

Northumberland County Council
JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title:	Fair Trading Officer (Level 3)	Director/Division: Public Health/ Public Protection/Business & Consumer Protection Unit	Office Use
Band:	6	Service/Workplace: Public Protection/Loansdean	JE ref: 2011
Responsible to:	Trading Standards Area Manager	Date: June 2011	Manager Level:
Job Purpose: To operate over and enforce legislation affecting a specific range of work activities, and deal with complaints and requests for service and advice in that field. Shared responsibility for the day to day work activities of that section and ensuring that necessary actions are taken to achieve the objectives of the area team and service.			
Resources	Staff	Occasional supervisory responsibility for a technical or support staff member providing area wide services	
	Finance	Shared responsibility for spending of allocated budgets, fee generation and collection in some areas	
	Physical	Operational and technical equipment associated with work area. Maintain premises databases, records and reports for work area. Council/Lease vehicles.	
	Clients	The public, businesses, industry, elected members, local and national government bodies, other enforcement authorities and support organisations.	
Duties and key result areas:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discharge the Council's responsibilities under Trading Standards and consumer protection legislation, Codes of Practice and guidance through the inspection of premises, goods and records, and the sampling of products. 2. Interpret, explain and enforce relevant legal requirements, ensuring appropriate procedures are followed, that parties have a proper understanding of their position and attempting to reach legitimate, mutually agreeable solutions through negotiation. Where necessary take appropriate action where non compliance is detected. 3. Conduct investigations of incidents, persons, premises or activities as required for the specific service area. 4. Prepare legal reports on all case work within area of responsibility, and ensure that the investigation and reporting of alleged offences are dealt with thoroughly and with the minimum of delay. 5. Recommend action to be taken to senior officers in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy. Assist in the maintenance, collation and delivery of records for court. 6. Attend court and give evidence as required. 7. Respond to all requests for service in an efficient and effective manner carrying out the appropriate actions in line with the Public Protection service plan, statutory and legal requirements and recognised best practice. 8. Provide professional advice to service users on Trading Standards and consumer protection matters, which meets legal requirements, professional best practice, corporate standards, and in-house procedures. 9. Undertake specific projects or initiatives within the given terms of reference or objectives. 10. Implement Council policies and ensure operating procedures and guidance are followed. 11. To provide information and guidance on good practice to encourage compliance and support businesses. 12. Maintain all relevant records in accordance with the Service's requirements and procedures and assist with the collation of performance statistics. 13. Assist the Area Manager in service planning. 14. Assist in the monitoring of relevant budget headings to ensure effective spend against established targets and compliance with financial regulations. 15. Develop effective and constructive relationships with colleagues and external contacts in order to promote effective partnership arrangements for the delivery of high quality services. 16. Ensure a professional service level is delivered, be able to demonstrate the section's performance against service plans, adapt the service area in response to legislative change and develop the service in the future, responding to customer needs and council priorities. 17. Participate fully in quality initiatives and the strategic development of the Public Protection Service 18. Participate as necessary in emergency actions / response in areas outside the normal work area. 			

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this job description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Work Arrangements

Transport requirements:	Able to meet the transport requirements of the post. Travel throughout and occasionally outside the County area.
Working patterns:	Flexible hours to ensure duties are fulfilled, including (occasional) evening, night and weekends and Bank Holidays. Lone working. Emergency response
Working conditions:	Office, outdoors, inspecting retail, catering, industrial and commercial premises. Some work will take place in dirty, unpleasant environments , including spaces with dead animals, and in the open in all weathers

