

# **CANDIDATE BRIEFING PACK**

**Director of Housing Management**

**London Borough of Croydon**

**August 2023**

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# Welcome

Thank you for thinking about joining Croydon Council. This is an exciting time to join us as the Housing Directorate undergoes a massive transformation programme to deliver improved services to our residents.

As you will already know, Croydon has faced significant challenges over the past 3 years, in terms of the Council's governance and financial crisis, and some well-publicised service failures.

We are already making substantial progress, with a clear three-year transformation programme in place. The Executive Mayor Jason Perry was elected in May 2022 and his administration is focused on delivering our Business Plan, which is focused on listening to the people of Croydon and putting the pride back in our borough. Transforming the Housing Service is a fundamental part of that.

We are looking for an outstanding individual to lead the Housing Management Division in the Housing Directorate. The successful candidate will be instrumental in delivering excellent landlord services to our circa 16000 social housing residents and leaseholders.

We are looking for someone who has the right skills and experience, and most importantly someone who fully shares our values, our commitment to Croydon and its people and who wants to make this Council the best it can be.

You will join us at an exciting, yet challenging time for both the Council and the Housing Directorate. You will play a full part as Director in turning round both the Council and housing services.

This will be hard but fulfilling work; you will face challenges and Croydon will test every part of your experience and knowledge to date, but if you are the person we are looking for, this is exactly the opportunity you will relish.

You will not be on your own in this challenge. You will be joining a strong, supportive, and values driven team of senior staff, all helping to rebuild the Council and the Housing Directorate: its finances, its governance, its culture, and its services.

Croydon is a fantastic place; a vital part of London's story with a strong identity in its own right, and a future for the making. This is a rare chance to make genuine change in a place of great opportunity. This is truly one of those once-in-a-career moments, to join us at a time when your impact will be felt the most.

We are building a values-led organisation where people who care passionately about fairness, inclusion, tackling inequality, and making Croydon better for the people who live here will thrive.

Thank you again for your interest in this opportunity and we look forward to receiving your application.

Executive Mayor Jason Perry

Katherine Kerswell, Chief Executive

## About us

As one of London's largest and most diverse boroughs, Croydon is a fantastic place to live, work and spend time, with all the benefits of close proximity to the rest of London and the southeast.

Our borough is made up of diverse communities that stretch from Crystal Palace to Coulsdon and from New Addington to Purley; with bustling district centres and over 120 green spaces that link us together and an urban town at its centre. One of London's largest commercial districts outside the centre, Croydon is a major hub for shoppers, workers and visitors; its excellent transport links include the iconic trams. The borough has a richly diverse cultural scene and is known as the birthplace of music genres from punk to dubstep and the home of grime legend Stormzy.

Croydon's greatest strength is its people. London's most populous borough, Croydon is home to 398,800 (Census, 2021). Caring, passionate and principled, they take huge pride in coming together to improve their borough and help their communities.

Croydon is also home to more than 90,275 people aged under 18 (Census 2021) – more young people than anywhere else in London. We are incredibly proud of them and committed to them and their futures. We look after more vulnerable children and young people than any other council in London; caring for them is a privilege and a priority, and our children's services are rated 'good' by Ofsted.

Over the past decade we have seen huge investment, regeneration and growth in our borough. Croydon remains an attractive and important part of London for ongoing growth and investment – growth from which we want to see all our communities' benefit. However, the impact of our financial challenges mean we must focus on the needs our residents are facing today, regain their trust following the financial and governance crisis at the council and make sure we are a financially sustainable council by 2026.

### **Croydon Council**

Croydon Council is two years into one of the most significant and fast-paced transformational programmes in local government today. The 'Mayor's Business Plan' sets out how we must change as an organisation to provide the good quality core services and value for money our residents and businesses expect. We must do less and do it better.

In addition, the housing service has had its own significant challenges with the issues reported in March 2021 at Regina Road and the subsequent regulatory notice. But transformation of housing is underway and forms an extensive programme overseen by the Housing Improvement Board.

There is a huge amount of change underway and most importantly, we want to involve staff, residents and all our partners in the decisions we make and be open in everything we do. Our passionate and committed workforce is our greatest asset; our partners are our most valued colleagues. We look forward to continuing to work with them as we build the council for Croydon's future.

# Advertisement

## **Director – Housing Management Salary Director Grade 3**

Croydon is a council on a journey. By accepting and addressing the challenges of its past, the council is transforming itself into a modern, sustainable, and resident-focused local authority.

