

Job Pack

Caseworker - Planning



Lewes District Council



Location

Thank you for taking the time to look at the details of this post.

Located in the heart of the Sussex countryside and one of the principal towns of the South Downs National Park Lewes offers the best of town and country. It is no surprise that the District is considered among the most desirable places to live and work in the UK.

Lewes town is one of the jewels of the South Downs National Park and the District also possesses many picturesque towns and villages, all with their own unique character.

Whilst nearby Eastbourne is a resort town on England's southeast coast. On the seafront are Victorian hotels, the 19th-century Eastbourne Pier and a 1930s bandstand. Discover a wide range of shops in Eastbourne from high street shopping at The Beacon to the quaint Victorian shopping streets of Little Chelsea, and the boutiques in the Enterprise Centre.

One of the most attractive aspects of living and working in the Lewes and Eastbourne area is the quality of life it has to offer. It is a truly exceptional location. Make the most of the area by enjoying a wide range of activities including country walks, water sports and much more.

Our offices in Lewes and Eastbourne are located close to Train Stations with direct connections to the coast and London. However, the Council provide all the necessary IT and infrastructure to enable home working and maintain a good work life balance

“The best of town, country and coast”

We are able to offer our staff a range of benefits and access to discounts as follows:

- Membership at local leisure centres who are part of Wave Leisure across the District and Borough and at the Sovereign Centre in Eastbourne.
- Kaarp Benefits which are only available to Local Government employees and includes between 3 and 4.5% savings at supermarkets when purchasing a gift card as well as savings on attractions and discounts on many other things.
- Chorus Workplace Savings Scheme
- Boundless which includes up to 10% off high-street and supermarket goods through discounted pre-paid shopping cards.
- CSSC which includes free entry to a number of tourist attractions and a free tastecard as well as discounted cinema visits and 4% saving on supermarket shopping through pre-paid shopping cards.
- Public Sector Discounts – by paying £9.99 for a Black Card £2.99 staff are able to access discounts such as 2.5% cashback – ASDA, 3.5% cashback – Sainsbury's, Waitrose and M&S, 4.5% cashback on B&Q and Primark and 5% cashback – Boots, Carpetright, Clarks, feelunique, Halfords, Harvester, John Lewis, National Express, New Look, River Island, Body Shop, Nike, The White Company, The Works, Waterstones, Wilko etc.
- Easit – the Councils have joined the Queens Award winning easitNETWORK group through which we hope to influence travel behaviour in the area by providing a full range of transport options to encourage staff to adopt more sustainable commuting habits. EasitNETWORK is a social enterprise, not for profit organisation that is all about sustainable travel. Our staff can benefit from many transport discounts including 15% discount on Southern rail journeys across the network (except central London zones 1,2,+ 3); including peak time travel; 10% discount at Halfords on all bikes, cycling accessories, servicing and parts; 15% discounts on monthly and annual bike insurance and 25% discount on new, electric, folding Beat Bikes.
- Eyesight tests vouchers are available for all drivers and computer users which include a discount off selected glasses and when glasses are required solely for VDU use.
- Vouchers for fully funded flu vaccinations through Boots which staff can redeem, arrange and book at a participating Boots Pharmacy of their choice.
- Cyclescheme - The UK's leading provider of the cycle to work scheme and the founding member of the Cycle to Work Alliance. It enables our staff to get a bike tax-free, saving between 25-39%. Participants can choose from over 2,000 retailers and enjoy the ability to shop in-store or online.

-
- We also understand that balancing everyday life together with the requirements of work and home can create pressures for all of us. To support our staff in achieving this balance we have an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) in place. Our EAP is currently provided by Health Assured an independent external organisation who work to a robust professional code of strict confidentiality.
 - They offer both emotional and practical support to our staff when they feel they need it. They also have qualified legal advisors who will assist with any legal matters. They will provide advice and guidance on matters such as writing a will, tenancy and housing concerns, divorce procedures, boundary disputes, probate costs, motoring issues, property and partnership rights and immigration information.
 - Our EAP is available 24/7, 365 days and year. As part of this service we are also able to offer staff access to an app where they can find useful articles and webinars alongside an enhanced set of wellbeing tools and engaging features to support wellbeing and wellness.
 - Within the Councils we have a number of staff trained to provide 'first aid' to staff experiencing mental health issues. Mental Health first aiders are trained to listen, reassure and respond, even in a crisis – and even potentially stop a crisis from happening.
 - They are able to empower others to access the support they might need for successful management of symptoms. This could include self-help books or websites, accessing services via their GP, the EAP, other support groups and more.

