

Job Description

Department:	Corporate Services
Division/Section:	Shared Transactional Services
Job Title:	Benefits and Systems Manager
Post No:	
Grade:	
Reports to:	Head of Shared Transactional Services
Organisation Chart: Show immediate manager and any jobs reporting to this post.	<pre> graph TD A[Head of Shared Transactional Services] --> B[Benefits and Systems Manager] B --> C[Benefits Team Leader] B --> D[Benefits Team Leader] B --> E[Systems and Support Team Leader] </pre>
DBS Check applicable?	Basic <input type="checkbox"/> Standard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhanced <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/>
	Is post exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 in respect of declaration of spent convictions? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Line Management responsibility for:	No. of direct reports: 3 No. of indirect reports: 31
Size of budget:	Budget manager for c.£40m Housing Benefit subsidy, £0.4m Discretionary funding and £11m Council Tax Support awards.
Job Purpose:	The role of the Benefits and Systems Manager is to lead and manage the Benefits & Systems Service to ensure the effective, economic administration and payment of claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support and management of the systems team within Shared Transactional Services in accordance with legislation, local policies, strategies and key performance targets

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

- To formulate and maintain policy and strategy for all areas within the Benefits & Systems Service particularly benefits administration in line with local and national policies and priorities
- To manage the systems team to ensure efficient system administration and support covering benefits, council tax, business rates, car parking and cash receipting, including provision of management information, reporting and financial reconciliations.
- Manage the process and the associated budget for granting of Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Manage the planning and execution of the year end/start routines, including the annual billing process for Council Tax and Business Rates.
- Ensure collaboration with Team Leaders and their teams within the service area in order to minimise benefits overpayments and maximise recovery and income from Housing Benefit Overpayment debt
- To manage the development and implementation of new technology and processes to deliver efficiencies and improvements across all areas of Shared Transactional Services.
- To support, motivate, develop and guide Team Leaders to lead highly motivated and effective teams and ensure they have the appropriate training, empowerment and responsibility to carry out their job effectively.
- Develop, establish and regularly review systems and procedures to ensure all staff in the Benefit section process all Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support matters effectively and efficiently and that systems within Shared Transactional Services are administered effectively in line with audit requirements
- Ensure staff within the service area are aware of standards, expectations and timescales, and to establish clear lines of responsibility and accountability building trust, good morale and teamwork.
- Ensure comprehensive performance management and monitoring processes for all staff within the Benefits & Systems Service are in place and updated as necessary to meet changing legislation or other requirements from both external and internal bodies.
- Take effective action to manage and continuously improve upon key performance indicators, both national and local and improve efficiency.
- Determine and ensure effective implementation of performance standards, objectives and targets. Ensure performance reviews, one to one's and training development plans are in place to enable service and personal development
- Indirect responsibility budget covering Benefit subsidy, Discretionary Housing Payments and Council Tax Support totalling £50m, including responsibility for all audit work undertaken in respect of subsidy.
- To be responsible for the council's subsidy claim ensuring that monitoring and reporting is undertaken within pre-determined timescales.
- To lead on the preparation of the council's benefit subsidy claim by implementing sound procedures and quality control checks to maximise the council's income and avoid subsidy penalties.
- To ensure all government and other statistical returns for Shared Transactional Services are completed and submitted to the relevant organisation within the prescribed timescales.
- Manage the process to deal effectively with all Freedom of Information (FOI) and Data Protection (DPA) requests received relevant to the areas covered.
- Assist with the preparation of reports for Cabinet, other committees, Corporate Leadership Team or other working groups as required.
- Ensure that complaints, Member and MP enquiries and Local Government Ombudsman cases are dealt with effectively and within relevant timescales.
- To facilitate collaborative working with other council services, especially with Local Taxation and Customer Services, in order to improve efficiencies and customer experience.
- Ensure effective communication of changes in working practices, together with decision-making and work processing requirements and encourage all team members to develop and improve the service.
- To take effective action to manage and continuously improve upon key performance indicators and improve efficiencies.
- Support the Head of Shared Transactional Services in the strategic management of the service. Attend service management team meetings and to assist in the continuous improvement and development of the service.
- To ensure that services provided are fair and accessible to all, challenging existing practices and