This is an opportunity to be part of a new chapter for Croydon and help shape the future of the council. A council with a passion for driving positive change and delivering excellence; a community with a rich heritage, a diverse population, and a distinct identity. It's an environment in which you can find fresh inspiration and inspire others in equal measure.

Welcome to Croydon Council – and a role that will challenge you and fulfil you like never before. As our Director of Housing Management, you'll head up our Housing Management division, driving widespread improvements and promoting our values across everything from delivering excellent frontline Landlord services, leading on resident engagement activities, manage the new voids process and development of housing strategies to enable residents to make informed decisions. You'll work collaboratively as part of the new corporate team of directors and with our Chief Executive to deliver the Mayor's Business Plan, the Housing Transformation programme, and the Housing Improvement Plan.

### **The impact you will have**

When it comes to housing, we've already started to make some improvements. But there's much more we need to do. Which is why we need an inspirational leader. Taking responsibility for much of the frontline services, you'll work collaboratively across the council as well as with our elected members and really engage with our residents to deliver improvement for housing that will see us working to the highest standards.

There will be difficult decisions to make and tough budgets to deliver. But you'll relish the chance to apply your ideas and ingenuity to find the best ways forward.

Your specific responsibilities will include:

- Lead and shape the landlord services, modernising current target operating models.
- Lead on resident engagement activities for the directorate, ensuring an up-to-date Resident Engagement Strategy is in place and delivers the promise of the Resident's Charter.
- Lead on the delivery of estate caretaking, improvement and development activities which enhance the estates and communities
- Lead on the development and delivery of the newly formed contact centre
- Lead on the delivery of a new Voids management process

- Assist the council in meeting its statutory responsibilities to priority and non-priority homeless households.
- Be responsible for effective financial and operational performance of the Housing Revenue Account and operational budgets.
- Work closely with colleagues across the council and within the directorate to deliver a one council approach to Landlord services.
- Lead and direct the services within the directorate to ensure they deliver effective and efficient services.

### **The skills and experience you will bring**

You'll bring a track record of leadership success in social housing or a related sector – you'll certainly have worked in another similarly large, complex organisation at a senior level alongside a wide range of stakeholders. You will lead and direct the services within the division, to ensure delivery of effective and efficient services against agreed KPIs, that they achieve high standards of performance, that they deliver the duty of best value and that the overall budgets are managed and controlled within the funding envelope agreed.

We're looking for someone who will be a champion for our tenants and an inspiration to our whole organisation as you work tirelessly to ensure people in Croydon have access to the good quality homes and services they deserve, as well as driving continuous improvement in service delivery to achieve high levels of tenant satisfaction and engagement.

### **Who we are – and where we're going**

We fully acknowledge the fact that we haven't got things right in the past and have strengthened our resolve do them better. With a clear financial strategy in place together with an unwavering commitment to listening to our residents and putting them first by upholding our **Residents Charter** to:

1. To treat residents with respect
2. Respond quickly and efficiently to complaints and learn from problems that lead to complaints
3. Be clear and transparent with our residents about how we are performing
4. Provide safe homes and a clean environment which residents are proud to live in
5. Give residents a voice and encourage meaningful decision-making activities
6. Communication is clear and easy to understand

## Job description

<b>Job title:</b> Director of Housing Management	<b>Service Area:</b> Housing Management	
<b>Directorate:</b> Housing	<b>Post Number</b> From Oracle	<b>Evaluation Number</b>
<b>Grade:</b> Dir 3	<b>Date issued: August 2023</b>	

### Croydon Council's priorities

The Mayor's Business Plan has five outcomes:

- The council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services.
- Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning.
- Children and young people in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential.
- Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough we're proud to call home.
- People can lead healthier and independent lives for longer.

### Croydon Council's new ways of working

We will practice sound financial management, being honest about what we've spent and what we can afford.

We will focus on what we, uniquely, can do as the local authority as the democratically elected leaders of our borough. This means we will focus on our core services, and a small number of evidence-based outcomes that deliver our priorities. But we will also continue to use our democratic mandate to convene our partners around a common purpose and to make a clear case for a better deal for Croydon.

We will aim to become a much more transparent, open and honest council.

We will involve residents in our decision making. But we will also need to be clear with residents about what we can do, and what we can't. When we have to say no, we will do so with compassion and take the time to explain our decisions.

**Responsibility for:** Leading the Housing management division of the Housing directorate. Responsible for the delivery of landlord services to our customers including the management of the repairs contact centre and deliver a model of transformative operational management to drive customer satisfaction.

