



Business Rates Officer

LEVEL:	7
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	Revenues and Benefits Financial Analyst
SALARY:	£28,598 to £32,061
LOCATION:	Totnes / Tavistock / Agile Working
CONTRACT:	Permanent

Job Purpose

The postholder has specific responsibility for maintaining and safeguarding the Council's Business Rates base through establishing liability and dealing with collection and enforcement. This includes providing in-depth advice, support and information to businesses about valuation matters, reliefs and exemptions.

The postholder is also responsible for processing Valuation List and Rating List schedules from the Valuation Office and ensuring the Council's Business Rates and Council Tax records are accurately maintained.

The postholder also provides support to the administration of any current or future Business Improvement Districts in South Hams and West Devon.

Role Profile

- To effectively maintain the Councils' systems through information received from customers, agents, internal departments and external agencies.
- Assess liability for Business Rates and correctly bill including applying appropriate reliefs and exemptions.
- To assist in all stages of the billing and recovery process including dealing with customer enquiries which arise by email, telephone, letter and in-person providing an excellent, polite and courteous service at all times. To include promoting payment by direct debit.
- Understand and be able to explain to customers how changes in rateable value impact the amount they are required to pay.
- To ensure the effective administration of empty properties by making necessary proactive enquiries with estate agents, solicitors and property owners.
- Identify and refer properties needing a visit to the Revenues Inspections Officers.
- Liaise with the Valuation Office Agency regarding amendments to the Rating List and ensure that all schedules and transitional relief certificates are actioned promptly, thus ensuring the Council's rateable value is accurate and income from Business Rates is fully realised.



- To ensure all amendments to the Valuation List are actioned accurately and promptly so the Council's income from Council Tax is accurate and fully realised.
- To assess applications for mandatory and discretionary rate relief in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and Council policy guidance and procedures.
- To provide technical advice to/attend court hearings with the Councils' representative and discuss cases and offer advice and guidance to business ratepayers who may attend.
- Ensure all activities and decisions result in the maximisation of revenue due to the Councils.
- To prioritise workload to achieve service targets and collection rates ensuring that a proactive approach is taken where there is a need to contact customers for further evidence or information in support of their account or debt.
- Negotiate and make arrangements to discharge debt owed to the Councils, including determining the most appropriate payment method for the business rate payer and the Councils.
- Where necessary ensure appropriate enforcement action is taken including referring cases to enforcement agents for collection and identifying accounts where alternatives such as charging orders and committal action are the most appropriate enforcement remedy.
- Ensure that any suspicions of irregular or fraudulent application for discounts, reliefs and exemptions are referred for further investigation.
- To provide support for the administration of any current and future Business Improvement Districts in South Hams and West Devon.
- Provide ad-hoc support for projects to improve service delivery.
- To perform any other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope, level and purpose of this role profile.

Person Specification

Qualifications

Essential	Desirable
Minimum 5 GCSEs or equivalent, including Maths and English.	

Knowledge / Experience

Essential	Desirable
Experience of working in Revenues or a similar environment.	Recent experience of using NEC and NECDM software.



Good working knowledge of business rates legislation and best practice including the enforcement process.	Sufficient knowledge to challenge valuation decisions with corrective action being taken where appropriate.
Good working knowledge of Council Tax.	
Experience of using Revenues and Benefits software including an electronic document management system.	
Experience of dealing with customers, often in difficult circumstances.	

Skills / Abilities

Essential	Desirable
Effective communication skills, both verbal and written.	
Able to understand and apply complex and changing legislation.	
Able to remain calm under pressure.	
Able to prioritise, meet deadlines and performance targets and work effectively under pressure	
Accuracy and attention to detail.	
Proactive approach to work and committed to providing excellent customer service	
Proficient in the use of ICT including Microsoft applications and specialist systems	
Able to adapt to changing priorities and have a flexible approach to work.	
Committed team player who can also work on their own initiative to complete tasks and achieve targets.	



General / Other

Essential	Desirable
All staff must be prepared to have an understanding of the Equal Opportunities, Customer Care and Health and Safety policies.	
A basic DBS check will be required before appointment.	

General

The list is not exhaustive; this role profile sets out the duties of the post at the time it was drawn up. Such details may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility involved.

Safeguarding Children & Adults at Risk

The Council has a Safeguarding Policy which outlines its responsibilities and the responsibilities of its employees. All employees need to be aware of this Policy and comply with the contents.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

The Council has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy which outlines its commitment to creating a culture that respects and values each other's differences, promotes dignity, equality, diversity and inclusion, encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential and combats prejudice, discrimination and harassment.

Staff Code of Conduct

The public, our communities, customers and colleagues are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all people working for the Councils. The Code of Conduct sets out the general standards of conduct expected of everyone working for the Councils.

Climate Change

Contribute to the Council's corporate objectives in relation to climate change by considering the environmental impact of individual and collective actions, working to reduce resource and energy use, minimise waste, and anticipate and enhance the efficiency of services in response to a changing climate, wherever possible, to help the council reduce its own carbon footprint and that of the district.