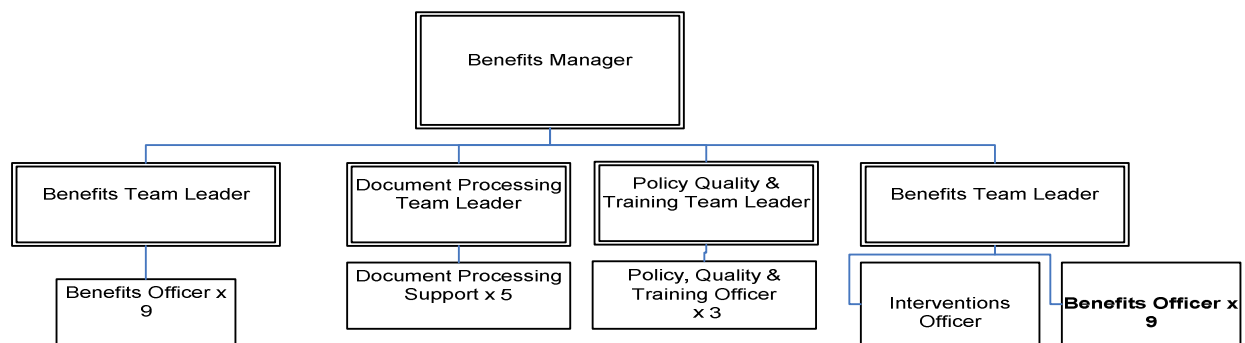


Job Description

Job Title:	Benefits Officer	JE Ref:
Post Number:	RB6227	
Service/ Department:	Revenues and Benefits	Section: Benefits
Salary band:	Band 6	
Location:	<p>You will be based at the Town Hall Watford or any such other place of employment within the remit of the Shared Revenues and Benefits Service as may be required.</p> <p>You will be required to work at :</p> <p>Three Rivers Benefits Surgery, Rickmansworth Three Rivers Benefits Surgery, South Oxhey</p> <p>In addition, Benefits Officers will be required to visit claimants in their homes. It is also envisaged that home working opportunities will apply to this role.</p>	
Hours per week:	37 hours per week.	
Travel	The post holder will be expected to travel to achieve the requirements of the role.	
Payment Allowance:	Inner Fringe Weighting allowance Essential car user allowance and mileage (for those taking on a mobile role)	
Responsible to:	Benefits Team Leader / Benefits Manager	
Responsible for:	Not applicable	

Place in Department Structure Chart :



Purpose of Role:

- To provide a first class service to the public in the granting of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit
- To assist the Benefits Team Leader and the Benefits Manager in implementing the relevant technologies and new ways of working in a way that meets the needs of both organisations.

Key Accountabilities:**Service Delivery**

- Process claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit both accurately and quickly so that agreed targets are met.
- Visit claimants in their own homes to process claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.
- Maintain an up to date knowledge of procedures, regulations and systems and provide an awareness of other welfare benefits where appropriate.
- Consider and make recommendations on back dating benefit claims.
- Maintain a high level of customer care in all operations.
- Assist in supporting other staff when required.
- Deputise for the Benefits Team Leader in their absence.
- Other duties as required by the Benefits Team Leader / Benefits Manager.

Continuous improvement

- Suggest continuous improvements to the section by innovative practices, policies, processes and technology. Review existing methods and procedures, discuss with team members / line manager to agree possible solutions and their implementation
- Assist in planning service delivery for the Benefits section. Provide information to allow performance to be monitored effectively, achieve service level agreements standards and identify and action areas for improvement, according to agreed strategies and plans.

Working in teams

- Contribute to good team working relationships
- Contribute effectively and positively to cross service teams and projects

Communication and Customer Engagement

- Ensure both internal and external customers receive a first class service that is easily accessible to all sections of the community
- To communicate clearly and efficiently both verbally and in writing.
- Suggest new customer orientated approaches and ideas within the Benefits section and the Customer Service Centre at each council
- Assist in monitoring the performance of the Customer Service Centre at each council, to include regular liaison, reviewing and updating of lines of enquiry for the service
- Liaise with the Department for Work and Pensions and Jobcentre Plus, Citizen Advice Bureaus, Housing Associations, Landlords and other outside sources.
- Liaise with the Fraud section when necessary

Key Performance Indicators:

- Ensuring that claims and changes are processed as per the targets set
- Claims are processed and amended accurately
- Pended and suspended cases are dealt with required timescales

Key Relationships:

- Benefits Manager
- Benefits Team Leader
- All Benefits staff
- Customer Service Centre Managers
- Key contacts of external partners and suppliers of service
- Benefit Claimants

Important Notes Relating to Duties:

In dealing with any form of contract or tendering procedures on behalf of the councils, the holder of this post is personally responsible for ensuring that she/he:-

- Is familiar with the relevant requirements of the Council's constitution, Contracts procedures, Rules and Financial Procedure Rules, Officer Code of Conduct and other management guidance that may be given from time to time;
- Complies with these formal requirements and related procedures; and
- Seeks advice from a more senior officer or an officer with specialism in subject area if in any doubt about the proper course of action.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

This section presents the knowledge, skills, experience, personal qualities and qualifications that are considered essential for a person being deployed to this role.

Knowledge/skills/qualifications:**Qualifications:**

- Five GCSEs Grade C and above, including Maths and English, or equivalent qualifications and experience.
- IRRV technician or equivalent

Knowledge/skills:

- Ability to work quickly and accurately paying attention to detail
- Ability to deliver to agreed deadlines and manage conflicting priorities
- Ability to plan and prioritise work
- Ability to solve problems and make decisions
- Ability to demonstrate good numeric skills
- Ability and proficiency in Windows based software
- Understanding of the need to respect confidentiality
- Knowledge of benefits legislation and the ability to interpret and communicate it to customers.
- Knowledge and skills to deliver first class customer service using variety of service channels
- Knowledge of e-capabilities for Benefits services

Experience

- Experience of working in a customer-facing role
- Experience of working within a benefits environment and knowledge / awareness of Housing Benefit legislation (at least 2 years experience of processing benefit claims).
- Able to visit claimants outside of the council offices

ICT/ technological aptitude

- Familiar with Microsoft systems (Word/Excel/Outlook)
- Use of Capita Academy Systems would be an advantage but not essential
- Use of Anite@Work DIP system (or any DIP system) would be an advantage but not essential

Personal qualities

- High level of interpersonal skills – written, verbal, face-to-face in different locations
- Confident and enthusiastic about change
- Excellent personal organisation
- Flexible and resilient
- Ability to collaborate with others and work effectively in a team

How we work

This is our generic behaviours and attitudes framework against which our performance is measured
(For full detail see the How we Work framework)

Clusters	Key Themes	Level needed* (1 – 4) *See guidance below
We deliver results	Manage performance	2
	Manage resources	2
	Manage change	2
We set an example	Fairness	2
	Integrity	2
	Accountability	2
	Image	2
We develop and grow	Personal development	2
	Challenge	2
	Innovation	2
We work together	Working with customers and colleagues	2
	Communication	2
	Leadership	2

How to map the 'How we work' levels to posts

Grade for WBC and Shared Services	Up to Band 5	Band 6 – 9	Band 10 + / Chief Officers
Do not manage staff	1 or 2	2	4
Manage staff	3	3	4

Politically Restricted Posts

Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended), posts that are either specified under that Act or posts that are defined as sensitive under the Act because the post holder is required to either give advice on a regular basis to the executive or any committee of the Council, or speak on behalf of the Council on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters are 'Politically

Restricted'. This means that the post holder is restricted in terms of public political activity. For further information with regard to this please contact Human Resources.

This post is not politically restricted.

Job Share:

Job share will be considered for this post. If you wish to apply on this basis please enclose a covering letter with your application.

Equal Opportunities:

The Council fully supports the terms of The Equality Act 2010. We are an equal opportunities employer and do not discriminate on any grounds. We want a diverse workforce which reflects our community and welcome applications from everyone regardless of age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and marital or civil partnership status.

We are also committed to improving opportunities for people with disabilities, and are a registered 'Two Ticks' employer. If you have a disability and demonstrate that you fulfil the essential person specification criteria for the role on your application form, you will be invited for an interview. If you feel that you could carry out this post with some adjustments, please let us know. If you require particular arrangements made for interview etc (e.g. signing, access), please indicate this on your application form.

Job description:	Name	Date
Written by (Manager)	Jane Walker	12.3.14
Agreed by (Manager)	Robert Della-Sala	12.3.14
Approved by (Human Resources)	Alison Watson	12.3.14