**Job Purpose:**

As a member of the Housing Directorate's management team, the Director of Housing Management Services will work collaboratively with other directors, corporate directors and the chief executive to deliver the Mayor's Business Plan, and the Housing Transformation Programme. This role will primarily focus on leading the Housing Directorate's Landlord responsibilities. This includes leading approximately 200 staff covering tenancy management, rent accounting, income collection, leaseholder/home ownership services, safeguarding, low level anti- social behaviour intervention, lettings, voids, estate improvements, community development, resident engagement, and estate caretaking services.

**Reports to:** Corporate Director of Housing

**Responsible for:**

The development and delivery of an effective and efficient landlord service whilst ensuring delivery of the charter for Social Housing Tenants, requirements of the Building Safety and Fire Safety Acts, and meeting the Regulator for Social Housing's Standards.

The post holder will:

Lead and shape the landlord services division and be responsible for the delivery of and the performance of statutorily defined local authority functions relating to landlord housing services including: Tenancy management, Income Collection, Low level anti-social behaviour intervention, Rent Accounting, Lettings, Tenancy safeguarding. Ensuring that effective systems are in place for discharging these functions working with the voluntary sector and other providers as appropriate.

Lead and shape on the delivery of excellent customer service of the Repairs Contact Centre and digital forms of contact.

Lead on the resident engagement activities for the directorate, ensuring an up-to-date Resident Engagement Strategy is in place and delivers the promise of the Resident's Charter.

Lead on the delivery of estate caretaking, improvement and development activities which enhance the estates and communities within them.

Lead on the delivery of a new Voids management process which minimizes turnaround time and maximises opportunity to generate income, reduce housing need pressure and minimise the use of Temporary Accommodation.



Assist the council in meeting its statutory responsibilities to priority and non-priority homeless households including the development of housing strategies to enable residents to make informed decisions. To support the delivery of housing need arrangements and support the preventative aspects of homelessness and minimising the use of temporary accommodation.

Be responsible for effective financial and operational performance of the Housing Revenue Account and operational budgets, maximising use of assets and supporting growth.

Work closely with colleagues across the council and within the directorate to deliver a one council approach to Landlord services.

Lead and direct the services within the directorate in to ensure that they deliver effective and efficient services against agreed KPIs, that they set and achieve high standards of performance, that they provide best value and that the overall budgets are managed and controlled within the funding envelope agreed.

### **Corporate Accountabilities**

To take a “one Council” approach to deliver more effective outcomes and at all times avoid a siloed, single division or service area approach.

To actively seek out and learn from external good practice and bring those new ideas and ways of working into service development and delivery.

To contribute and lead as required as a project owner on the delivery and implementation of specific corporate projects.

To actively role model the council’s priorities and ways of working and the council’s leadership framework and values.

To lead, manage and develop staff teams and ensure compliance with the council’s performance management system and all HR policies and procedures

Be accountable for associated budget and have affordable plans in place to deliver the annual budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Provide assurance that the services are compliant and performance monitoring is part of the corporate rhythm, and exceptions have robust action plans.

To operate within the governance, financial and legal frameworks of the Council at all times.

Ensure equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded into all aspects of professional and managerial roles, including service delivery and at all times carry out your duties with regard to the Council policy.

Ensure by robust management that the services and staff you are responsible for adhere to the Council’s Health and Safety Policy and operate within the safety management frameworks.

To ensure the effective management of data and security of information received and used

within the division, to comply with the relevant legislation such as GDPR and the Freedom of Information Act, recognising that the council wishes to operate in the most open and transparent way.

Participate in cross organisational risk management and emergency planning activities as required.

Represent Croydon Council externally as appropriate to the role, to ensure strong partnership working, strong public relations, and for other reasons as appropriate.

Deputise for the Corporate Director of Housing on all matters as required.

Work with the Corporate Director of Housing and the other housing directors, take responsibility for building a whole Council approach to deliver on the ambitions of our priorities on housing.

