

# RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## JOB PROFILE

**Post No.**

**Post Title:** Trainee Benefits Officer (Apprenticeship)

**Unit/Team:** Housing Advice and Benefits Team

**Grade:**

**Service:** Communities and Homes

**Reports to:**

**Issue Date:**

### PURPOSE OF THE JOB

The purpose of this role is to learn and work with clients to support them to pay their rent and council tax through the provision of financial support. This includes the administration of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction as well as informing and signposting regarding other financial inclusion support.

### 1. ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 1.1 Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction

- 1.1.1 To undertake and complete the IRRV apprenticeship program.
- 1.1.2 To interview, learn the financial needs and provide high quality, tailored advice to all people that approach the Council for guidance on their benefits entitlement (administered by both national and local government).
- 1.1.3 To assess claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction in accordance with national legislation, Council policies and procedures.
- 1.1.4 To work with clients to resolve queries relating to their claim for Housing Benefit and or Council Tax Reduction.
- 1.1.5 To undertake in-claim / accuracy reviews to ensure that the right award is made to the right person at the right time.
- 1.1.6 To review or supersede decisions where new information has been provided by the client.
- 1.1.7 Referring claims of suspected irregularity to the Single Fraud Investigation Service and responding to requests for information / evidence and queries from the SFIS and implementing investigation outcome decisions.

#### 1.2 Financial Inclusion Support

- 1.2.1 To interview, learn the financial needs and provide tailored advice to all people that approach the Council for guidance on their financial situation.
- 1.2.2 Work with external agencies referring cases where more in-depth budgetary / debt advice and support is required.

### **1.3 Service Delivery and Improvement**

- 1.3.1 To work across the Housing Advice and Benefits Team and wider Communities and Homes Service to ensure that services are robust, harmonious, and meet the needs of clients
- 1.3.2 To work with the Benefits Team Leader to ensure that there is a holistic approach to service delivery putting the client at the centre of what we deliver.
- 1.3.3 To provide timely and robust key-performance data to identify blockages to service delivery at an early stage.
- 1.3.4 To create a culture of continuous improvement within the team, with all team members involved and responsible for taking the service forward.
- 1.3.5 To be innovative and creative with trialling new ways of delivering a service that meets the needs of clients.
- 1.3.6 Actively contribute to the future development of the service
- 1.3.7 Working with others across the Communities and Homes Service to make best use of IT solutions to assist the work of the team, ensuring it meets our needs and the needs of clients.
- 1.3.8 To integrate equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices into all aspects of the post and in particular, work with disadvantaged groups and socially excluded communities to increase resident activity and involvement.

### **1.4 External Relations**

- 1.4.1 Promote new and strengthen existing partnerships in order to publicise the service and improve services to clients.
- 1.4.2 Represent the Council at meetings with internal departments and external organisations
- 1.4.3 Arrange and attend case conferences involving other agencies and statutory bodies.
- 1.4.4 To represent the Council at Tribunal and Court as and when required.

### **1.5 Development of Self and Others**

- 1.5.1 To ensure that you are up to date with legislation and best practices for the service area.
- 1.5.2 Demonstrate commitment, vision and leadership to delivery of the Housing Advice and Benefits Team Aims and Objectives
- 1.5.3 Take responsibility for identifying your own development and training requirements (technical and interpersonal skills based)
- 1.5.4 Strive for continuous improvement of yourself and the team
- 1.5.5 To actively engage in the 1:1 Support and Supervision Meetings framework

### **1.6 Customer Care**

Ensure that the Council's "CANDO" values, Equality and Diversity policies are embedded in service delivery.

## **2. OTHER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 2.1 Any other reasonable duties as requested by your manager, in line with you skills and knowledge.

### **3. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

None

### **4. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsible for protection of public funds through correct administration of the benefits system and other financial assistance.

### **5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSETS AND DATA**

Responsibility for all the assets within the team, such as IT and office furniture and equipment, and data, especially confidential personal data of all customers.

### **6. EXTENT OF PUBLIC CONTACT**

- Residents
- The Police and Department for Families and Children.
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Voluntary and statutory agencies.
- GP's, Health Visitors, Mental Health Resource Centre, Occupational Therapists, Housing Associations.
- Other local authorities, solicitors and other professional organisations.
- CAB and Mediation Services.
- Other services within the Council and Senior Officers within Housing and other services.
- Councillors and the MP.

### **7. WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT**

7.1 Hybrid working

7.2 There is a requirement to undertake home visits to support clients where required.

7.3 Travel to and from external training courses and meetings.

7.4 You will be required to have a Basic Disclosure and Barring Service check.

### **8. CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

All staff have to act within the Council's rules and follow all reasonable management requirements. These are contained within: the Council's Standing Orders, Employment Policies, Constitution and Code of Conduct for Employees. Other documents may be introduced at times setting out rules of the Council. These will cover responsibilities and requirements for the following:

Financial Accounting

Equality and Diversity  
Health and Safety  
Risk Management  
Anti- Fraud  
Data Quality and Data Protection  
Business Continuity  
Major Emergency Plan  
Procurement and Contract Management  
Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Copies of the relevant rules and policy are available on the staff intranet or from your manager

In addition, all employees are expected to behave in line with our Values and Behaviours and challenge other employees whose behaviour is against our values.

**9. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Refer to Person Specification attached.

**Signed as agreed:**

Postholder

Date

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Post: Trainee Benefits Officer



For effective performance of the duties of the post the postholder will be able to demonstrate that they have the skills and/or knowledge detailed in 'Essential Criteria'.

Criteria	Essential/ Desirable	Method of Assessment
A commitment to work within our CAN DO values	E	A, I
Interest in Local Government and helping the residents of Rugby	E	A, I
Strong customer service skills	E	A, I
GCSE's Grade C \ 4 or above in Maths and English	E	D
Good listening and communication skills with a wide range of people of all ages and background	E	A, I
Good written communication skills i.e. able to create letter/e-mails explaining issues/decisions to customers	E	A, I
Practical experience of ICT systems including working knowledge of IT programs i.e. MS Office particularly Outlook, Word and Excel	E	A, I
Ability to work effectively as part of a team, use personal initiative and take responsibility for individual tasks	E	A, I
Ability to work under pressure in a performance managed environment	E	A, I

Application	A
Interview	I
Test (written, presentation, practical – eg word processing)	T
References	R
Documentary – eg certificates	D