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

Post Title: Fair Trading Officer (Level 3)	Service: Public Protection Service	Ref: 2011
Essential	Desirable	Assess by
Knowledge and Qualifications		
<p>A knowledge and interest in Trading Standards and Animal Health At least five GCSE's (Grade C or above) or equivalent Committed to study for the appropriate Certificates of Competence. Certificates must be obtained within 3 years of taking up the post. A general knowledge and awareness of the structure of, functions of and topical issues facing local government Vocational Training in relevant service areas Has a good knowledge of relevant legislation, major case law, opinions, professional best practice and codes of practice</p>	<p>Degree standard of general education or equivalent Relevant Certificates of Competence or equivalent Diploma in Consumer Affairs and Trading Standards or equivalent Thorough knowledge and understanding of relevant service legislation, case law, opinions, codes of practice, professional best practice and contemporary issues. Evidence of continual professional development in a related area</p>	
Experience		
<p>Experience of local government Committed to pursuing a career in trading standards. At least two years recent and relevant professional experience related to the post in at least two of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trading Standards ● Enforcement or advice ● Legal issues <p>Experience in engaging effectively with others Experience of working with other professional & technical staff Experience of working with equipment and tools relevant to technical area Experience of investigating complaints/alleged offences, including defendant interviewing, taking witness statements, obtaining evidence, taking and submitting samples A breadth of work experience in selecting and applying a full range of techniques across a range of areas of Trading Standards functions.</p>	<p>Experience of leading specific projects and investigations Experience at working at a more senior level Experience in project management/budget responsibilities Experience of building productive partnerships Experience of presentations using variety of media Evidenced specialism in a particular service area Broad range of professional experience in more than one field of Trading Standards/Animal Health Experience in designing and drafting policies, procedures and other technical documents Experience of giving evidence in Court</p>	
Skills and competencies		
<p>The ability to work as part of a team Commitment to provide a quality service Commitment to develop skills and knowledge To maintain a professional demeanour in all situations Pleasant and approachable manner Ability to engage effectively with internal and external partners to effectively delivery services Wide range of interpersonal skills Ability to keep accurate and confidential information Numerate and Literate</p>	<p>Maintains a commitment to continuous professional development Works without supervision Proven ability to lead specific projects and investigations Ability to work at more senior level Ability to act as a coach or mentor Ability to produce training documents and provide training to members of staff, businesses and the public</p>	

<p>Excellent communication skills and ability to demonstrate that advice and information can be given in a clear authoritative manner and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences within the workplace and the professional work area</p> <p>Keyboard skills and familiarity with PC application software</p> <p>A proven ability in problem solving</p> <p>Summarises and presents complex and complicated information in a clear and logical manner.</p> <p>Produces clear, concise and accurate reports without undue delay.</p> <p>Undertake detailed projects and/or more complex investigations across a wide range of areas, requiring defendant interviewing, taking witness statements, obtaining evidence, taking and submitting samples</p> <p>Proficient in the use of Trading Standards and NCC computer systems</p> <p>Ability to adopt a pragmatic and innovate approach in new situations.</p> <p>Able to influence and persuade others.</p> <p>Works will be allocated by supervisor however, works mainly without supervision and manages and prioritises own work day to day/ time effectively to meet deadlines</p> <p>Self- reliant in most professional areas</p> <p>Demonstrates a high level of independent decision making and sound judgement</p> <p>Process detailed information</p> <p>Determines own system of work within the priorities agreed with the supervisor.</p> <p>Input from other professionals is sought as necessary.</p> <p>Engenders confidence in senior managers and others</p> <p>Ability to use relevant technical equipment</p> <p>Takes a keen interest and supports the team and less experienced staff in their work</p> <p>Ability to promote and market the trading standards service to internal and external clients.</p>		
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<p>Physical, mental and emotional demands</p>		
<p>Ability to work in cramped spaces or in awkward positions in the course of inspections.</p> <p>Ability to work in unpleasant environments and/or adverse weather conditions.</p> <p>Prolonged sitting for example at a desk, using a PC or driving.</p> <p>Standing and walking generally in the course of inspections, enforcement. Occasional prolonged walking over rough terrain.</p> <p>Lifting and carrying equipment for example briefcase/inspection bag, sampling equipment, cool box, technical equipment.</p> <p>Visual attention for prolonged periods when conducting inspections, driving, during presentations, meetings & training.</p> <p>Close visual attention when examining samples.</p> <p>Visual attention and mental concentration for extended periods daily when; for example, reading incoming post; writing reports; using a PC for data entry or writing; reading documents, reports, technical advice.</p> <p>Mental demands in balancing and prioritising a number of conflicting work demands due to deadlines, frequent interruptions in the form of emails, telephone calls and face to face meetings from work colleagues, staff, members of the public, and businesses etc, unexpected reactive work, demands from government agencies, and the need to respond to an urgent and serious problem.</p>		

<p>Emotional demands in occasionally dealing with individuals in connection with trading standards matters who do not exhibit normal rational behaviour or have personal problems, and are unpredictable, unwilling to accept alternative points of view or comprehend the implications of their actions.</p> <p>Emotional demands in occasionally dealing with business people, members of the public or others who are angry following enforcement action or notification of intention to prosecute.</p> <p>Emotional demands in occasionally dealing with persons making an official complaint about a Council service who may be angry, distressed or disturbed.</p>		
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Other		
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<p>Able to meet the transport requirements of the post.</p> <p>Evening, night, early morning, and weekend work will be necessary, occasionally at short notice.</p>		
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Key to assessment methods; (a) application form, (i) interview, (r) references, (t) ability tests (q) personality questionnaire (g) assessed group work, (p) presentation, (o) others e.g. case studies/visits