### **Service Accountabilities:**

To lead on all aspects of housing landlord function including:

- Tenancy management and estate caretaking services – delivering tenancy management and support and creating clean and vibrant neighbourhoods. Leading approximately 77 staff who will support the provision of cohesive neighbourhood services which engage with and give residents influence over service delivery. Identifying neighbourhood priorities, formulating investment plans and enforcing tenancy and lease conditions.
- Income collection – accountability for the income collection housing team. This team is made up of approximately 73 staff, collecting income, charges and arrears for tenancies, garages, leaseholders, providing support and welfare advice.
- Lettings – leading a team responsible for an effective and supportive lettings service. Staff numbers are included in income collections team.
- Rent accounting – creation of a business support team to effectively and efficiently manage rent account set-up.
- Visiting Team – oversight into the visiting team outputs which oversee the damp and mould follow-ups, fire safety tenancy checks, safeguarding visits.
- Oversight of the provision of a cost effective and efficient major aids and adaptation service for those with a disability requiring support.
- Community development – oversight of a team of approximately 5 staff to develop capacity and capability in communities and supporting individuals and groups to achieve strategy priorities and opportunity. The team also includes safeguarding expertise.
- Resident engagement – leading a team of approximately 12 staff to deliver an effective resident engagement strategy for the housing service which also includes data and insight and digital inclusion.
- Void management – leading on the strategy for an effective voids service, overseeing all stages and involving all teams that are connected to the void management process. To ensure there is effective co-ordination of activity and clienting of other teams the void passes through and producing performance data and making improvements.
- The delivery of an estate management function with responsibility for care-takers on estates, bulk service provision, handyman provision, and SLA management for Pest Control and CCTV. This function will also manage the deep cleaning regime and warden service.

- The oversight and delivery of an estate improvement programme
- Lead on the delivery of a Customer Contact centre (25 staff) for repairs which delivers accurate diagnostics of repair issues, logs and communicates effectively with the repairs contractors.
- Provide high quality professional advice to the Corporate Director of Housing, the Mayor, the Chief Executive, lead Members and Councillors, Committees, the Housing Improvement Board and any others on all landlord services related to the functions of the council.
- Continue to review services as appropriate to ensure high standards of operational delivery.
- Work collaboratively across the directorate, council and with elected members and residents to deliver the Housing Improvement Plan and ensure high quality, effective and compliant operational performance is delivered.
- Build strong and trusting external partnerships, developing strategy and engaging stakeholders in a shared vision to drive landlord services.
- Promote meaningful engagement with tenants and leaseholders, ensuring that their voice is heard and is influential, while maintaining positive and productive relationships with representative tenant and leaseholder groups.
- Ensure an appropriate control and assurance framework is in place to meet statutory, regulatory and financial requirements in order to manage risks to the business, including internal and external audit, health and safety, safeguarding and data protection, to inform relevant and timely intervention.
- Deliver on our strategic aims as defined by the Mayor's Business Plan, the Housing Improvement Plan the Housing Strategy and workstream responsibilities as defined in the Housing Transformation Programme.
- Empower and encourage staff to deliver an excellent service resulting in high levels of tenant satisfaction; reflecting our values on respect and dignity.
- Ensure that the requirements of legislation and relevant statutory obligations and guidance affecting housing services are identified and implemented including appropriate staff training.
- Work closely with the Corporate Director in managing the housing revenue account, its in-year delivery and future planning.

The list of duties in the role profile should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive.

There will be other duties and requirements associated with your job and, in addition, as a term of your employment you may be required to undertake various other duties as may reasonably be required.

Your duties will be as set out in the above role profile but please note that the Council reserves the right to update your role profile, from time to time, to reflect changes in, or to, your job.

You will be consulted about any proposed changes.

### **Key Stakeholder Relationships:**

Internal:

Members; Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, Directors; Heads of Service; other teams and senior directorate colleagues across the council; trade unions.

External:

Local, regional and national government bodies, agencies and NGOs; professional bodies; other local authorities; partner organisations; statutory bodies; members of the public and community groups; trade unions

**Political Restrictions:**

This post is politically restricted and under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and the post holder may not have any active political role either in or outside the work.

**Statutory Responsibilities:**

This role has no assigned statutory responsibilities.

**Other Considerations:**

You may, from time to time, be required to work outside of regular office hours including weekends and evenings to attend meetings and community events.

The postholder is required to observe and fulfill the seven principles of public life (also known as the Nolan Principles).

