

Job summary

Role title: Benefits Officer

Department: Benefits, Revenues and Fraud

General description of role

We are looking for an experienced Benefits Officer who has a robust and up to date knowledge of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction. It is important that you are inquisitive, adaptable, a problem solver, a team player and have the ability to understand and apply legislation. You must have a zest for learning and a thirst for new opportunities.

Enjoying plenty of responsibility, you have plenty of experience and the role will involve assessing new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support and also for assessing changes of circumstances through ATLAS and RTI. The role will also include responsibility for the recovery of overpayments. We pride ourselves on delivering a highly responsive and customer-focused service. You will be part of a service that currently undertakes exciting commercial opportunities to grow, and form shared services with other local authorities and outside organisations.

Achieving the most exacting levels of accuracy, you will engage with stakeholders including the Department of Work and Pensions, the Pension Service, HM Revenue and Customs, the Valuation Office Agency, Social Services, Supporting Families team and advice agencies to make the right decisions and ensure that the customer receives an excellent level of customer service and support.

Top ten duties / responsibilities of role

1. Assessing entitlement to both Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction.
2. Dealing with electronic Universal Credit files from the DWP.
3. Dealing with reviews of entitlement.
4. Dealing with written statements and reconsiderations.
5. Assessing entitlement and awards of Discretionary Housing Payments.
6. Maximising subsidy.
7. Maximising overpayment recovery.
8. Be a competent user of benefit systems.
9. Ability to understand and apply legislation correctly.
10. Be a team player.

Person Specification

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Qualifications	Essential / Desirable	Assessment by A / I / T (Application/Interview/Testing)
Good standard of education with a minimum of Grade C in Maths and English GCSE or equivalent	E	A
IRRV	P	A
Experience and achievements		
Dealing with public/customers	E	A/I
Computer literate	E	A/I
Competent in IT systems such as Word/Excel	E	A/I
User of document imaging systems	E	A/I
Excellent literacy skills e.g. letter writing	E	A/I/T
Proven benefits experience	E	A/I/T
Role required competencies and behaviours		
Diagnostic and analytical skills	E	T
Accuracy	E	T
Ability to plan and organise workload	E	A/I
Ability to understand and interpret legislation, systems and processes	E	A/I/T
Ability to effectively coach, develop and mentor others	E	A/I/T

Great People at Reigate & Banstead

Our great working environment and the values and behaviours of every individual and team in the Council, help to evolve the culture of our organisation to become more commercial, innovative and embracing of change.

Successful applicants to our career opportunities will be able to demonstrate they share the values and behaviours we seek in our organisation.

Our Vision

Working together to make a great place to live, work and enjoy.

Our Values

Making a difference, doing the right thing, being bold and confident.

Our Behaviours

We should demonstrate our values by being positive, supportive, flexible, and innovative.

Positive: I maintain a “can do” attitude and a smile

- ✓ Create an encouraging and optimistic environment and bring others with me
- ✓ Approach others in a pleasant, happy and upbeat manner
- ✓ Maintain enthusiasm in difficult times
- ✓ Demonstrate commitment to my own service and to the Council
- ✓ Demonstrate an "I care" attitude

Supportive: I create an environment where the people I work with feel valued and respected and have confidence to develop

- ✓ Understand the council's priorities and work towards a common goal
- ✓ Work across boundaries to develop relationships, share information and keep others informed
- ✓ Listen to the views of others allowing the best way forward to be found
- ✓ Communicate in a courteous and respectful manner
- ✓ Behave in ways that promote the fair and equal treatment of all

Flexible: Adapting the way I work, I can deal confidently with change and accept new and different ideas and approaches

- ✓ Accept that change is an integral part of working at Reigate & Banstead
- ✓ Demonstrate an open mind to new ideas and proposals
- ✓ Display a willingness to do things differently
- ✓ View change in working practices as an opportunity for improving and developing
- ✓ Adopt a flexible approach to meet the team's requirements

Innovative: I work to develop new ideas and workable solutions to drive the Council forward

- ✓ Question currently accepted ways of doing things
- ✓ Implement good ideas, learn from others, both internally and externally
- ✓ Identify novel ways of resolving issues using own initiative
- ✓ Suggest and try out new approaches
- ✓ Challenge the status quo in a constructive way

