JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Details - Primary

Job Title	Home-Options Officer		
Department	Housing Services		
Service	Community Housing		
Job Location	Town Hall, Matlock		
JE Number	JE314	Grade	8

Post Details – Other

Political Restriction	No
DBS/BPSS Checks	Yes
Responsible to	Housing Strategy Officer (Homelessness and Inclusion)
Responsible for	

Main Purpose of Post

This is a specialist role that will be at the forefront of the prevention of homelessness, and at the cutting edge following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

This position is fundamental to the provision of services to vulnerable customers who may approach the council for assistance through the Children's Act, the Care Act, and all relevant housing legislation including the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

The postholder will

- provide an effective, professional service on behalf of the Council including offering a full range of advice on housing options in the private and public sector and work as part of a team to ensure a comprehensive homelessness prevention service.
- assist in the delivery of Home-Options, including processing of applications, preparing adverts, interviewing applicants and preparing nominations.
- assist the Housing Strategy Officer in the collation of the data information for the Department for Communities and Local Government thereby assisting the government in its work to capture the true picture of homelessness and its impact on society.
- assist the Housing Strategy Officer to develop and implement the Homelessness strategy Action Plan.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Housing Advice	
1	To advise housing applicants on matters relating to their re-housing including eligibility, availability, tenure, type, location and housing prospects.
2	Prepare housing applicants for tenancy including awareness of the costs associated with renting a home and the duties and obligations of being a tenant.
3	To supply basic advice regarding financial matters including affordability, benefits, debt and housing benefits.
4	To advise private sector tenants and landlords of their right and responsibilities under the Housing Acts and to liaise with other sections of the Council to help

	prevent harassment or illegal evictions.
5	To assist in developing full range of information and publicity for all clients as well as internal procedures. To understand the value of information to the council and to contribute to good information governance by keeping information safe, accurate and up to date and available to those who need it. The officer is required to abide by the council's information governance policies.

Prevention Services (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)	
6	To ensure that all homeless or potentially homeless persons are dealt with according to the statute having regard to the Code of Guidance, Case Law and Council Policy.
7	To complete the Personalised Housing Plan following a detailed assessment with all customers following the first interview and to ensure this Personalised Housing Plan is kept up to date.
8	To undertake case work ensuring that families and/or individuals receive appropriate support to prevent homelessness that is consistent, integrated and of the highest standard.
9	To prevent homelessness by liaison with mortgage lenders, solicitors, landlords, applicants, their families and the County Court etc. and by giving advice, assistance or direct action.
10	To refer applicants to support services to enable them to sustain tenancies. Monitor referrals and outcomes.
11	To co-ordinate the Council's input for the Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme, and to assist in assessing the suitability of applicants.
12	To advise clients on full range of options to solve their housing problem, including intervention if threatened with homelessness, registering on council housing list, initiatives for tenants, private renting, mortgage advice, and shared ownership.
13	To comply with all relevant statutory requirements, Government Guidance and Codes of conduct, Derbyshire Dales policies and procedures, professional and performance standards and good housing and homelessness prevention practice.
14	To ensure full and accurate records of all clients, all advice and support provided. To maintain accurate written and computer records, reports, & other monitoring information as required in connection with the various duties undertaken, and keep other records necessary to provide an adequate management information data base.

Homelessness Relief Services	
15	To ensure that all homeless or potentially homeless persons are dealt with according to the statute having regard to the Code of Guidance, Case Law and Council Policy.
16	To complete the Personalised Housing Plan following a detailed assessment with all customers following the first interview and to ensure this Personalised Housing Plan is kept up to date.
17	To undertake case work ensuring that families and/or individuals receive appropriate support to relieve homelessness that is consistent, integrated and of the highest standard.
18	The arrangement of temporary accommodation for homeless applicants, including liaison with other Council Services on housing benefits and rent payments for temporary accommodation.
19	Monitor placements in temporary accommodation, work with support providers and accommodation providers to keep the length of stay in temporary accommodation to a minimum.

