Role Profile

Reference Number	SVP003
Role Title	Revenue / Benefits Technical Specialist
Directorate	Resources
Department	Finance
Reports to	Revenue / Benefits Team Leader or Revenue / Benefits Team Manager

Role Purpose

To assess and take decisions on complex customer applications, and resolve complex issues relating to applications, eligibility, liabilities and assessments, to ensure that customers receive the right outcomes.

The focus is on providing specialist advice and supporting colleagues to ensure a high quality and compliant service is delivered.

Accountabilities

- Review and assess complex customer applications, in accordance with well-defined procedures, protocols and entitlement rules, to determine eligibility and liability for a range of benefits, discounts and exemptions (this will be for either benefits, social services financial assessments, council tax, or business rates). This will involve reviewing submitted forms and documentation, and conducting interviews.
- Support with the allocation and prioritisation of work, based on the team's workflow and customer needs, to ensure the work is allocated efficiently to meet delivery targets.
- Communicate decisions regarding eligibility, entitlement and liability to customers, so that customers understand and accept the decision taken and the reason for it.
- Deal with and resolve complex escalated issues relating to customer eligibility, entitlement and liability, providing professional opinion to ensure that complex cases and issues are resolved in proper accordance with legislative and policy framework.
- Undertake quality and integrity testing of applications and decisions, to ensure that procedures and decision-making protocols are being applied correctly and identify any issues or trends.
- Provide information and advice to customers in response to enquiries on complex issues relating to benefits, rates or debt-related matters, so that customers understand the procedures and requirements, and receive helpful, accurate advice. There will also be a need to signpost and refer customers to other services.
- Negotiate with customers for the settlement of arrears and income receivable, in accordance with defined protocols and procedures, so that the Council can recover and receive monies owed effectively.
- Investigate identified 'high-risk' accounts, analysing risks and preparing information and documentation for legal proceedings, to ensure that the council can recover funds owed. This may also include representing the service at court hearings/tribunals.
- Maintain accurate records and case notes on specified systems and in line with defined standards, so that information is accurate, up-to-date, accessible, and auditable.
- Risk assess cases, take compliance action and where necessary undertake inspections of new and existing properties to ascertain the appropriate information to ensure records are correct, and determine completion dates.
- Support staff with technical issues relating to the systems, to ensure efficient operational use. This will include testing software functionality and reporting issues to suppliers.

Knowledge / Skills / Experience required

- NVQ Level 4 or diploma.
- IRRV Certificate (Technician Qualification).
- Experience of customer-facing service delivery.
- Experience of complex processing.
- Experience of providing professional advice and guidance.
- Knowledge of legal processes.
- Detailed knowledge of processes, procedures and protocols relating to the assessment and processing of benefits/council tax/business rates applications.
- Detailed knowledge of legislation and regulations relating to benefits/rates/council tax.
- Detailed knowledge of a range of systems.
- Ability to manage and prioritise own workload, and priorities of colleagues.
- Ability to communicate technical and complex procedural information to customers and staff.
- Ability to communicate with empathy and assertiveness.

Dimensions of role

- This role does not have any formal management or supervisory requirements, but will provide advice, guidance and support to colleagues, and support with prioritising workloads.
- This role does not manage any budgets.
- Planning is short term, focused on own workload, with a need to be considering priorities and customer needs.

Notes

Date:	01/02/2021
Working Conditions:	Aspects of the role that have a material impact on the nature of the job, once all reasonable actions have been taken to moderate or eliminate them: • Where the role involves visiting customers or business premises, the role holder may be exposed to minimal to moderate environmental discomforts such as varying temperatures, smells or smoke. For the majority of role holders this is infrequent or not part of the role. • The role holder will need to maintain composure and concentration when undertaking assessments and recording information. • The role holder will need to communicate and deal with distressed customers, who may be confrontational or present challenging behaviour, and to deliver difficult and potentially contentious decisions that may distress customers. • In undertaking assessments, the role holder may hear and need to record distressing and upsetting information about hardships such as poverty, illness, and situations such as domestic violence and abuse.
Working Arrangements:	• The role may be required to work overtime as required, including evenings.