

Job Description

Division Communities & Environment Directorate, Welfare and Benefits Service

Section Council Tax & Benefits Service

Grade

Post Title Council Tax & Benefits Officer

Post(s) To Which Directly Responsible

Team Leader Council Tax & Benefits

Post(s) For Which Directly Responsible

None

Purpose of Job

Responsible for assessing, inputting and amending Council Tax data, Housing Benefits and Local Council Tax Support claims and changes. All assessments to comply with the Council Tax & Housing Benefit regulations and Council Tax Support Policy. To assist and support the Team Leader in delivering an Integrated Council tax & Benefits service that is secure, accurate, timely and remains customer focused.

Responsibilities

1. Understanding, assessing and amending Council Tax data, Housing Benefit & Local Council Tax Support new claims, changes in circumstances (to include changes of address) and other Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support correspondence accurately and in accordance with Council Tax & Housing Benefit regulations and procedures.
2. Understanding, assessing and amending Council Tax Support new claims, changes in circumstances and other council tax support correspondence accurately in accordance with the Local Council Tax Support policy and procedures.
3. Understanding, amending and adjusting Council Tax liabilities including billing, change of address, tracing of Council Tax absconders, deaths, entitlement to discounts and exemptions, making payment arrangements and processing direct debits accurately in accordance with Council Tax legislation.
4. Processing of Housing Benefit overpayments, including the creation, classification, determination and recoverability of overpayments accurately. Checking overpayments for accuracy and dealing with enquiries generated from overpayments raised.
5. Processing of Free school meals timely and accurately in accordance with the national scheme.
6. Checking processed work for Council Tax, Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support are input accurately. Input to the Council Tax & Benefits computer systems to obtain all the information required to ensure the accuracy and security when assessing information in relation to all Council Tax, Housing Benefit & Local Council Tax Support claims and changes

and other correspondence.

7. To assist and support the Team Leader in providing a secure, accurate and customer focused Council Tax & Benefit Service. Providing team support to ensure that the objectives, deadlines and targets of the team are met.

Responsibilities (Continued)

8. Assisting with day to day training needs of other staff and providing assistance to other staff in the performance of their duties.
9. Maintain effective liaison with other staff, other services, sections and external organisations to enhance the work of the Council Tax & Benefits Service.
10. Usage of the various computer systems and output to obtain all the information required to ensure Council Tax & Benefits is correctly calculated and awarded and to provide information for customers.
11. Undertaking the more routine correspondence, making written enquiries and responses and providing clear and concise written records and reports for Council Tax & Benefits claim records/case papers.
12. Deal with telephone enquiries to resolve outstanding Council Tax & Benefits matters to include charge queries, claims, changes and correspondence.
13. To keep up to date with skills and knowledge of the Council Tax & Housing Benefit legislation, Local Council Tax Support Scheme Policy and procedures.
14. To support and abide by the policies and practises of the Council with regard to Health and Safety, Customer Care, Equal Opportunities and Data Protection Act.
15. To carry out other duties as necessary, appropriate to the grade in order to provide an efficient Council Tax & Benefits Service.

Relationships

There will be contact with staff in the Directorate and the Council, Members of the Council, General Public and Customers, External bodies, other Local Authorities, Valuation Office Agency, Landlords & Agents, DWP, Job Centre Plus, Solicitors, Employers, Advice Centres, Social Workers, Voluntary Organisations, Housing Associations, Probation Officers, Prison Welfare and other Sections of the Welfare and Benefits Service.

Physical Conditions

The post is based at Enterprise House, which is situated in the city centre.

Enterprise House has access by stairs and is accessible by disabled persons to the ground floor by a disabled ramp and the other floors by a lift.

Employees can also be required to work at other sites dependent on the requirement of the service.

You will be working in a computer based environment which will include assessing work using the Council Tax & Housing Benefits computer system and Document Management system.

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ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Grade: | (To be evaluated) |
| Annual Leave: | 20 days minimum (plus 5 days following the completion of 5 years service) plus 11 statutory holidays. |
| Hours: | 37 hours per week. |
| Flexitime: | The Council operates a flexitime system. |
| Conditions of Service: | Covered by Conditions of Service agreed under the NJC for Local Government Services staff as adopted or amended by the City Council. |

PROSPECTS

Promotion: Whilst there is no automatic progression to any more senior posts, opportunities do exist for advancement and promotion, dependent upon normal staff movements and on the capabilities of the individual post holder.

Training: The Council encourages training both “in-house” and external to meet the needs of the individual and of the Council.

Qualifications

No specific qualifications are required but possession of GCSE grade C or above (or equivalent) in Mathematics and English Language would be desirable.

