 <b>Stockton-on-Tees</b> BOROUGH COUNCIL	<b>JOB DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>Directorate:</b>  <b>Finance, Development and Regeneration</b>	<b>Service Area:</b>  <b>Revenues, Benefits and Welfare</b>
<b>JOB TITLE: Revenues, Benefits and Welfare Officer</b>	
<b>GRADE: G/H</b>	
<b>REPORTING TO: Team Leader as assigned</b>	
<p><b>Progression within the Career Grade</b></p> <p>To progress within the career grade structure all the requirements of the job description and person specification must be met and there must be sustained work available at the advanced level.</p> <p>This will need to be demonstrated through a formal review of performance, in the first instance by the operational team manager and then verified by the Head of Revenues, Benefits and Welfare.</p> <p>Possession of qualifications or time in post will not alone determine where a job holder is placed on the career grade.</p> <p>When an employee believes that they meet the criteria for the next level they should raise this with their line manager. A formal application will be completed and will be sent to the Head of Revenues, Benefits and Welfare.</p>	
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>JOB SUMMARY:</b></p> <p>The role will be assigned to one of the three operational teams within the Revenues, Benefits and Welfare service and will provide support to all teams to meet the needs of the service. The operational teams and functions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Tax and Benefits - the assessment and processing of changes to housing benefit and council tax where system automated processing is not possible or not appropriate</li> <li>• Income Collection - collection and enforcement of monies owed to the Council.</li> <li>• Welfare Assistance - processing applications in respect of discretionary housing payments, discretionary council tax hardship discount, welfare assistance and provision of personal budgeting support</li> </ul>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS</b></p>
	<p><b>Grade G</b></p> <p>To have a good level of understanding of the relevant legislation, working independently, using discretion and dealing with more complex matters in relation to the team the postholder is assigned to.</p> <p>To undergo the necessary training to proactively take all action necessary when dealing with customers and their accounts to minimise contact, this will include carrying out the basic functions of all three operational teams in accordance with procedures where practicable to do so.</p>

Specific requirements for employees assigned to the Council Tax and Benefits Team		
1		To identify and accurately process the correct liability for each property including changes to the valuation list, applications for all forms of reduction where system automated processing is not possible or appropriate and, where appropriate, updating the benefit claim at the same time.
2		To check and accurately issue the appropriate bills and notices, taking steps to prevent any unnecessary documents being issued.
3		The accurate assessment and processing of the full range of benefit claims including students, self-employed, the calculation of overpaid benefit and decision making in the areas of discretion such as back date requests and benefit on two homes.
4		To have a good understanding of the subsidy implications when processing claims, taking the necessary actions to prevent any penalties to the Council.
5		To undertake accuracy checking of housing benefit claims as required.
6		To check and update records identified through system reporting.
7		To take the necessary action in respect of account amendments rejected from automated processing.
Specific requirements for employees assigned to the Income Collection Team		
8		To assess propensity to pay, arrange suitable payment arrangements ensuring the prompt progression of enforcement against cases of wilful non-payment and identifying potentially vulnerable cases and taking the necessary supportive action to resolve payment issues in respect of these.
9		To pro-actively contact debtors using the most appropriate method of communication to maximise collection levels for the Council and BID assisting customers at all stages of recovery who are transferred from the automated outbound calling system.
10		To initiate and implement the most appropriate form of recovery action in respect of unpaid monies owed to the Council to maximise collection levels; referring cases for Committal and County Court proceedings to an advanced level officer.
11		To take the necessary action required on an account to ensure the balance is correct prior to taking recovery action including linking of accounts, transfer of sums between years/stages and writing off small balances in accordance with policies and procedures.
12		To prepare court papers in respect of liability order applications, make complaint to court and liaise with relevant parties regarding the issue of the summonses, attending Magistrates Court as and when required to deal with customer enquiries.
13		To be responsible for administering and progressing a caseload of unpaid accounts; identified through reporting and/or liaison with internal or external departments and organisations or Government departments.
14		To provide personal budgeting support when appropriate and in complex multi debt situations referring individuals to appropriate external organisations for advice and support.
Specific requirements for employees assigned to the Welfare Support Team		
15		To administer applications received for welfare assistance, including applications for support under S.17 of The Children's Act 1989 and any other relevant legislation, ensuring applications are considered for alternative or additional reliefs and/or support as appropriate.
16		To ensure ongoing support is appropriate and determine if support should continue or cease/change. This will involve making enquiries with both internal and external services and with residents receiving support.
17		To respond promptly to urgent daily crisis support requests.
18		To make clear, consistent decisions on customers' eligibility for assistance; reconsidering decisions made by other officers when requested to do so by a customer accurately updating systems allowing for monitoring, financial and performance information.