**1.1 Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

**1.2 Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

**1.3 Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

**1.4 Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### **1.5 Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### **1.6 Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

### **1.7 Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

# Person specification

## Specific Minimum Qualifications and Expertise

### Qualifications:

- A professional or management qualification (minimum level 5 Chartered Institute of Housing or equivalent) and educated to degree level or demonstrable equivalent experience.
- Evidence of continuing professional development, leadership and personal development

### Experience:

- A senior track record in social housing or related sector.
- Proven experience of working within a large complex organisation and experience of working with elected members or a Board at a senior level.
- Experience of successfully leading and managing a diverse workforce, developing successful and cohesive teams.
- A track record of transforming housing landlord services with effective change management experience across people, processes and policies
- Experience of successfully creating housing landlord services which engage effectively with residents and hear their voice when shaping services.
- Experience of overseeing a customer contact centre to deliver accurate repair diagnostics and a right first-time ethos.
- A track record of successfully delivering continuous improvement in service delivery, with high levels of tenant satisfaction.
- Experience of establishing and implementing business planning processes and performance management systems to ensure appropriate and cost-effective service delivery.
- Demonstrable excellence in team management and service delivery in relation to the provision of customer orientated services that achieve successful outcomes.
- Experience of working in partnership with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders / bodies including statutory bodies and organisations
- Experience of controlling a significant, comparable budget and effective financial management.

### Knowledge and Skills:

- Extensive knowledge of local government finance and experience of managing budget setting, financial monitoring and delivering savings from high pressured and very public facing services.
- High level of communication skills to persuade and engage audiences

- and form positive relationships at all levels (internally and externally).
- Ability to work in a collaborative way to transform service delivery including the ability to manage internal departmental relationships
- Evidence of being a strong corporate player who will lead, motivate and inspire their teams and build a high performing culture.
- Ability to work effectively across a range of service disciplines and with a range of people.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills to relate effectively to the public, employees, tenants and leaseholders, Council Members, contractors and other stakeholders and command their respect, trust and confidence.
- Excellent collaborative skills to deliver cross-directorate and cross-organisational strategic aims.
- Commitment to the Council's core value and objectives
- Knowledge and ability to provide high quality technical advice on all matters relating to the role.

## **Leadership Framework**

The council's leadership framework follows the principles of a competency framework and all staff are expected to demonstrate these.

**Developing Oneself** – You demonstrate the values every day, you are passionate about the services you lead and deliver the vision and outcomes of Croydon Council. You are inspirational and engage others through personal leadership making the vision understandable to everyone.

**Inspiring and Developing People** – You identify talent and develop their capability to ensure a committed and motivated workforce, you create a culture based on the corporate values and ensure staff and partners deliver a desired outcome.

**Collaborating and Influencing for Results** – You are challenging and innovative in your approach to driving high standards and value for money, you trust and respect staff and partners and empower them to be courageous to try new approaches.

**Enabling and Facilitating the Community** – You create effective collaboration between partners, establish relationships and understand others perspectives. You are open and honest with others. You build a shared sense of purpose across Croydon, ensuring delivery and a collective use of resources

# Corporate values

Our values are the base of every job role within Croydon – our values are fundamental in everything we do as a Local Authority. You are required to demonstrate a commitment to our corporate values:

**One Team:** To cross boundaries to work together towards shared goals with colleagues, partners and communities

- You are strategically innovative in your approach to building and maintaining partnerships and you and your teams act in a joint enterprise with them. You use your contacts and colleagues to bring teams together.

**Proud to Serve:** We strive to always do our best for the community, getting the most from limited resources and using taxpayers' money wisely

- You are proud to be part of the wider Croydon and the contribution you and your teams make to it. You make a difference to people's lives through engagement and you strive to get the best possible value for money for customers.

**Honest and Open:** We work hard to build trust by treating everyone with honesty and integrity

- You think through who needs to understand what during communication; and take care to communicate detail clearly. You take people's views into account continuously. You trust people, colleagues and staff, to do their best and deal with any issues positively.

**Taking Responsibility:** We encourage and support each other to take responsibility and show what we can do, learning together and recognising each others' contributions

- You are clear where formal accountability lies and where we can all take responsibility for results. You praise your colleagues for their efforts and ideas and thank them for their contributions.

**Valuing Diversity:** We make the most of the many perspectives that make Croydon distinctive

- You treat all staff and customers with equal value and respect. In everything you do, you make good use of the wide variety of background, skills and perspective your teams, the Council and the community demonstrate.





# Recruitment Process

The following timetable sets out the key dates in the recruitment process:

Activity	Date
<b>Closing Date</b>	Sunday 03 September 2023
<b>Longlist Meeting</b>	Tuesday 05 September 2023, candidates not required
<b>1<sup>st</sup> stage discussion with Corporate Director</b>	Friday 22 September 2023, candidates required via Teams
<b>Shortlist Meeting</b>	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> September, candidates not required
<b>Final Panel Interviews</b>	TBC, candidates required in person