20	To assist with requests from other authorities for assistance with their investigations into homeless applicants where appropriate.
21	To ensure full and accurate records of all clients, all advice and support provided. To maintain accurate written and computer records, reports, & other monitoring information as required in connection with the various duties undertaken, and keep other records necessary to provide an adequate management information data base.
22	To keep up to date with new legislation and practices
23	To liaise with other statutory or voluntary organisations on matters affecting homeless applicants.
24	To ensure that confidential information, which is made available to the postholder in order that they are able to undertake their duties or is otherwise known to them, is kept confidential and secure at all times.

Home-Options	
25	To assist in the receipt of acknowledgement and assessment of applications for admission to Home-Options and to assist in registering eligible applicants
26	To interview and advise Home-Options applicants on matters relating to their housing options. In exceptional cases for example where applicants are house bound home visits may be required.
27	To carry out any other reasonable duties and responsibilities within the overall function, commensurate with the grading and level of responsibilities of the post.
28	To prepare adverts for participating Private Rented Providers (Housing Associations) for inclusion on the Home-Options system.
29	To prepare nominations for Private Rented Providers (Housing Associations) properties and monitor the results of any nominations.
30	To respond to requests from homeowners to market homes for sale under the Council's low cost home ownership scheme.

General Duties and Responsibilities

Equalities - The Council aims for equality in the provision of its services and in carrying out its public functions. All employees will implement and promote its Equality and Diversity policy in their own work.
Code of Conduct - Your duty is to serve the Council as a whole in providing advice, implementing its policies and delivering services to the local community. In performing your duties, you must comply with the Employee Code of Conduct.
Health & Safety – The Council's policy needs full co-operation from all employees who are expected to give all possible assistance towards its successful implementation and to take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others.
Staff Development - The Council's Performance & Development Review (appraisal) is an integral part of Derbyshire Dales District Council's performance management framework as well as a key employee development procedure. Those with managerial responsibility must ensure that all staff with contract hours within their section receive an annual performance & development review (PDR).
Data protection - The Council is committed to maintaining the privacy of all its staff and customers. It expects all staff to handle individuals' personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Regulations in a sensitive and professional manner. All staff are under an obligation not to gain access or attempt to gain access to information they are not authorised to have.
Climate change- The Council is committed to being carbon neutral in respect of its own emissions by 2030 in line with the Climate Change Act 2008. All employees are expected to give due consideration to the climate change and other environmental impacts of the decisions they take during the course of their employment.
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults- all employees and Councillors have a duty of care for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Any concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff or service users must be reported immediately, in confidence, to a Director. Posts working directly with children

and/or vulnerable adults will be designated to require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before appointment and a recheck every 3 years.	
Date this Job Description last amended	

Signed by Jobholder	
Print Name	
Date	

PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE	Home-Options Officer
JE NO	JE314

	ESSENTIAL (Must be met to be considered for interview)	**DESIRABLE** (Required to perform job to high standard)	**AITD**
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	Ability to communicate clearly both verbally and in writing Ability to work with people of all backgrounds Able to work on own initiative or as part of a team Ability to keep accurate, concise records Sympathetic but assertive Diplomatic and flexible		AIT
KNOWLEDGE	Knowledge of homelessness legislation and housing advice services. Experience in the use of computerised record keeping systems. Familiarity with a computerised waiting list Choice Based Lettings Systems	Knowledge of the use of a P.C. and relevant software including spreadsheets and databases	AIT
EXPERIENCE	Experience of dealing with homeless householders	Experience of working with housing associations	I
QUALIFICATIONS	Qualification in housing and or previous experience		AD
OTHER REQUIREMENTS	Ability to present self in a professional manner. Must have current full driving license and be able to travel across the district in the course of work duties.		I

Assessed by: A = Application form I = Interview T = Test D = Documentary Evidence