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| **Job Description** | |
| **Post title** | Housing Advice Officer |
| **JE Reference No** | N10700 |
| **Grade** | 4 |
| **Service** | Regeneration, Economy & Growth |
| **Service Area** | Planning & Housing – Housing Solutions |
| **Reporting to** | Senior Housing Officer |
| **Location** | Your normal place of work will be Crook or Seaham Offices but you may be required to work at any Council workplace within County Durham. |
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| **DBS** | This post **is not** subject to a disclosure. |
| **Flexitime** | This post **is** eligible for flexitime. |
| **Politically restricted** | This post **is not** designated as a politically restricted post in accordance with the requirements of Section 1(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and by regulations made from time to time by the Secretary of State. |

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| **Description of role** |

To provide early intervention and housing advice to members of the public who are in housing need or who are homeless/threatened with homelessness, ensuring customers access the right support having regard to the statutory provisions of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and associated legislation.

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

*To undertake other duties and responsibilities that are commensurate with the level of the post. This job description contains the main accountabilities of the post and does not describe in detail all the duties required.*

* Manage an allocated caseload of early intervention/advice cases and provide early intervention advice and support to customers who may be at risk of becoming homeless.
* To provide housing options advice, sign posting, referrals and self-help information to customer who are or who may become homeless or threatened with homelessness.
* To provide support and address any welfare needs for those clients who are in Interim/Temporary Accommodation, provided by Durham County Council Housing Solutions Service, as well as providing assistance and support in the move on process into suitable long-term accommodation.
* To provide advice and support to clients to help them to secure or sustain accommodation by resolving housing need and other matters that may result in homelessness or repeat homelessness.
* Provide support to Housing Officers and Key Workers in the delivery of casework under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
* To support clients to make housing applications and other welfare benefit claims.
* To provide general administration duties associated with providing the above, answering telephones, updating records and booking appointments.

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| **Organisational responsibilities** |

* **Values and behaviours**

To demonstrate and be a role model for the council’s values and behaviours to promote and encourage positive behaviours, enhancing the quality and integrity of the services we provide.

* **Smarter working, transformation and design principles**

To seek new and innovative ideas to work smarter, irrespective of job role, and to be creative, innovative and empowered. Understand the operational impact of transformational change and service design principles to support new ways of working and to meet customer needs.

* **Communication**

To communicate effectively with our customers, managers, peers and partners and to work collaboratively to provide the best possible public service. Communication between teams, services and partner organisations is imperative in providing the best possible service to our public.

* **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

To take responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing in accordance with the council’s Health and Safety policy and procedures.

* **Equality and diversity**

To promote a society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live, free from discrimination and prejudice and ensure our commitment is put into practice. All employees are responsible for eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination in everything that they do.

* **Confidentiality**

To work in a way that does not divulge personal and/or confidential information and follow the council’s policies and procedures in relation to data protection and security of information.

* **Climate Change**

To contribute to our corporate responsibility in relation to climate change by considering and limiting the carbon impact of activities during the course of your work, wherever possible.

* **Performance management**

To promote a culture whereby performance management is ingrained and the highest of standards and performance are achieved by all. Contribute to the council’s Performance and Development Review processes to ensure continuous learning and improvement and to increase organisational performance.

* **Quality assurance (for applicable posts)**

To set, monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team and service level so that the highest standards of service are delivered and maintained. Use data, where appropriate, to enhance the quality of service provision and support decision making processes.

* **Management and leadership (for applicable posts)**

To provide vision and leadership to inspire and empower all employees so they can reach their full potential and contribute to the council’s values and behaviours. Managers and leaders must engage in personal development to ensure they are equipped to lead transformational change; always searching for better ways to do things differently to meet organisational changes and service priorities.

* **Financial management (for applicable posts)**

To manage a designated budget, ensuring that the service achieves value for money in all circumstances through the monitoring of expenditure and the early identification of any financial irregularity.

*The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by your manager.*

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| Person specification | | |
|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications | * NVQ Level 2 or equivalent |  |
| Experience | * Experience delivering telephone and face to face advice and assistance services. * Experience of providing support to clients to achieve positive outcomes * Working in a similarly challenging role | * Experience of giving support to vulnerable people * Experience of completing and submitting welfare benefit application forms |
| Skills & Knowledge | * Knowledge of Housing and Homelessness legislation * Good verbal and written communication skills * Excellent administrative skills, with ability to organise and prioritise own workload and to deliver work within deadlines * Good ICT skills * A caring approach and a desire to achieve a high quality of life for customers * The ability to deal with people effectively and sympathetically in sometimes difficult and sensitive situations * The ability to liaise with other agencies in order to achieve the best results for all concerned * Be able to work as part of a team and support other colleagues in their roles | * Local Government experience |
| Personal Qualities | * Flexible * Enthusiastic * Dedicated * Access to a car or means of mobility support (if driving then must have a current valid driving licence and appropriate insurance) * May be required to undertake lone working |  |