Great People



POSITIVE



INNOVATIVE



SUPPORTIVE



FLEXIBLE

Summary of employment package

Place of work	The role will be primarily based at Town Hall, Reigate/ Hybrid Working. We may require you to work from another place of work within the Borough or a neighbouring Borough or District, or further afield by prior agreement.
Salary	Graded Technical Specialist, the salary will be in the region of £28,023- £35,724 per annum dependent upon experience. Cost of living awards are reviewed annually on 1 April. Incremental progression and bonuses may be payable in line with the appraisal scheme.
Duration of contract	The contract will be offered on a permanent basis.
Probationary period	Upon joining the Council, all staff are required to satisfactorily complete a six month probationary period.
Hours of work	Hours of work are nominally 36 per week.
Employment Benefits	
Flexible working hours	Flexible working allows for the alteration of start/leave times and length of lunchtime break, time off in lieu for longer hours worked and a flexible working system. Whilst staff are expected to manage their time and keep working hours within acceptable limits, flexible working arrangements are always subject to sufficient office cover and the particular needs of the service at that time.
Annual leave	The basic leave entitlement is 259.2 hours per annum pro rata (equivalent to 36 standard days), rising to 295.2 hours per annum (equivalent to 41 standard days) pro rata after five years continuous local government service, inclusive of Bank Holidays. Annual leave must be taken on the Council's discretionary day off around Christmas and New Year period.

Pension	You will be auto enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to which the Council contributes 15% of your earnings each year. You are able to transfer funds into the LGPS within the first twelve months of employment. However, you can also choose not to join the scheme and make your own arrangements. If you wish to opt out of the scheme you will not be able to do so until after your first day. Your pension contribution rate will depend on your full time equivalent annual salary. The salary and rates are reviewed annually on 1 April each year. The current rates can be found on the Surrey Pension Fund website: http://www.surreypensionfund.org/surrey-pension-fund/paying-in/membership-and-contributions/#contribution-rates
Training and development	The Council actively encourages continued professional development and talent development. Learning facilities are available in-house, including a dedicated Training Room for both individual and group learning. The Council also has a number of Computer Based Training packages.
Professional subscriptions	If you are required to be a member of a professional organisation(s) for your role, we will pay the subscription fee(s) each year, your manager will approve your claim as applicable.
Car parking / Travel loan scheme	You will be able to request a car parking permit to be able to park at the Town Hall. The Council offers interest free loans to encourage staff to travel by alternative methods to solo car use. Loans are available to purchase bicycles and accessories to the value of £1000, for quarterly/yearly rail season or bus tickets or a season car park pass.
Cycle purchase scheme	The Council offers staff who have passed the probation period and are employed for 18 months or more, the opportunity to lease/purchase bikes and related safety equipment up to £1000, reducing tax and National Insurance deductions. Staff are required to use the bike mainly for journeys between home and work.
Employee discounts	All staff have access to special offers and discounts on national and local high street shops, restaurants, motoring benefits, discount cinema and theatre tickets, holidays, insurance and much more. Full annual discounted membership is available for the 'Better' run leisure centres at Tadworth, Donyngs and Horley.

Other Conditions	
Pre-employment checks	Appointments are offered subject to several pre-employment checks to comply with the Home Office's Baseline Personnel Security Standards (BPSS): • at least two satisfactory references • eligibility to work within the UK, and proof of your identity • evidence of relevant qualifications • basic criminal record check (As access to secure government systems is an intrinsic requirement of the role)
DBS clearance	Employment with the Council will also be subject to receipt of standard / enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance. Details will be provided to the successful applicant, which may require completion of an online application and/or registration to the DBS 'Update Service'.
Paid work with another employer	If you are appointed, your contract with the Council should normally be classed as your main employment. You will devote your whole-time service to our work and not be involved in any other business or take up any other appointment without getting written permission from your manager or the Chief Executive.
Disclaimer	Please note that this document outlines the likely employment package for this role but does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment if you are subsequently employed by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council. These will be outlined in any contractual documents addressed to you directly.

