

RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOB PROFILE

Post No.

Post Title: Benefits Officer

Unit/Team: Revenues and Benefits

Grade: E

Service: Finance and Performance

Reports to: Benefits Team Leader

Issue Date:

PURPOSE OF THIS ROLE

The purpose of this role is to work with clients to support them to pay their rent and council tax through the provision of financial support. This includes the administration of Discretionary Financial Support Schemes and Information and signposting regarding financial inclusion support.

1. ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction

- 1.1.1 To interview, learn the financial needs and provide high quality, tailored advice to all people that approach the Council for guidance on their benefits entitlement (administered by both national and local government).
- 1.1.2 To assess claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction in accordance with national legislation, Council policies and procedures.
- 1.1.3 To work with clients to resolve queries relating to their claim for Housing Benefit and or Council Tax Reduction.
- 1.1.4 To undertake in-claim / accuracy reviews to ensure that the right award is made to the right person at the right time.
- 1.1.5 To review or supersede decisions where new information has been provided by the client.
- 1.1.6 Referring claims of suspected irregularity to the Single Fraud Investigation Service and responding to requests for information / evidence and queries from the SFIS and implementing investigation outcome decisions.

1.2 Discretionary Financial Support Schemes

- 1.2.1 To work directly with clients to administer claims for discretionary financial support with regards to Discretionary Housing Payments, Homelessness Prevention Grants and Loans, or any other scheme that may be introduced nationally or locally.
- 1.2.2 To assess claims for discretionary financial support in accordance with national legislation, Council policies and procedures.

1.4 Service Delivery and Improvement

- 1.4.1 To work across the Revenues and Benefits Team to ensure that services are robust, harmonious, and meet the needs of clients
- 1.4.2 To work with the Benefits Team Leader to ensure that there is a holistic approach to service delivery putting the client at the centre of what we deliver.
- 1.4.3 To provide timely and robust key-performance data to identify blockages to service delivery at an early stage.
- 1.4.4 To create a culture of continuous improvement within the team, with all team members involved and responsible for taking the service forward.
- 1.4.5 To be innovative and creative with trialling new ways of delivering a service that meets the needs of clients.
- 1.4.6 Actively contribute to the future development of the service
- 1.4.7 Working with others across the Revenues and Benefits team to make best use of IT solutions to assist the work of the team, ensuring it meets our needs and the needs of clients.
- 1.4.8 To integrate equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices into all aspects of the post and in particular, work with disadvantaged groups and socially excluded communities to increase resident activity and involvement.

1.5 External Relations

- 1.5.1 Promote new and strengthen existing partnerships in order to publicise the service and improve services to clients.
- 1.5.2 Represent the Council at meetings with internal departments and external organisations
- 1.5.3 Arrange and attend case conferences involving other agencies and statutory bodies.
- 1.5.4 To represent the Council at Tribunal and Court as and when required.

1.7 Development of Self and Others

- 1.7.1 To ensure that you are up to date with legislation and best practices for the service area.
- 1.7.2 Demonstrate commitment, vision and leadership to delivery of the Revenues and Benefits Team aims and objectives
- 1.7.3 Take responsibility for identifying your own development and training requirements (technical and interpersonal skills based)
- 1.7.4 Strive for continuous improvement of yourself and the team
- 1.7.5 To actively engage in the 1:1 Support and Supervision Meetings framework

1.8 Customer Care

Ensure that the Council's "CANDO" values, Equality and Diversity policies are embedded in service delivery.

2. OTHER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Any other reasonable duties as requested by your manager, in line with individual skills and knowledge, including one off projects

- 2.2 To support the efficient uses of resources within the Housing Advice and Benefits Team you may be required to undertake other roles within the team commensurate with your grade.

3. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Coaching of less experienced members of the team

4. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsible for protection of public funds through correct administration of the benefits system and other financial assistance.

5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSETS AND DATA

Responsibility for all the assets within the team, such as IT and office furniture and equipment, and data, especially confidential personal data of all customers

6. EXTENT OF PUBLIC CONTACT

- Residents
- The Police and Department for Families and Children.
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Voluntary and statutory agencies.
- GP's, Health Visitors, Mental Health Resource Centre, Occupational Therapists, Housing Associations.
- Other local authorities, solicitors and other professional organisations.
- CAB and Mediation Services.
- Other services within the Council and Senior Officers within Housing and other services.
- Councillors and the MP.

7. WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT

Hybrid working

There is a requirement to undertake home visits to support clients where required.

Travel to and from external training courses and meetings.

You will be required to have a Basic Disclosure and Barring Service check.

8. CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff have to act within the Council's rules and follow all reasonable management requirements. These are contained within: The Council's Standing Orders, Employment Policies, Constitution and Code of Conduct for Employees. Other documents may be introduced at times setting out rules of the Council. These will cover responsibilities and requirements for the following:

Financial Accounting
Equality and Diversity
Health and Safety
Risk Management
Anti- Fraud
Data Quality and Data Protection
Business Continuity
Major Emergency Plan
Procurement and Contract Management
Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Copies of the relevant rules and policy are available on the staff intranet or from your manager

In addition, all employees are expected to behave in line with our Values and Behaviours and challenge other employees whose behaviour is against our values.

9. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

Refer to Person Specification attached.

Signed as agreed:

Manager

Date

Postholder

Date

PERSON SPECIFICATION



Post: Benefits Officer

For effective performance of the duties of the post the postholder will be able to demonstrate that they have the skills and/or knowledge detailed in 'Essential Criteria'.

The criteria to be measured are function specific and are highlighted

Criteria	Essential/ Desirable	Method of Assessment
A good understanding of the legislation used for decision making regarding Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Financial Support schemes administered by the team.	E	A, I
Extensive experience of assessing claims for Housing Benefit and or Council Tax Reduction	E	A, I
Excellent listening and communication skills with a wide range of people of all ages and background	E	A, I,
Experience of explaining complex issues in a face to face, telephone based or video-based environment	E	A, I
Good time management skills and the ability to work effectively under pressure and prioritise to meet deadlines	E	A, I,
Ability to work in partnership, network, influence, problem solve, overcome barriers and apply solution focused approaches	E	A, I
The ability to work well within a team and under own initiative and of maintaining professional boundaries with clients and partner agencies	E	A, I
A good understanding of the importance of confidentiality, safe practice and safeguarding	E	A, I,
A good standard of education to enable the creation of letters undertaking basic arithmetic	E	D
Full driving licence and access to a vehicle to undertake home visits across the Borough.	D	A, D

Application	A
Interview	I
Test (written, presentation, practical – e.g. word processing)	T
References	R
Documentary – e.g. certificates	D