Job Description

Service:	Revenues and Benefits
Job title:	Senior Business Rates Officer
Grade:	D
Hours of work:	37
Responsible to:	Business Rates & Valuation Team Leader
Responsible for	
Direct reports:	0
Indirect reports:	1
Budget:	0

Purpose of Post:

To be responsible for:

- Collecting what the Council is owed in Business Rates – ensuring that billing & collection is delivered and passing relevant debts to the Recovery Team
- Making decisions on payment arrangements and granting reductions, reliefs and exemptions
- Providing technical and legal advice to customers, officers, Members and external organisations

Key Deliverables:

1. To maximise income from Business Rates and Council Tax (composite/new properties) by following the agreed protocols and practices of the Council.
2. Interpret legislation and apply case law to ensure correct liability is determined. This includes keeping up to date regarding new legislation and case law.
3. Ensuring that customers receive all they are entitled to – making decisions on when to award reductions, reliefs and exemptions following necessary investigation.
4. Deal with the more complex daily processes escalated from other teams including queries by telephone, written correspondence or face to face, from a range of customers, e.g., managing director of an international company, land agent, or insolvency practitioner.
5. Allocate work to members of the team and provide guidance and support to meet priorities and statutory deadlines.
6. Negotiate payments and special arrangements with ratepayers to maximise income for the Council taking having considered the specific circumstances of the account.
7. Liaise with external bodies such as the Valuation Office to ensure that HDC records are accurate and up to date to ensure Business Rates are delivered correctly.
8. To liaise with other departments to share information and give advice in accordance with the Data Protection and other relevant acts and to work in partnership with other internal departments to maximise the council's overall income.
9. Administer and monitor accounts that are subject to insolvency action by the Insolvency Service or private insolvency practitioners to maximise prospects of receiving dividends and take action as appropriate on the account.

This job description is intended only as a guide to the range of duties involved. The post holder will need to be flexible and adaptable in order to respond to other duties that may be required from time to time and the changes and developments within HDC.

Knowledge and Qualifications The minimum knowledge required to undertake this role and any qualifications or training essential for the role	• Good technical/legislative knowledge of Council Tax, NNDR legislation and awareness of Benefits • PC skills and use of proprietary software including Word and Excel • Ability to explain customer accounts over the telephone, face to face, or in writing, requiring sound arithmetic skills coupled with tact and diplomacy. • An excellent and knowledgeable team worker capable of multi-tasking and working to deadlines. • Time management and prioritization skills. • Knowledge of Planning Procedures
Experience Experience the person would need to do the job	• Experience of dealing with a variety of external agencies involved in administration of National Non-Domestic Rating, such as Valuation Office Agency, Rating Agents, Insolvency Companies, Ratepayers and members of the public. • Knowledge of the Local Taxation billing and collection processes from initial bill to Court action. • Experience in dispute resolution. • Supervisory Experience, the role will require providing guidance in the absence of the Team Leader. • Experience of using Microsoft office packages, and preferably NEC and Enterprise
Skills and Abilities Specific skills the applicant would need to do the job	• Clear and concise written and spoken communication skills. • Can present written information in a structured and balanced way appropriate to the needs of the reader. • Is able to work with the customer in arrears situations to understand their issues to negotiate a plan to move forward that will bring the best

	outcome to the Council and customer. • Is able to use analytical and investigative skills to understand complex changes to properties, e.g., the implications to reliefs when a Rateable Value has been changed retrospectively or when deciding on retrospective occupation of a property. • Can carry out complex financial calculations to determine entitlement to various reliefs.
Decision Making and Impact on Others What impact the reasons made by the post holder would have on others across the Council	• Determines who is liable to pay Business Rates under the terms of lease agreement/lease re-assignment/licence to occupy to ensure the correct party is billed. • Investigates and makes decisions on disputed liability cases by requesting appropriate evidence and scrutinizing legal documents (leases/licences/other agreements) • Investigates potential rate avoidance schemes by arranging a visit, carrying out internet research or querying matters with the ratepayer dependent on the circumstances of the case. • Provides first line advice and guidance for officer on team. • Assists the Team Leader when reviewing cases prior to deciding which should be contested in court. • Uses discretion to makes decisions on payment arrangements with debtors to ensure that income to HDC is maximised based on the individual circumstances of the customer. • Monitors occupation and liability of businesses within the Business Improvement District to ensure that

	they are billed correctly and in a timely manner.
Communication with Internal and External Customers What customers the applicant would be in contact with in the job	**Example:** Predominantly external customers – high visibility with members of the public Where is the focus of this role in their team, other teams or across the council Internal customer contact 20% External customer contact 80%
Personal Attributes and Other Requirements In this section please list any other qualities you are looking for from the applicant	**Example:** Willing to travel and occasionally work unsocial hours Be a good team worker demonstrating loyalty and commitment to the organisation and team members
HDC values	**Example:** The values outlined below reflect our collective positive attitude and how all staff is expected to work together as one team. **Inspiring:** We have genuine pride and passion for public service; doing the best we can for customers matters to us all. **Collaborative:** We achieve much more by working together, and this allows us to provide the best service for customers. **Accountable:** We take personal responsibility for our work and our decisions, and we deliver on our commitments to customers. **Respectful:** We respect people's differences and are considerate to their needs. **Enterprising**: We use drive and energy to challenge the norm and adapt to changing circumstances. We are always ready for challenges and opportunities, and we embrace them.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults

Huntingdonshire District Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

(The above lines need to remain in all JD. The lines below, delete as applicable – this is for roles where you are working with vulnerable adults or children)

- Ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults
- Demonstrates understanding of safeguarding issues
- Appreciates the significance of safeguarding and interprets this accurately for all individual children and young people/vulnerable adults whatever their life circumstances.
- Has a good understanding of the Safeguarding agenda
- Can demonstrate an ability to contribute towards a safe environment
- Is up-to-date with legislation and current events
- Can demonstrate how s/he has promoted ‘best practice’
- Shows a personal commitment to safeguarding children

13/03/2024