Job Description

Post Title	Caseworker
Service Area	Planning First
Team	Planning First
Grade	C
Reports to	Team Leader
Date prepared	Feb 2023

Job Purpose

- Ensure LDC and EBC provide quality service to their customers through collaboration innovation, knowledge and professional excellence.
- Delivering core processes efficiently and effectively.
- Provide a continuously improving service to customers.
- Manage 'rules based' cases/accounts.
- Single point of contact for customers.
- Undertaking case work where the customer has multiple processes/services.

Key Tasks

1. Assist the efficient, effective and consistent processing and resolution of customer case work, identifying and meeting customer needs and ensuring the sharing and dissemination of best practice.
2. Manage rule-based customer and issues effectively and understand when to consult with others.
3. Work with other team members to organise and manage workloads effectively, ensuring that all customer and performance standards and targets are achieved.
4. Access and accurately update all relevant systems, both customer and back office.
5. Actively develop and maintain a good working knowledge of the councils' processes and procedures.

-
6. Reviewing and moderating reports and requests, proactively managing and resolving them where possible or referring them to the relevant team or contractor using scripts and processes when required.
 7. Carrying out a range of other related duties (e.g. taking and processing payments, capturing statistical data or sending correspondence).
 8. To process customer requests and queries about their customer records across all Local Planning Authorities and systems accurately and efficiently, providing a fast, high quality and continuously improving service for customers.
 9. Process a range of applications, cases and reports/complaints, permissions and inspections, and associated activity e.g. site visits, enforcement - referring queries to the Specialist Advisory team when required.
 10. Confidently using a range of systems on a daily basis.
 11. Effective case work and case management including handling related cases for a single customer, assessing risk, identifying potential fraud and working on complex cases in conjunction with Specialist Advisors.

Corporate Accountabilities

1. To promote equality of opportunity in service delivery in line with strategic commitment and corporate policies.
2. To Promote a culture that is supportive of the Council's purpose, aims and values, and to take all reasonable steps to maintain good employee relations.
3. Staff are encouraged to participate fully in promoting a safety culture to protect the safety and health of themselves, colleagues and other people affected by the Council's activities.
4. To understand and apply the council's Data Protection and Data Quality policy and procedures.
5. Any other duties commensurate with the nature of the post.
6. This role is considered to be safety critical and will therefore be subject to the councils' drugs and alcohol policy which is contractual. The policy is available in full to all staff appointed to this role and will be applicable for the duration of their employment in this or any other role considered to be safety critical.
7. To work within the Council's Core Competencies Framework. Central to the delivery of the role are the values and behaviours set out below. These are shared by all employees and applied to everything we do. The bullet points for each competency are examples of performance required:

Core Competencies

Sharing the Vision - Shaping the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understands the Council's purpose, context, goals, objectives and values, and is willing to behave consistently with them.• Knows the strategic direction of the Council and acts in support of it.
Communicating Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contributes to and participates in an organisation where high quality information flows smoothly both internally and externally.• Works positively to gain understanding from others.
Driving Improvement Performance &Results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Takes responsibility and ownership for decisions, actions and results.• Takes actions to improve skills, knowledge and level of contribution.• Seeks and delivers high standards for self, team and Council
Self-Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-motivated and professional.• Is organised and uses time and technology efficiently.• Adopts a flexible approach to change
Delivering for our Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates a desire to identify and give priority to meeting and exceeding the needs of internal and external customers, generating high levels of customer satisfaction
Working Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actively contributes to team working, sharing information, valuing the input of others.• Works co-operatively and is committed to building, productive, positive relationships.• Demonstrates commitment to achieving overall team objectives

This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time it was drawn up. Such details will vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility involved.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS

Essential	Desirable
Good standard of general education including GCSE at grade C or above or equivalent in English and Maths (or qualified by strong relevant experience).	Institute of Customer Services (or equivalent).

TRAINING

Essential	Desirable
Willingness to undertake relevant training.	Document verification and validation.
Commitment to undertake continuing professional development.	Customer Service.

SKILLS & ABILITIES

Essential	Desirable
Proactive with commitment to provision of excellent customer service.	Able to review processes and recommend better ways of working and explore use of new technology.
Ability to prioritise, meet deadlines and work effectively under pressure.	Understanding of social media channels & channel shifts.
Able to communicate effectively both orally and in writing with customers, colleagues, Council Officers and external agencies.	Able to work with teams across an organisation to improve services.
Numerate, methodical and accurate with attention to detail operating in accordance with planning legislation and guidelines.	
Committed to high standards of performance and quality.	
Problem solving and decision making.	