**Job Description Prepared/
Reviewed by Andy Cameron**

**Job Description
Approved by**

Date: 28 August 2019

Date: 28 August 2019

Employee Specification

Detailed below are the type of skills, experience and knowledge which are required of applicants applying for the post. The “Essential Requirements” indicate the minimum requirements, and applicants lacking these attributes will not be considered for the post. The points detailed under “Desirable Requirements” are additional attributes to enable the applicant to perform the position more effectively or with little or no training. They are not essential, but may be used to distinguish between acceptable candidates.

| Knowledge/Qualifications | Ess | Des | MOA |
|---|------------|------------|------------|
| Qualifications demonstrating ability in English Language and Mathematics equivalent to GCSE grade C or above. | | ✓ | A/C |
| Knowledge of the Government's Council Tax & Housing Benefits legislation. | ✓ | | A |
| Knowledge of the Council Tax Support scheme Policy and procedures. | ✓ | | |
| Knowledge of free school meals. | ✓ | | A |
| Knowledge of the availability and entitlement to other national welfare benefits. | ✓ | | A |
| A sound knowledge of written English. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Awareness and understanding of Display Screen Equipment user requirements. | ✓ | | A/I |

| Experience | Ess | Des | MOA |
|--|------------|------------|------------|
| Experience of using established computer software applications prevalent in office environments, particularly Microsoft Office products. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Experience of working with a Data Image Processing System. | | ✓ | A |
| Experience of meeting targets, service standards and tight deadlines. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Experience of working in a busy office environment (in a paid or unpaid capacity). | ✓ | | A/I |
| Experience of calculation, assessment and input of Council Tax liabilities and discounts & Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support data. | | ✓ | A |

| Skills | Ess | Des | MOA |
|--|------------|------------|------------|
| Ability to work with a wide ranging client group with differing needs. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Ability to learn new computerised systems quickly. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Ability to learn new information and instructions quickly. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Ability to bring together information and make own decisions from the information provided quickly and accurately. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Able to demonstrate good communication skills clearly and accurately to resolve a range of enquiries received from telephone, face to face and | ✓ | | A/I |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|-----|
| correspondence. | | | |
| Able to work well to multiple deadlines to meet targets on time. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Able to consistently work well as part of a team. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Assisting with day to day training needs of other staff and providing assistance to other staff in the performance of their duties. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Ability to input information quickly and accurately on to a computer based system checking information for accuracy and amending appropriately. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Good numeracy skills in order to work out Council Tax & Benefit calculations. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Ability to adapt quickly to frequent change. | ✓ | | A/I |

| Behavioural and Other Related Characteristics | Ess | Des | MOA |
|--|------------|------------|------------|
| Willing to abide by the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy in the duties of the post, and as an employee of the Council. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Willing to take personal responsibility under and abide by the Council's Health and Safety Policy. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Commitment to confidentiality and national data protection act. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Commitment to keeping up to date with skills and knowledge through self-development. | ✓ | | A/I |
| Be able to demonstrate a commitment for ensuring a customer focused benefits service. | ✓ | | A/I |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| METHOD OF ASSESSMENT (MOA) | A = Application Form |
| | I = Interview |
| | C = Certificate |

RISK ASSESSMENT OF THE POST

CLIENT GROUPS, the employee will work with *

| | | | | | |
|----------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| General Public | ✓ | Housing Tenants | | Other Agencies | ✓ |
| Children | | People with learning difficulties | | Clients in their own home/residential home/hostel | |

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS:

1. Work is conducted in the main *

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---|----------|--|---------|---|----------|--|---------|--|----------------------|---|
| Indoors | ✓ | Outdoors | | Sitting | ✓ | Standing | | Walking | | Office Accommodation | ✓ |
|---------|---|----------|--|---------|---|----------|--|---------|--|----------------------|---|

2. The job will involve *

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---|--|--|--------------------------------|--|
| Lone Working | | Working out on the Estate | | Working Underground | | Working in Confined Spaces | |
| Working on the Counter | | Working in Void Properties | | Working at Heights | | Manual Handling Tasks | |
| Stretching | | Bending | | Climbing | | Driving | |
| Cash Handling | | Use of Display Screen Equipment | ✓ | Potentially working in a smoking environment | | Contact with Discarded Needles | |

* Tick where appropriate to indicate what aspects the job will involve.

3. This job may involve possible exposure to (specify) n/a

We therefore offer (specify) n/a as a protective measure
e.g. Health Surveillance and Immunisation

CONTROLS TO MINIMISE HAZARDS - The following specialist equipment will be provided for the job.

1. Personal Protective Equipment (please specify) n/a
2. Protective Clothing * specify what n/a
3. Type of Vehicle (other than car) * specify what n/a
4. Other equipment used * specify n/a

To control the hazards identified by this assessment,
we are committed to providing Induction Health & Safety training
plus further detailed training as appropriate to the post.

We want all our employees to work in safe and healthy conditions.

In accordance with health & safety legislation - all employees have a duty to act responsibly and to do everything they can to prevent injury and ill health to themselves, fellow employees and others.