

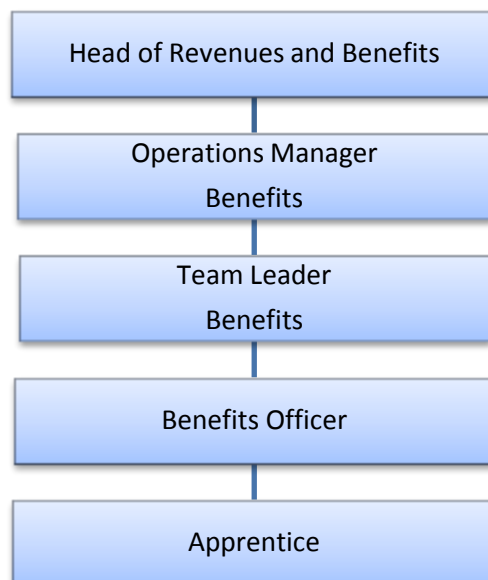
Rochdale Borough Council

Job Description

Directorate	:	Resources
Service	:	Finance Service, Revenues and Benefits
Location	:	Number One Riverside, Rochdale
Job Title	:	Benefits Officer
Grade	:	5
Accountable to	:	Head of Revenues & Benefits; Operations Manager (Benefits)
Accountable for	:	N/A
Hours of Duty	:	The hours of duty are 37 hours per week in line with the Service's Work-Life Balance Scheme.
Any Special Conditions of Service	<p>The authority operates a Smoke Free Policy for all its employees which applies to any building and associated grounds within the immediate vicinity of the building which is wholly owned, leased or operated and occupied by Rochdale BC</p> <p>This post is not Politically Restricted in accordance with current regulations.</p> <p>Appointment to this post is subject to Basic Disclosure and Barring check.</p> <p>In accordance with Section 7 of the Immigration Act 2016 this post requires the ability to converse at ease with members of the public and provide advice in accurate spoken English.</p>	

The Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects staff to share this commitment.

Organisational Chart



Purpose and Objectives of the job

To support the Operations Manager (Benefits) to deliver an efficient, effective and quality service; and to work together with the Benefits Team Leaders, Senior Officers and Benefit Officers to meet team and service priorities and targets.

Control of Resources

Personnel: None

Financial: Responsible for the correct operation of financial systems relating to Revenues & Benefits in accordance with statutory regulations and Council procedures.

Equipment/Materials: Responsible for equipment and materials used by self and staff, ensuring they are properly protected from loss and provide value for money.

Health/Safety/Welfare

Responsibility for the safety and welfare of self and colleagues in accordance with the Health and Safety Policies of the Council

Equality and Diversity

To work in accordance with the Authority's Policy relating to the promotion of Equality and Diversity.

Training and Development

The post holder will be responsible for assisting in the identification and undertaking of his or her own training and development requirements in accordance with the Council's Performance Management Framework.

Relationships (Internal and External)

Internal: Officers within Customers & Communities
Officers within other service areas
Elected Members of the Authority

External: Staff of other local authorities
Members of the public
Government Departments
Other relevant external bodies and organisations

Values and Behaviours

Approach the job at all times using the values set out in the Rochdale Way:

- Valuing our people
- Focusing on customers
- Acting with integrity
- Using time and money wisely
- Working together
- Always learning and improving

Be aware of and apply the Rochdale Way behaviours at all times

Principal Duties & Responsibilities

- 1) The assessment and input of all types of Housing and Council Tax Support (HB & CTS) claims
- 2) The maintenance of all Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims, including reviews, reconsiderations, revisions, amendments, cancellation and suspension of claims
- 3) To be conversant with Council Tax legislation in order to determine the correct liability for Council Tax including the correct award of discounts, exemptions and reliefs
- 4) The assessment and input of education benefit claims and Blue Badge claims

- 5) The assessment of any other means tested benefit processed on the team e.g. assessing contributions for financial assessments for residential and non-residential service users; assessing entitlement for Blue Badge applications.
- 6) To make relevant enquiries of customers and third parties for HB and CTS, Education Benefits, other means tested claims and processes dealt with by the Service
- 7) To visit households, as service/policy needs require, and interview customers/service users to obtain information to enable a correct means-tested assessment of benefit entitlement, contributions to service-costs etc; making use of available mobile technology where appropriate
- 8) To help provide an efficient and friendly service to our customers; in dealing with assessment and benefit enquiries from them in a polite and professional manner for example during home visits, at Customer Service Centres, over the telephone and at external events
- 9) To ensure that HB Overpayments records are accurate, that correct invoices are issued and ongoing benefit recovery is set up where appropriate
- 10) To provide advice, help and information on the full range of the benefits provided by the service
- 11) To initiate and deal with enquiries relating to all assessment and benefit activity and processes dealt with by the Service including responding to customer letters and e-mails.
- 12) To understand the appeals process and offer correct guidance where needed
- 13) To have a comprehensive understanding of other state welfare benefits to enable advice to be given on benefit maximisation and to consider debt recovery issues in order to maximise collection.
- 14) To identify potential fraudulent applications and refer these to the Fraud Investigation Team
- 15) To make determinations on all fraud recommendations referred to the team
- 16) To access and update all relevant information systems e.g. Customer Information System (CIS) to obtain information relating to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims and document management systems
- 17) To participate in training programmes as identified in One to One interviews and as specified by the Operational Manager and Team Leader
- 18) To constantly look for ways to improve the service the team delivers and by identifying best practice; suggesting changes to procedures; and demonstrating a willingness to learn and thereby contributing to a continuing improvement in performance, customer satisfaction and service excellence
- 19) To maintain a comprehensive up to date knowledge of assessment & benefits legislation and procedures for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and education benefit awards and offer advice to customers accordingly.
- 20) To ensure quality is at the heart of service delivery, by adopting a 'right first time' approach that aims to meet customer needs and demands
- 21) To contribute to putting the customer first and at the heart of service delivery; and to help achieve improved levels of customer satisfaction
- 22) To access and update all relevant information systems e.g. document management systems