<p>To be confident, resourceful, flexible in approach with the ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team.</p> <p>Ability to actively listen in order to extract and assess important information to ensure that the appropriate arrangements are made to support the customer's needs.</p> <p>Ability to work calmly to handle difficult situations effectively and sensitively.</p> <p>Negotiation skills.</p> <p>IT literate /proficient in MS Office and other relevant systems.</p>	
---	--

KNOWLEDGE

<p>Essential</p> <p>Equalities.</p>	<p>Desirable</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of relevant legislation and processes.</p> <p>Knowledge of the councils' services and procedures.</p>
--	--

EXPERIENCE

<p>Essential</p> <p>Experience of working in a Customer Services environment.</p> <p>Maintenance and updating of databases.</p> <p>Analysing and processing information for reporting.</p>	<p>Desirable</p> <p>Validating and processing planning applications</p> <p>Working in a local authority.</p> <p>Working with external agencies and service providers.</p>
---	--

PHYSICAL, LEGAL AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Essential	Desirable
An engaging, enthusiastic and positive manner with a strong “can do” approach. Willingness to work within the councils’ Core Competency Framework.	Able to undertake site visits.

All staff must be prepared to have an understanding of the Equal Opportunities, Customer Care and Health and Safety policies. Managers in particular, must have a commitment to implement and abide by these policies.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils have been on a transformational journey to fully integrate services. This has involved integrating staff teams, processes and systems whilst still retaining sovereignty of the individual councils.

The employer will be Eastbourne Borough Council.

Duration

This is a permanent contract.

Conditions of Service

The conditions of service for this post are for the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services. The post is graded Band C.

Salary

The spinal column points (SCP) for the post are as follows:

SCP 06	£25,576	SCP 11	£27,704	SCP 16	£30,051
SCP 07	£25,985	SCP 12	£28,155	SCP 17	£30,550
SCP 08	£26,402	SCP 13	£28,615	SCP 18	£31,059
SCP 09	£26,827	SCP 14	£29,085	SCP 19	£31,577
SCP 10	£27,261	SCP 15	£29,563	SCP 20	£32,106

Hours

The hours for this post are 37 a week. These will be worked within operational requirements. Actual starting and finishing times will be agreed with your manager. Within these boundaries the Council operates a flexitime scheme for all but Heads of Service. Details will be supplied to the successful candidate upon appointment.

Place of Work

Your normal place of work will be from home, however you will be required to attend the offices at either Eastbourne or Lewes, or such other places within the boundaries of Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough as may be reasonably required.

In particular, you will be required to:

- Budget for and cover the costs of all expenses incurred (including travel costs) to attend Team Meetings or Events, as well as for training at any of the Councils' sites.
- Budget for and allocate time to travel to appointments in the Councils boundaries where required. For example, visits that need to be performed as part of your role and cannot reasonably or appropriately be carried out remotely.
- Budget for and cover all postage costs (including return postage from Councils sites to your home) for all IT and other work equipment, when this needs to be replaced or updated. This includes but is not limited to, your work phone/headset and your laptop, such as for updates to software that need your laptop onsite connected to the LAN.

-
- Continue to participate in all meetings as reasonably required, such as 121 meetings, team meetings, attendance management meetings, or consultations on any proposed changes, such as restructures. Where possible and appropriate, these meetings will be conducted remotely but where it is not possible or it is deemed inappropriate for the meeting to be conducted remotely, you will be required to cover all expenses incurred (including travel) for your attendance at said meetings.

Probationary Period

All posts are subject to a six months' probationary period where your suitability for the post will be assessed. During this time your progress will be reviewed and discussed with you at regular intervals.

Casual User Car Mileage

You will be entitled to mileage as a casual user on official business. This mileage is reviewed annually.

Annual Leave

The leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March and entitlement varies with length of service. The current minimum entitlement is 26 days. This increases to 30 days in the leave year following completion of five years' service. Subject to the demands of the post, you will normally receive additional paid leave on each Public Holiday.

An employee who starts part way through the year will receive a proportion of the basic holiday entitlement. For operational reasons some Service Areas have to restrict the maximum amount of holiday taken at any one time and its timing in the year. Holiday commitments entered into before taking up an appointment will be honoured wherever possible.

Notice Period

The contract of employment applicable to this post will specify a minimum period of one calendar months, to be given by either side.

Pension

We provide membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to employees aged under 75 who have a contract of employment that is for at least 3 months. The LGPS is a qualifying pension scheme, which means it meets or exceeds the government's standards.

All employees are automatically entered into the Local Government Pension Scheme unless they choose to make alternative provision for pension. Scheme members contribute the percentage of salary as set out in the table below. We will also make an employer's contribution to the scheme.

The contribution bands with effect from 01 April 2025 are:

Pay Range	Contribution
Up to £17,800	5.50%
£17,801 to £28,000	5.80%
£28,001 to £45,600	6.50%

£45,601 to £57,700	6.80%
£57,701 to £81,000	8.50%
£81,001 to £114,800	9.90%
£114,801 - £135,300	10.50%
£135,301 - £203,000	11.40%
£203,001 or more	12.50%

The pay ranges will be increased each year from 01 April in line with inflation. Based on the salary for this role, the contribution will be 5.8%, increasing to 6.5% when paid from SCP 12.