	19	To work with a designated list of providers of goods and services to ensure customer awards are distributed and delivered to the required standard and within the timescales.
	20	To provide personal budgeting support when appropriate and in complex multi debt situations referring individuals to appropriate external organisations for advice and support.
	21	To carry out home and off-site visits where necessary in order to assist with a claim or to verify circumstances and information.
<p><b>Grade H</b></p> <p>In addition to above, to have a good level of understanding of relevant legislation in all three operational areas.</p> <p>To be fully competent in the assessment and processing of changes to council tax and housing benefit; the collection and enforcement of monies owed to the Council and BID; and processing applications in respect of welfare assistance.</p> <p>To be interchangeable between operational teams to meet the needs of the service.</p>		
Specific requirements at this level include:		
	22	To have full knowledge of all three operational teams to reduce unnecessary contact, respond fully to enquiries and take the necessary action to ensure accounts are fully updated where practicable to do so.
	23	To gather evidence, make recommendations and prepare court papers taking into account relevant legislation and case law in respect of magistrates and county court enforcement methods including committal to prison, charging order, insolvency and sundry debts.
	24	To provide advice and guidance to colleagues as required and personally deal with more complex or contentious cases.
	25	To distribute work/reports requiring action in accordance with working arrangements where automatic allocation is not available or appropriate.
<b>General requirements – all levels</b>		
	26	To be alert to the possibility of fraud and misrepresentation, to undertake such checking as may be appropriate, and refer cases for further investigation where there is a suspicion of fraud.
	27	To maintain a good knowledge of audit and data protection requirements and Council policies, and take action to prevent data breaches, ensuring personal and sensitive information is kept secure.
	28	To deal with all forms of communication, liaising with customers, landlords and internal and external stakeholders and support the customer services team with non-standard enquiries.
	29	Dealing with enquiries, providing and collecting information and evidence and preparing income and expenditure statements.
	30	To carry out data checks using Government databases and the Experian system complying strictly with security and confidentiality requirements.
	31	To identify and refer debts for write-off in accordance with policies and procedures.
	32	To support with ad-hoc Government initiatives related to the functions of the team.
	33	To co-operate with the implementation and introduction of revised methods of work, including those changes that may arise from the development of new technology, the introduction of new legislation and guidance, or other reasons.
	34	To assist in the training and development of staff and to undertake such personal training as may be deemed necessary to meet the duties and responsibilities of the post.
	35	To ensure a culture of co-operation and effective joint working is maintained and ensure the service is customer focussed.

### 3. GENERAL

**Job Evaluation** - This job description has been compiled to inform and evaluate the grade using the NJC Job Evaluation scheme as adopted by Stockton Council.

**Other Duties** - The duties and responsibilities in this job description are not exhaustive. The post holder may be required to undertake other duties from time to time within the general scope of the post. Any such duties should not substantially change the general character of the post. Duties and responsibilities outside of the general scope of this grade of post will be with the consent of the post holder.

**Workforce Culture and supporting behaviours and Code of Conduct** – The post holder is required to carry out the duties in accordance with Workforce Culture and supporting behaviours, code of conduct, professional standards and promote equality and diversity in the workplace.

**Personal Development** – As defined by the Council's Culture Statement, all employees will take responsibility for their own development

**Customer Services** – The post holder is required to ensure that all customers both internal and external, receive a consistently high quality level of service, commensurate to the standards required by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

**Policies and Procedures** - The post holder is required to adhere to all Council Policies and Procedures.

**Health and Safety** - The post holder has a responsibility for their own health and safety and is required to carry out the duties in accordance with the Council Health and Safety policies and procedures.

