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| **Benefits Visiting Officer (Post 1837)** |
| **Service Area**Benefits |
| **Manager/Team Leader**Benefits Team Leader |
| **Direct reports**N/A |
| **Total Managed**N/A |
| **Purpose of the Role**A member of a team that accurately and efficiently administers the assessment of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, whilst providing high quality customer service and complying with statutory legislation, policies and procedures. To visit north Norfolk Customers in their own homes or at an agreed venue local to the customer. To assist with claims to Housing Benefit/Council tax Support and the administration of these claims. |
| **Key Result Areas**1. To administer Housing Benefit and Council Tax support; to include new claims, changes in circumstances and data matches. Ensuring prompt and accurate assessment, notification and payment/award.
2. Calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, including underlying entitlement and Alternative Maximum Benefit.
3. To advise customers of their entitlement to other Welfare assistance and signposting to either maximise the customers income or to seek debt advice. Visiting customers to assist with making claims to Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment, Alternative Maximum Benefit, Council Tax Discounts and Exemptions. To maximise the income for North Norfolk residents.
4. Visiting customers to assist on occasion/ad hoc basis with making claims to other Welfare Benefits/Allowances.
5. Collaborative working, visiting customers with their representative, Department for Work and Pensions, other organisations, support worker or tenancy support worker.
6. To escalate accordingly where the safeguarding of adults or children is identified, including fear of violence, abuse, mental health problems and money deception.
7. To represent the Council at joint working initiatives, for example new Housing Scheme and company closures.
8. To adhere to the Lone Working Policy and Service Lone Working Procedures including the use of Skyguard or similar lone working device.
9. To visit properties that are suspected or reported as being unoccupied and the tenant or landlord is in receipt of Housing Benefit.
10. To visit customers to complete Review forms to ascertain any changes in circumstances that the Council is not aware. To validate circumstances and appraise claims to ensure that entitlement is correct and to identify discrepancies.
11. Preventing overpayments /excess payments. Calculating the correct amount of an overpayment/excess payment and categorising correctly for subsidy purposes. To ensure that appropriate recovery action is taken.
12. Obtaining and analytically crosschecking a range of data to support a claim.
13. To use secure Government databases to validate and support claims and to identify and administer changes as a result of discrepancies.
14. To maintain a technical, working knowledge of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support including frequent changes in legislation and procedures.
15. To actively prevent and detect false claims and discounts using investigative skills.
16. To visit and provide assistance, advice, guidance and explanation to vulnerable or elderly customers on matters that are complex. To provide assistance and guidance face to face, over the telephone and in writing. Visiting to provide explanation of large overpayments, where it is inappropriate to post the notification letter.
17. To assist the Customer Services team when dealing with difficult or complicated enquiries.
18. To provide excellent customer service, promoting equality and diversity, treating customers professionally and with empathy. Customers may be vulnerable, financially distressed, suffer mental health problems or abusive.
19. To communicate externally with a range of organisations to include; the Department for Work and Pensions, Housing Associations, Private Landlords/letting agents, Care and Support services. Internal communications include, Housing Options, Revenues, Customer Services, Planning and Living Well, Health and Wellbeing.
20. To accurately maintain and update computer records using a workflow system.
21. To ensure that the rules of GDPR are adhered to, including that confidential information is not shared with appropriate consent.
22. To use sound judgement and discretion in decision making taking account of the legislation which may refer to “reasonableness”, “good cause” and “special circumstances”.
23. To understand the importance of service targets and meeting set performance targets.
24. To adopt corporate values and awareness of corporate plan and vision.
25. To take own responsibility for resolving enquiries, decision making and ensuring a comprehensive audit trail and decision records are maintained.
26. To propose ways of improving the service using business transformation to ensure processes and best practice are efficient and cost effective.
27. To work with a minimum level of supervision.
28. Mentoring and supporting less experienced staff.
29. Assisting Team Leaders or Revenues and Benefit Manager as required.
30. To promote and adhere to the workplace values of our organisation.
31. To take reasonable care for the Health and safety of yourself and other persons who may be affected by your actions or omissions at work.
32. Any other work required and as directed within the confines of the existing grading and post
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| **Benefits Visiting Officer (Post 1837)** |
|  | Essential | Desirable | **How****Identified** |
| **Knowledge and Experience** | Up to date and in depth knowledge and experience of Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
| Experience of using Housing Benefit/Council Tax system and electronic workflow.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
| Experience of working in an administrative role.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
| Understanding of Welfare Benefits/Allowances/ Pensions/ Universal Credit. | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
| Experience of maintaining and updating customer records, providing sound audit trails and supporting evidence.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
|  | Knowledge, application and awareness of GDPR legislation.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
|  | Experience of dealing with vulnerable and difficult customers, explaining complicated information face to face at the customers home or alternative venue, on the telephone, in writing and electronically.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
|  | Understanding of Diversity and Equality.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
|  | Up to date and in depth knowledge and experience of Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
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| **Qualifications** | At least 5 GCSE or equivalent at grade c or 4, including English and Maths.  | **** |  | Application form |
| ICT skills including Microsoft Word & Excel and accurate data input.  | **** |  | Application form |
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| **Skills** | Negotiating and influencing skills whilst giving consideration to the best interest of the customer and the council.  | **** |  | Application form/ Interview |
| Good planning, organisational and time management skills. Including efficient route planning and appointment setting. Prioritisation and self-monitoring of workload.  | **** |  | Application form/ Interview |
| Empathic approach to customers in adverse situations such as bereavement, domestic violence and financial difficulties.  | **** |  | Application form/ Interview |
| Able to clearly communicate complex matters to a customer or third party face-to-face, at the customer’s home or alternative venue over the phone and in writing.  | **** |  | Application form/ Interview |
| Able to assimilate and process a range of information quickly and accurately.  | **** |  | Application form/ Interview |
| To identify situations or circumstances which may question the safeguarding of adults or children.  |  | **** | Application form/ Interview |
| Good judgement and decision making skills.  | **** |  | Application form/ Interview |
| Accurate and non-routine data input.  | **** |  | Application form/ Interview |
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| **Aptitude and****Disposition** | Attention to detail and a methodical approach whilst maintaining productivity and accuracy. | **** |  | Application form |
| Ability to work with minimum level of supervision.  | **** |  | Interview |
| Flexible team member, able to work on own and contribute positively to team working.  | **** |  | Interview |
| Ability to work under pressure.  | **** |  | Interview |
| Ability to adapt and embrace change.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
| To be responsible for own actions and decisions.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
| Self- motivated.  | **** |  | Interview |
| Ability to work alone, visiting customers in their own home or other venues across the District.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
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| **Personal****Circumstances** | Has a current driving licence and vehicle with business insurance.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview |
| Is aware of self-defence techniques and personal safety.  |  | **** | Application form/Interview  |
| DBS check.  | **** |  | Application form/Interview  |
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**Our Values and Behaviours**

The values and behaviours we seek from our staff draw on the high standards of the Council:

**Fairness** - We respect people and treat everyone fairly

**Ambition** - We welcome new challenges and embrace change

**Integrity** - We are open and honest and listen

**Resourcefulness** - We strive to be efficient with our resources