Job Description

Post title	Housing Officer
Job Evaluation	N8677
Grade	7
Service	Regeneration, Economy & Growth
Service area	Planning & Housing – Housing Access & Independent Living
Reporting to	Senior Housing Officer
Location	Your normal place of work will be Seaham or Crook Offices, but you may be required to work at any Council workplace within County Durham
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)	This post **is** subject to an Enhanced Disclosure (NBL)
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

Description of role

To carry out the local authorities' statutory duties to prevent and relieve homelessness. This will require a full assessment of a households' housing and support needs including the completion of a Plan (personal housing plan). The primary purpose of the role is to work with households and partner agencies to prevent homelessness.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide a front-line service through telephone, face to face and written communication to customers who are homeless or who may be at risk of homelessness and carry out visits or attend meetings where required.

- Advise clients on their housing and support options available to prevent homelessness and/or relieve their homelessness. Ensuring effective outcomes are achieved based on client's requirements through the proactive use of a range of prevention tools.

- To work partner agencies to ensure members of the public access appropriate services to sustain accommodation, such as early help, health and wellbeing services

- Ensure the discharge of the County Council's statutory duties under the Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002, Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and other relevant legislation including the investigation of homelessness applications.

- Manage own caseload, carry out client assessments and develop and maintain personalised housing plans.

- Maintain comprehensive records to demonstrate the effective service, including written confirmation of advice and options to clients.

- Attend multi-agency meetings as appropriate such as Adult Safeguarding meetings, Team around the Family or Child Protection Conferences.

- Contribute to the continuous improvement of the service and be involved in service reviews and the development of procedures and good working practices.

- Keep up to date with all relevant legislation, guidance and case law with regard to homelessness and allocations ensuring any change to legislation is drawn into the Housing Solutions Service

- Develop good working relationships with private and registered landlords, other housing providers to prevent and relieve homelessness.

- To act as Duty Officer, as required, taking the lead on case investigation on these days and allocating to other Housing Officers.

- Arrange suitable temporary accommodation to those applicants where a duty is owed.

- To advise and assist clients with financial assistance claims, which will include welfare changes, which may include Universal Credit.

- Participate as directed in outreach initiatives to link in with genuine Rough Sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping, working with partners to address this across the County.

- To assess the needs of rough sleepers, involve specialist agencies as necessary, ensuring a holistic approach is maintained.

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.

Person Specification

Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	• NVQ Level 2 or equivalent	
Experience	• Experience within a housing, homelessness or support related service • Experience of providing tailored advice and support to clients with the aim of preventing homelessness. • Experience of providing support to vulnerable people	
Skills and Knowledge	• Knowledge of housing and homelessness legislation • Good verbal and written communication skills • Ability to work to deadlines and organise/prioritise workload • Good ICT skills • The ability to deal with people effectively and sympathetically in sometimes difficult and sensitive situations • Be able to work as part of a team and support other colleagues in their roles	• Local Government Experience • Experience of determining homelessness applications
Personal Qualities	• A caring approach and a desire to achieve a high quality of life for customers • Access to a car or means of mobility support (if driving then must have a current valid driving licence and appropriate insurance) • Flexible and willing to work outside normal working hours when required.	