<p>promote customer first culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To manage the implementation and testing of upgrades and new releases for all IT systems in use in the service and ensure staff receive adequate training in relation to these. • To manage all aspects relating to the system administration of all computerised systems and ancillary applications used by the Shared Transactional Services section. • In conjunction with the Revenues and Transactional Services Managers be responsible for providing accurate and up to date financial, statistical and performance monitoring information from all systems operating within or controlled by the Shared Transactional Services section. • To ensure all system Reconciliations for the teams managed are undertaken in an efficient and effective manner in line with pre-determined timescales. • To maintain a personal awareness of developments within the Revenues & Benefits arena, keeping abreast of relevant court judgements and legislation. • To actively participate as a member of the Shared Transactional Services Management • Ensure effective and efficient systems for record keeping are established and maintained. • To lead by example, setting excellent standards of management behaviour • To comply with all Health & Safety at work requirements as laid down by the employer. • To Deputise for the Head of Shared Transactional Services as required 	
Generic Responsibilities:	<p>To carry out all responsibilities with regard to the Council's Equalities Policy and Procedures and Customer Care Policy.</p> <p>To comply with all Health & Safety at work requirements as laid down by the employer.</p> <p>The council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.</p>
Flexibility Clause:	Other duties and responsibilities express and implied which arise from the nature and character of the post within the department (or section) mentioned above or in a comparable post in any of the Organisation's other sections or departments.
Variation Clause:	<p>This is a description of the job as it is constituted at the date shown. It is the practice of this Authority to periodically examine job descriptions, update them and ensure that they relate to the job performed, or to incorporate any proposed changes. This procedure will be conducted by the appropriate manager in consultation with the postholder.</p> <p>In these circumstances it will be the aim to reach agreement on reasonable changes, but if agreement is not possible the Head of Service reserves the right to make changes to your job description following consultation.</p>

DATE:

COMPLETED BY:
Jess Cox

Version: 2	Date Issued: June 2024	Review Date: June 2025
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JOB TITLE:
Benefits and
Systems Manager

Person Specification

POST NO:

DEPARTMENT:
Shared
Transactional
Services

DIVISION:
Corporate Services
DATE:

DIRECTOR:
Mark Sandhu
COMPLETED BY: Jess Cox

ATTRIBUTES	ESSENTIAL CRITERIA	DESIRABLE CRITERIA
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive understanding of the legislative frameworks and key issues relating to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. (A/I) Excellent understanding of Housing Benefit Overpayment debt recovery including the unique options available for recovery of this debt type (A/I) Excellent understanding of best practice for the administration of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support (A/I) Good understanding of the legislative frameworks and processes relating to Council Tax, Business Rates (A/I) A good understanding of Penalty Charge Notices for Car Parking offences and the appeals and enforcement processes (A/I) Good understanding of business processes and how these can be used to develop and market a service (A/I) Detailed knowledge and understanding of the Benefit Subsidy Claim process and its impact (A/I) Good understanding of performance management frameworks and how these can be used to influence service outputs (A/I) Has a good understanding of issues such as social deprivation and vulnerability and how these have the ability to influence the behaviour of customers of the service (A/I) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of the Housing Benefit appeals processes and Council Tax tribunals (A/I)
SKILLS & ABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to compile and appraise policy, procedures and processes, introducing 	

	<p>innovative changes to working practices in response to legislative and organisational change (A/I)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to manage conflicting priorities in a pressurised work environment (A/I) • Ability to performance manage to achieve targets and service improvements (A/I) • Ability to think strategically, use own initiative to develop solutions, plan ahead and anticipate consequences and impact (A/I) • Ability to manage large scale change (A/I) • Ability to participate in the overall management of Shared Transactional Services demonstrating a positive and focused approach and an informed understanding of the service (A/I) • Ability to provide leadership on cross-boundary and multi-disciplinary issues and identify new opportunities for the service to achieve effectiveness and best value (A/I) • Well developed communication skills (written and oral) to enable communication with a wide range of people (A/I) • To be able to present complex information in a clear and precise manner (A/I) • A forward and innovative thinker in shaping future service delivery (A/I) • Stays focused and composed when under pressure to deliver, dealing constructively with setbacks and staying on course even when facing resistance or pressure to change (A/I) • Establishes effective relationships with a wide range of stakeholders inside and outside their immediate working environment, valuing the contributions from others and leveraging networks across the whole of Serco (A/I) • Is motivated to deliver results through leading large and diverse teams across functions or business units. Shows drive to make a difference across teams, community and nationally (A/I) • Quickly recognises and gets to grips with increasingly complex scenarios. Secures and compares information from multiple sources and exercises judgement to close the gaps in data and deal with increasing levels of ambiguity (A/I) • Demonstrates an understanding of the customer, builds productive customer relationships with integrity and takes responsibility for ensuring customer advocacy (A/I) 	
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EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of success in establishing effective performance objectives, targets and performance monitoring within a performance management framework (A/I) • Experience and knowledge of the use of information technology as related to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support (A/I) • Experience of managing financial resources and evaluating competing budget priorities within tight financial limits (A/I) • Demonstrable experience of working with stakeholders to a service to review and improve service delivery whilst delivering value for money (A/I) • Demonstrable experience of maximising the use of IT based solutions to enhance and improve the service to the customer (A/I) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing external suppliers
QUALIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 years' experience working in a housing benefits environment (A) • IRRV (Tech) qualification (A) 	
PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to work occasionally outside normal working hours (A/I) 	
EQUALITY	Candidates must demonstrate understanding of, acceptance and commitment to the principals underlying equal opportunities. (A/I)	
CUSTOMER CARE	Knowledge and understanding of effective customer care (A/I)	

*[At the end of each criteria the following codes are used to indicate how the criteria will be assessed:
(AI) Application / Interview, (P) Presentation, (W) Written Test.]*