Core Duties & Responsibilities

- 1) To ensure compliance with the Council's statutory requirements, policies and procedures.

- 2) To promote and respond to policies around Pride of Place, Aiming High, Stepping-Up etc.
- 3) To promote diversity, to participate in the achievement of the Council's Equality and Diversity Strategy, and work in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 4) To be responsible for the health, safety and welfare of self and others in accordance with the health and safety legislation and Council policies.
- 5) To maintain relationships with relevant stakeholders and partners, e.g. Elected Members, Impact, suppliers, other local authorities, voluntary agencies etc.
- 6) To ensure compliance with the Council's policy on Managing Sickness Absence.
- 7) To ensure compliance with the IT Regulations and guidance to Managers on the use of DSE equipment.
- 8) To ensure compliance with the Council's Performance and Development Review Process through the effective use of 1-2-1's and appraisals; and to contribute to communication with staff through the corporate briefing process.

Secondary Duties & Responsibilities

- 1) To participate in Council programmes of in-service training as a trainee and when required as a trainer facilitator
- 2) To provide support and assistance to other parts of the service as appropriate to the skills of the post holder as and when directed by the Head of Finance Services
- 3) To undertake such other duties and responsibilities of an equivalent nature as may be determined from time to time by the Service Director (or nominated representative) in consultation with the post holder (and if he/she so wishes, with his/her Trade Union representative).

Personal Competencies

Staff within the Finance Service are expected to demonstrate a positive approach, to deliver a quality service to our customers and stakeholders, to act openly and honestly, to have respect for colleagues and others and to work collaboratively within a team environment.

Job Description prepared by	_____	Date	_____
Agreed by Post holder	_____	Date	_____
Supervisor	_____	Date	_____
Chief Officer	_____	Date	_____

Rochdale Borough Council
Person Specification

Service :	Resources	Post:	Benefits Officer
Section :	Revenues & Benefits	Post Number :	
Job Ref:		Grade:	Grade 5

Note to Applicants:

Where the Criteria are marked as **Essential (E)**, you **must** show the qualifications, experience, skills or knowledge you have.

The **How Identified** column shows how the Council will obtain the necessary information about you.

If the **How Identified** column says the **Application Form (AF)** next to Essential (E) Criteria, you **must** include enough information in your application to show how you meet these criteria. You should include examples from your paid or voluntary work.

The Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects staff to share this commitment.

	Criteria	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	How Identified: AF Application I Form A Interview Assessment
(a)	Qualification and Experience		
1	Describe your experience of working within a benefits environment processing a full range of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Claims.	E	AF
2	Describe your experience of working with IT applications for example document management systems, benefit processing systems	E	AF/I
3	What is your track record of providing good customer service? Give examples of where you have 'gone that extra mile'.	E	AF/I/A
4	Illustrate with examples your track record of making a positive contribution giving examples of particular good performance, ideas for improvement or similar.	E	AF/I/A
(b)	Skills and Knowledge		
5	Illustrate your ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines and targets	E	AF/I/A
6	What evidence can you present to show that you are self-motivated and able to work unsupervised?	E	AF/I/A
7	Describe your ability to work as part of a team, for example, through helping other team members, improving team performance, communicating with others	E	AF/I/A
8	Please give illustrations of your ability to communicate with a range of customers in effective and positive ways.	E	AF/I/A

9	Describe how you have acquired your knowledge and understanding of benefits.	E	AF/I/A
10	Illustrate your awareness of the social and cultural issues facing the residents of the borough and how these might affect our service delivery.	E	AF/I/A
(c)	Special Working Conditions		
11	Are you willing to adopt a flexible approach to normal work patterns?	E	AF/I
12	The ability to converse at ease with members of the public and provide advice in accurate spoken English is essential for this post.	E	I
(d)	Values and Behaviours		
13	<p>To approach the job at all times using the values set out in the Rochdale Way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuing our people • Focusing on customers • Acting with integrity • Using time and money wisely • Working together • Always learning and improving <p>Please confirm if you are willing to adhere to these values and behaviours.</p>	E	AF/I
(e)	Armed Forces		
14	If applying as part of the Armed Forces Scheme please confirm your last long term employer was the Armed Forces.	D	AF/I
15	If applying as part of the Armed Forces Scheme please confirm you have been looking for a job for 6-24 months since you left the Armed Forces.	D	AF/I