**Safeguarding** - All employees need to be aware of the possible abuse of children and vulnerable adults and if you are concerned you need to follow the Stockton Council's Safeguarding Policy. In addition employees working with children and vulnerable adults have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults during the course of their work.

	Name:	Signature:	Date
Job Description written by: (Manager)	Michelle Connolly		December 2022
Job Description agreed by: (Post holder)	.....	.....	.....

**Job Description dated December 2022**



## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title/Grade	<b>Revenues, Benefits and Welfare Officer</b>	Grade G/H
Directorate / Service Area	<b>Finance, Development and Regeneration</b>	Revenues, Benefits and Welfare

	<b>ESSENTIAL</b>	<b>DESIRABLE</b>	<b>MEANS OF ASSESSMENT</b>
Qualifications	<p>Grade G</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educated to NVQ 3 or the equivalent level of knowledge and skill gained through substantial demonstrable direct work experience.</li> </ul> <p>Grade H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educated to NVQ 4 or the equivalent level of knowledge and skill gained through substantial demonstrable direct work experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IRRV Technician Qualification</li> </ul>	Application form
Experience	<p>Grade G/H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of using manual and computerised records</li> <li>Experience of working as part of a team.</li> </ul>	<p>Grade G</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of working in a Revenues and/or Benefits environment.</li> </ul>	Application / Interview


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant work experience in either a processing, welfare or debt collection environment.</li> <li>• Experience of giving advice and information, dealing with members of the public, professionals and other agencies.</li> </ul> <p>Grade H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working in a Revenues and/or Benefits environment.</li> </ul>	<p>Grade G/H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working with Civica Open Revenues systems.</li> <li>• Experience of working with customers from a variety of backgrounds.</li> </ul>	
Knowledge & Skills	<p>Grade G/H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good communication skills both orally and in writing.</li> <li>• Accurate and methodical, with the ability to meet challenging personal targets.</li> <li>• Ability to establish and promote good working relations with colleagues within the council, and other agencies and organisations.</li> <li>• Ability to deal empathetically with vulnerable residents.</li> <li>• Good ICT skills.</li> <li>• Ability to perform detailed numerical calculations and identify any errors and exceptions.</li> <li>• Ability to prioritise own workload, working with minimum supervision and using initiative.</li> <li>• Ability to influence and negotiate to achieve desired results.</li> </ul>	<p>Grade G</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good knowledge of council tax, non domestic rate and housing benefit legislation.</li> <li>• Broad knowledge of other related legislation including Welfare Benefits, Magistrates Court Act, Data Protection and Freedom Of Information.</li> </ul> <p>Grade H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the court process and production of court paperwork.</li> </ul>	Application / Interview

	<p>Grade H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good knowledge of council tax, non domestic rate and housing benefit legislation.</li><li>• Broad knowledge of other related legislation including Welfare Benefits, Magistrates Court Act, Data Protection and Freedom Of Information.</li><li>• To be able to form a judgement in sometimes difficult and complex circumstances, taking account of a range of information and legislation sources and conflicting aims and objectives.</li></ul>		
Specific behaviours relevant to the post	<p>Grade G/H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate the Council's Behaviours which underpin the Culture Statement.</li><li>• A demonstrable commitment to the delivery of quality services and continuous improvement.</li><li>• Contribute to council, service and team objectives.</li><li>• Build good links and relationships with other teams and services.</li><li>• Make time to listen to, support and involve others.</li><li>• Seek out and share ideas for improvement.</li></ul>		Application / Interview

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A positive attitude toward change, co-workers, the workplace and the tasks of the job.</li></ul>		
Other requirements	<p>Grade G/H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A flexible approach to working hours to maximise customer contact.</li><li>• This post is subject to a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) Check, which includes a Verification of Criminal Record check (unspent convictions only).</li></ul>		Application / Interview

Person Specification dated December 2022



 <b>Stockton-on-Tees</b> BOROUGH COUNCIL	<b>KNOWN RISKS FOR THIS ROLE</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b> Finance, Development & Regeneration	<b>SERVICE AREA:</b> Revenues & Benefits
<b>JOB TITLE:</b> Revenues Benefits & Welfare Officer	
<b>GRADE:</b> G/H	
<b>JOB LOCATION / BUILDING:</b> Bayheath House, Stockton	
<b>REPORTING TO:</b> <i>Rebecca Robson/Jacqui Gowland</i>	

The following are the known risks for this role as identified through a Risk Assessment. More than one risk may apply. Where there are no known risks this will be indicated.

