

**Post Specification**

# Post Specification - Key Information

* **Post Title: Interim Strategic Lead – Home Improvement Agency**
* **Date: January 2025**
* **Post Group Number: 7998**
* **Job Family: Thriving Communities**
* **Job Family Role Profile: Organisational Support**
* **Final Grade: OS17**

To be read in conjunction with the job family role profile.

# Service Area Description

This post sits within the Directorate of Thriving Communities and provides an exciting opportunity to shape the way Westmorland and Furness Council delivers Disabled Facilities Grants and Housing Retro Fit schemes to our people via its Home Improvement Agency.

Home Improvement Agencies are local, trusted organisations that help older, disabled and vulnerable people, including children with disabilities to live a good life for longer. They offer reliable information and advice and support people to make modifications to their homes as their health and needs change through later years especially. (Brief description of the service area where the job is situated)

The role will also take responsibility for managing and supervising the HIA budget, including the housing retro fit programmes and seeking funding opportunities to help to deliver and develop the service, ensuring appropriate allocation and spend, taking account of local factors and strategic objectives.

# Purpose of this Post

* To undertake a leadership role, overseeing the shaping and delivery of the Home Improvement Agency across Westmorland and Furness Council, managing funding and maximising opportunities that are available, to enhance the service provided to customers and maximise the performance of the service against its statutory responsibilities
* To lead on the development, and delivery of associated policies in relation to the HIA, Disabled Facilities Grants and Housing Retrofit
* Work with key internal and external stakeholders, including the Assistant Director of Housing, and the Senior Manager of Housing Standards and Services, the Portfolio Holder(s), Locality Boards, Senior Managers and service leaders, to shape the strategic direction of the service
* The successful candidate will develop business cases and strategies to shape how the service will be delivered by the Council, in line with the vision and objectives of the Council Plan.
* Cross directorate working will be critical in shaping how services will be delivered in a safe, cost effective and efficient manner
* To ensure cost effective provision of comprehensive services to meet strategic responsibilities and make decisions that align with the Council Plan and priorities and take account of local factors

# Key Job Specific Accountabilities

* Develop strategies and business cases to develop and improve the service to meet the needs of our communities, whilst providing best value for money
* Develop partnerships, agreements and contracts for the delivery of services with external organisations/funders and work across sectors such as health, social care and children’s services providers and also the relevant community and voluntary sectors to deliver the councils strategic objectives
* Investigating, scrutinising and pursuing opportunities for value for money use of Better Care Funding for the Home Improvement Agency
* Lead the development of policy, business and strategic planning activities to develop the services and through partnership working
* To take overall responsibility and management of the Home Improvement Agency, leading on the review, publication, delivery, monitoring and ongoing reporting to members and portfolio holder
* Monitor changes in legislation, legal/case law developments, and best practice relevant to the statutory duties of the service and prepare appropriate guidance for officers, Members, and key stakeholders so they are fully informed and to ensure high quality service delivery
* To manage and supervise Home Improvement Agency budgets and grant funding across Westmorland and Furness, to ensure cost effective provision of comprehensive services to meet strategic responsibilities and make decisions that align with the Council Plan and priorities and take account of local factors
* Proactively seek funding opportunities to enhance services, preparing and submitting bids as required, monitoring and reviewing performance and reporting back to funders as required
* Provide accurate and timely data and information to senior leaders and managers, members, Central Government, external funders, and key stakeholders
* Assist the Senior Manager of Housing Standards and Services with the implementation of strategy, other service related plans, objectives, policies and processes to deliver council priorities

*Please note: Annual targets will be discussed during the appraisal process.*

# Key Facts and Figures of the Post

* **Budget Responsibilities**: Significant - Disabled Facilities Grant; Home Improvement Agency budgets including contracts; Housing retro fit budgets (Warm Homes)
* **Staff Management Responsibilities:** Direct line management of service staff across Westmorland and Furness
* **Other:** None

# Essential Criteria

* **Qualifications:** Relevant professional qualification or demonstrable equivalent experience
* **Knowledge:** Extensive knowledge of some or all aspects of the service area, including statutory responsibilities and housing legislation
* Knowledge of Disabled Facilities Grants; Better care funding; Home Improvement Agencies, Housing Retrofit, and associated funding and grants
* Understanding the wider social, political, and economic environment and the impact on the issues and challenges facing local government
* Knowledge and understanding of service standards and performance criteria
* **Experience:** Experience of working in housing, or a related field
* Experience of managing budgets and grant funding
* Experience of developing new services and initiatives and managing change
* Experience of managing staff across a large area
* A successful track record in developing effective working alliances together with a proven ability to network
* Experience developing external partnerships, with other organisations and stakeholders, to deliver key strategies and programmes
* Experience of producing, reviewing and monitoring strategies and policies to support and improve service delivery and in response to internal or legislative changes
* Experience of managing projects and programmes.
* Experience of producing management reports
* Experience in compiling and submitting data for statutory returns and in relation to funding criteria
* **Expertise:** A successful track record in delivering efficiencies and ensuring value for money services
* Ability to make decisions and take responsibility for actions
* Excellent communicator with the ability to challenge and negotiate and engage with a wide range of audiences

# Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

* This post requires a DBS check.
* The level of check required is *(remove others not required):*
  + DBS Basic

# Job Working Circumstances

* **Emotional Demands:** Will involve working on multiple priorities at the same time
* Involvement in a decision making, which may receive strong opinion and / or opposition from those potentially affected and the wider community
* **Physical Demands:** Post will require concentration for extended periods of time during reporting periods
* **Working Conditions:** Minimal but will be required to travel around the Council area to the various anchor building and other offices
* **Other Factors:** Full driving licence and access to a car as there is a requirement to travel throughout the Westmorland and Furness region, and to work outside of normal office hours