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| **Job Description** |
| **Post title** | Customer Services Officer |
| **JE Reference No** | N7872 |
| **Grade** | 6 |
| **Service** | Digital & Customer Services |
| **Service Area** | Customer Services |
| **Reporting to** | The post holder will be accountable to the Customer Services Team Coach |
| **Location** | Your normal place of work will be Crook Civic Centre, 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 a first point of contact for all our customers, service users and stakeholders’ access to public services by all access channels, dealing with customer enquiries on all aspects of business within the remit of Customer Services.

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

Listed below are the primary responsibilities of the role:

* To provide accurate information on all Council and partner services on both routine and complex issues.
* To deal with specialist services for example council tax billing and benefits on a first point of contact basis, providing advice and guidance
* To deal effectively with customers service requests, answering queries, giving advice covering the full range of Council and partner services and managing the progress of each enquiry through all stages to its conclusion (where applicable).
* To support the capture of corporate complaints, comments, compliments and suggestions from customers using the Council’s Customer Relationship Management system and following the relevant adopted policies and procedures.
* Maintain an up to date and comprehensive knowledge of a range of services provided by Durham County Council to ensure that customers and clients are supplied with relevant information in an efficient and effective manner.
* Represent the customers' best interests in seeking expert or specialist advice from services inside or outside the Council.
* Schedule appointments for customers where necessary and follow up to ensure requests for service are followed through to conclusion.
* Maintain up-to-date records and knowledge required to provide the effective processing of requests and enquiries.
* Assist customers in locating Council information stored in computerised and manual formats including the processing of payments as required.
* Interpret and accurately record all information provided by customers in accordance with complex benefits legislative requirements, carefully checking customer claim forms and requesting supporting evidence where appropriate.
* Encourage and assist customers to locate and use Council information and service delivery systems e.g. Council website and Customer Self Service
* Participate in corporate working, in particular in order to achieve the corporate objectives and personal development aims.
* Shares all relevant and useful information with others in the team and keeps everyone up to date with the latest developments. Proactively co-operates with others to achieve targets set for group, participates in teamwork and supports team decisions.
* Patience and empathy
* The duties and place of work may change as the service provision changes to the meet the needs of the customer.

Flexible working:

Be expected to work outside normal hours on an organised basis to ensure the availability of the service between 8.30am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday, and also from time to time as the demands of the post and emergencies dictate

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 the Head of Service.

The generic responsibilities which will be undertaken in support of the above work include the following (if applicable):

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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 | * 4 GCSE’s (A-C) or equivalent
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| * Experience
 | * Experience of dealing with the public on the telephone or face to face.
 | * Experience of working in a call centre environment
* An understanding of the main services provided to the public
* An understanding of the Council’s policies and procedures for front line services
* Experience of dealing with tax billing and benefits cases on a first point of contact basis, providing advice and guidance
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| Skills & Knowledge | * Ability to work with minimal supervision and prioritise workload within areas of responsibility and authorisation
* Ability to contribute to the development of the team
* Ability to communicate effectively both on the telephone and face to face
* ICT skills
 | * Ability to communicate effectively in writing
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| Personal Qualities | * Tactful and diplomatic
* Commitment and determination to provide high quality public services
* Ability to deal with people who are angry/emotional in a calm and helpful manner
* 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 work outside of normal office hours.
 | * Ability to work under pressure
* Ability to deal in a professional manner with cases that are distressing or sensitive
* Negotiation and persuasive skills
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