 **Role Profile**

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| **Job Title** | Benefit Officer | | |
| **Team:** | Revenues & Benefits | **Grade:** | 6 |
| **Reports to:** | Benefits Manager | | |
| **Date:** | February 2025 | | |

Every role at Arun contributes towards our [**Vision – *A better future***](https://www.arun.gov.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jijm4n18990.pdf&ver=20441), and every employee strives to embrace and champion our [**Values**](https://arungovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/staff/Useful%20documents/Arun%20values%20explanation.pdf#search=arun%20values)**:**

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**Overall job purpose:**

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| To work as part of the Arun Revenues and Benefits team within the Services Directorate, delivering a first class, professional service, using a range of communication methods, and technical skills to ensure that all customer contact and Benefits & Revenues transactions are completed and resolved to a high standard. |

**Key areas of focus:**

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| 1. | To process and maintain all Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction applications; including changes of circumstance, overpayments, customer correspondence; all in accordance with legislation, regulations and local policies and procedures.  To assist the customer when making new applications to Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Payments. |
| 2. | Set up new Council Tax accounts and interpret amendments to customers’ existing accounts; accurately updating their records in accordance with legislation, regulations and local policies and procedures. **This is only in relation to what is required to process benefits claims only.** |
| 3. | Issue correspondence to customers by the most appropriate method including bills, benefit notification letters, reminders, overpayment letters and any other documentation. |
| 4. | Deal promptly and courteously with customer enquiries, however received. |
| 5. | Maintain computerised records ensuring data held is accurate and up to date. |
| 6 | To arrange and carry out home visits with the Revenues Visiting Officer to vulnerable customers where all alternative methods have been explored. |
| 7. | Maintain own knowledge of the relevant legislation, regulations, case law, policies and procedures |
| 8 | To carry out benefit work to assist in the Subsidy return where required to by the Benefit Manager. |
| 9. | Liaise with third parties including landlords and the DWP. |
| 10. | Participate in system testing and annual billing in relation to benefits systems. |
| 11. | To assist in delivering central government welfare/grant initiatives as required. |
| 12. | Give basic advice on welfare benefits or signpost to a relevant agency. Identify sensitive/vulnerable cases and refer to various support organisations as appropriate. |
| 13. | Proactively work as part of the team, be flexible and adapt to changing work demands, providing support across the entire Revenues and Benefits department. |
| 14 | To provide on-the-job mentoring & minor training to new staff on a one-to-one basis following their initial start-up training where required to by the Senior Benefits Officer. |
| 15 | Refer cases of suspected fraud to internal audit or the DWP as appropriate. |
| 16 | Participate in reviews of the service, helping identify areas for improvement and savings and where working practices could be changed to increase customer service and efficiency. |
| 17 | To comply at all times with the General Data Protection Act, relating to personal information held by the Council. Any employee who mis-uses, accesses or discloses personal data relating to a living individual without checking that it is to be used for an authorised purpose relevant to the Authority, may be prosecuted in a Criminal Court, as well as facing disciplinary action. This includes the Department of Work & Pensions data on our systems. |
| 18 | Any other duties that are appropriate to this post. |

**Role Requirements**

The following outlines the criteria for this post. Applicants will be shortlisted and interviewed to assess if they meet the criteria for the role.

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| **Criteria** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Qualifications and experience** |  |  |
| English/Mathematics GCSE or equivalent grade 4 and above. | E |  |
| IRRV qualification |  | D |
| Experience in processing housing and Council Tax benefit claims/changes in circumstances and Council Tax enquiries or in debt recovery**\*** | E |  |
| IT literate with experience of benefits software packages and Windows-based applications particularly use of spreadsheets and databases |  | D |
| Experience of using NEC software (or equivalent) and associated systems |  | D |
| Experience of working within a team. | E |  |
| Have experience of dealing with confrontational/difficult customers | E |  |
| **Knowledge** |  |  |
| Working knowledge of the Housing and Council Tax benefit regulations and/or knowledge of the Council Tax administration. | E |  |
| Working knowledge of the evidence requirements in support of claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. | E |  |
| Working knowledge of Council Tax | E |  |
| Working knowledge and understanding of debt recovery procedures | E |  |
| Knowledge of the criteria for claiming various state/welfare benefits. | E |  |
| Knowledge of following established procedures with reference to relevant guidance manuals codes of practice and applied to standard situations. | E |  |
| Maintaining accurate customer information and records | E |  |
| **Behaviours** |  |  |
| Consistency: Continually maintains standards and behaviours that lead to producing high quality work and delivering on promises and commitments. | E |  |
| Adaptability: Responds to challenges and change with an open mind, shifting priorities and re-focusing. | E |  |
| Innovative: Is creative when finding solutions at work, using initiative to improve service delivery. | E |  |
| Approachability: Supports others and recognises the impact their behaviour and attitude has on them. | E |  |
| **Competencies** |  |  |
| Collaborative working:  Working together to achieve a shared goal.  Builds effective relationships with internal and external customers. | E |  |
| Communication (written/oral):  Able to communicate clearly, appropriately, and respectfully with colleagues and customers. | E |  |
| Customer focus:  Takes pride in and is committed to delivering high quality services. Identifies and clarifies individual needs. | E |  |
| Decision making:  Able to make fair and logical decisions using policies/procedures and available evidence and be clear in the rationale. | E |  |
| Industry knowledge:  Keen to keep abreast of knowledge and best practice specific to the role/area | E |  |
| Initiative:  Understands what needs to be done and  accomplishes it proactively and with minimal supervision. | E |  |
| Organisation skills:  Plans and prioritises own work with reference to line manager. Makes the best use of own time and meets deadlines | E |  |
| **Other** | Yes | No |
| Does this role require a Basic DBS check? | Y |  |
| Will the post holder be required to take card payments via MOTO. (If yes – needs basic DBS). | Y |  |
| Is this a Politically restricted post? |  | N |
| Does this role require any out of hours/ weekend/ evening/ rota work? |  | N |
| Does this role require a driver’s license and access to a vehicle? |  | N |
| Does this role attract an essential car user allowance? |  | N |
| Does this role attract a market supplement? |  | N |
| Does this role require a uniform? |  | N |

\*There is some flexibility on the experience requirements if the individual has transferrable skills with the scope for training.