond to housing related complaints, being accountable for resolving disputes quickly and fairly and being responsible for administering all relevant records.</p> <p>Review and develop policies, strategies and procedures. Maintain recording systems and work with a range of services within the HRA and sometimes with other areas of the Council.</p>			
<b>Responsibilities</b>			
<p>To act as the first point of contact when there is resident dissatisfaction with housing related issues.</p> <p>Autonomously assess and make decisions about the eligibility of complaints in line with the council's Complaint Policy and procedures, including where complaints are directed to the Director or Heads of Service (or those received via an MP or elected member).</p> <p>Conduct objective, fair and thorough investigations into individual complaints received under the first stage of the council's two-stage Complaints Policy, including those that are challenging and complex. With the Case Manager Lead, commission such investigations from other sources. Where appropriate carry out similar investigations for other parts of the Directorate including those under disciplinary, grievance, whistleblowing &amp; similar procedures.</p> <p>Deliver a high quality, comprehensive and consistent approach to dealing with complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman's dispute resolution principles. Ensure that all issues are dealt with sensitively and in an even-handed way, working with colleagues at all levels and with the authority and autonomy required to resolve any disputes fairly and quickly.</p> <p>Maintaining complaint records using Housing systems, data and stakeholder knowledge.</p>			

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Ensure timescales for complaint handling (both statutory and corporate) and quality and performance standards are adhered to and ensure that they are set and effectively reviewed.

Ensure residents and stakeholders are kept informed at all stages of the complaints process and provide advice.

Ensure that operational services are notified of the outcomes which affect their service delivery and monitor their implementation.

Provide support in assessing risks to service users and assist in managing operational service delivery arrangements until the complaint is resolved as part of risk mitigation.

Manage difficult and challenging conversations with residents who might have experienced upset and distress. Have a good understanding of diversity issues and an ability to address the needs of vulnerable people, making reasonable adjustments where possible.

Act as a link officer with the Housing Ombudsman Service, collating large volumes of information and documents needed for their investigation.

Ensure Ombudsman deadlines are adhered to, to prevent the risk of a Complaint Handling Failure Notice or finding of maladministration.

Deputise for the Senior Case Manager.

### Impact

With the Senior Case Manager, prepare annual and quarterly reports to Heads of Service, the nominated Member responsible for Complaints and the Director of Housing on data to inform performance management, practice development and service planning (also a regulatory requirement under the Complaint Handling Code).

Attend council and Tenant Strategic Group meetings.

Work in collaboration with senior managers, the Member responsible for Complaints, Elected Members, the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator to ensure the authority's compliance with regulations and legislation and to promote good practice in complaints handling.

Facilitate training and promote a positive complaints culture to staff through knowledge sharing and to residents through newsletters and webinars (required under the statutory Complaints Handling Code).

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Ensure that complaints procedures are appropriately publicised and promoted by providing the Housing Communications team and wider council stakeholders with relevant information and guidance on complaint policy and process.

Contribute to service development in co-operation with other colleagues and the Performance and Improvement Lead.

Review and support the development of policies, strategies and procedures within the housing service. Make recommendations to ensure that these provide continuous improvement of services.

Liaise with the central Customer Feedback team and partner agencies to develop and maintain clear channels and processes for listening and responding to concerns and complaints. Ensure a consistent approach to complaint handling and share best practice.

Support the effective liaison and joint working with government agencies in respect of complaints e.g. the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government Ombudsman and the First Tier Tribunal process for leasehold service charge challenges.

Keep abreast of legislation and policy related to housing management and building maintenance, including ongoing CPD learning through the Housing Ombudsman's learning centre.

### Knowledge / Experience / Skills

#### Knowledge

	Essential	Desirable
Up to date knowledge and expertise in the operational aspects of housing management and/or building maintenance.	X	
Good understanding of the regulatory framework for social housing and housing related legislation.	X	
Ability to analyse feedback trends, data and prepare detailed reports for senior managers and Members.	X	
Ability to work with minimal supervision, possess effective workload and time management skills. Able to work to competing deadlines and see things through to completion.	X	

#### Experience

Have experience in housing management or a similar customer facing role.	X	
Experience of investigating complaints in a social housing, local authority or similar (regulated) environment that provides complex services.		X

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Experience of corporate working within a large and complex organisation and of working with external partners and customers.		X
Be robust and confident in decision making.	X	
Good understanding of data protection procedures and the need for data quality.	X	
Knowledge of the regulation of social housing, the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, legislation and practices.		X
<b>Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications</b>		
Educated to GCSE Level in 5 subjects at Level 4/C or above including English and Maths	X	
Educated to degree standard	X	
CIH Level 3 (or working towards)		X
<b>Skills</b>		
Ability to undertake detailed investigations and research. Being able to 'see the bigger picture'.	X	
Excellent communication and influencing skills, including presentation skills. The ability to explain complex issues to audiences in an accessible way. Ability to liaise with customers, staff, managers and Members across the organisation and external partners.	X	
Excellent written communication – able to explain how decisions have been reached in plain English, in a clear and concise way. Able to deliver complex and emotive information in writing.	X	
Be well organised and methodical, being able to keep good electronic and paper records and having sound information management/analysis/interpretation skills.	X	
Good negotiating skills and the ability to develop effective working relationships, both internally and externally. Demonstrating a pragmatic and flexible approach to collaboration and teamwork.	X	
Ability to work well under pressure to meet strict deadlines. To work on own initiative, managing a workload with conflicting priorities, with minimal supervision.	X	
Ability to speak fluent English as stated in Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016).	X	
<b>Working Conditions</b>		
Flexible working by agreement.		

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### Working Arrangements

Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.

### Corporate Responsibilities

Understand, uphold and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024