Known Risks - which require Baseline Health Surveillance Screening before or at start of employment and ongoing health surveillance with Occupational Health		
Known Risk	Yes	No
<b>Noise:</b> Employee Is likely to be regularly exposed to noise above the exposure action level. (Daily or weekly exposure of 85dB)		✓
<b>Vibration:</b> Employee will be exposed to vibration above the daily Exposure Action Value (EAV) of 2.5m/s <sup>2</sup> A(8) 9		✓
<b>Respiratory:</b> Employee will be exposed to Hazardous Substances such as machine generated wood dust, mineral dust, solder flux, glues, resins, cutting oils, latex.  (Those working with respiratory/skin irritants or sensitizers as defined by COSHH)		✓

Known Risks which require a Medical Assessment with Occupational Health prior to starting employment and ongoing assessment during employment.		
Known Risk	Yes	No
<b>HGV/LGV/Fork Lift Truck/Passenger Carrying Vehicle/Minibus (Group 2) Licence Drivers:</b> Employee will be required to drive an HGV/LGV/FLT/PCV/Minibus.		✓
<b>Asbestos:</b> Employee likely to be exposed to asbestos. Work with asbestos' includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work which removes, repairs, or disturbs asbestos</li> <li>○ Ancillary work (work associated with the main work of repair, including maintenance work on equipment)</li> <li>○ Supervisory Work (work involving direct supervision over those removing, repairing, or disturbing asbestos)</li> </ul>		✓

Known Risk	Yes	No
<b>Lead:</b> Employee likely to be exposed to lead or lead based products (handling, processing, repairing, maintenance, storage, disposal) The lead must also be in a form in which it is likely to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inhaled, e.g., lead dust, fume or vapour.</li> <li>○ Ingested, e.g., lead powder, dust, paint or paste; or</li> <li>○ Absorbed through the skin, e.g., lead alkyls or lead naphthenate.</li> </ul> The regulations do not apply to work with materials or substances containing lead where, because of the nature of the work, lead cannot be inhaled, ingested, or absorbed.		✓
<b>Confined Spaces - Safety Critical:</b> Employee will be required to work in a <b>confined space</b> where specialist equipment or breathing apparatus is needed.		✓
<b>Working at Heights - Safety Critical:</b> Employee will be required to work <b>at a height</b> .		✓
<b>Blood-borne viruses:</b> Employee is at risk of exposure to Blood-borne viruses e.g., needle stick injury, human bite, contact with human blood or other bodily fluids and sewerage.		✓

Other Known Risks		
Known Risk	Yes	No
<b>Council Vehicles or transport that does not require a Group 2 licence:</b> Employee will be required to drive a Council vehicle or regularly transport service users/clients/pupils in their own vehicle as part of normal duties.		✓
<b>Food Handlers:</b> Employee will be preparing and handling food <i>Food Handlers Questionnaire to be completed and sent to Occupational Health</i>		✓
<b>Night Workers:</b> Employee will be regularly working at night <i>Optional Night Worker Questionnaire available</i>		✓
<b>Lone Working (including Home Working):</b> Employee will be required to work alone.		✓
<b>DSE Users:</b> Employee will be required to use Display Screen Equipment (DSE) <b><i>DSE Training and assessment should be completed on commencement – arranged by manager</i></b>	✓	
<b>Any Other:</b> Please identify any other known risks associated with this job role.		

**As the manager of this post, I declare that the details above are an accurate reflection of the risks associated with the post.**

Signature of Manager: R Robson

Date: 09.05.23

**For any queries related to this form, please refer to the Known Risk Managers Explanatory Notes, or email the Occupational Health Department:**

**[Occupational.Health@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:Occupational.Health@stockton.gov.uk)**