**Division: Corporate Services**

**Department: Revenues & Benefits**

**Post Title: Head of Revenues and Benefits**

**Grade: Service Manager**

**Hours: 37 hours per week (Full Time)**

**Reports To: Assistant Director (Corporate Services)**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

This job description is intended as a working document only, giving a guideline to the major tasks to be performed. It is anticipated that the post will develop as working practices change in order to meet the demands of the service, new legislation or policies of the council. It is expected the post holder will contribute to and assist in the development of such changes

**Job Summary**

To manage the council’s Revenues & Benefits function, ensuring that services are delivered in an efficient, effective and customer focused manner whilst complying with statute and council policy in all respects.

To lead the Revenues & Benefits section in accordance with the council’s performance-led culture, planning and monitoring targets as a means to delivering strong performance and providing a quality service to the people of the borough of Gravesham.

To look to continuously improve and innovate service delivery whilst seeking to deliver value for money, considering also how reductions in service costs can be achieved.

To develop and maintain good relationships with key partners, stakeholders and contracted providers to further the effective achievement of the objectives of the service.

To play a proactive role in developing and promoting the vision and objectives of the wider Corporate Services Directorate, within the overall scope of the council’s Corporate Plan.

**Main Responsibilities**

1. Ensure the effective provision of all aspects of the Revenues & Benefits Service, including (but not limited to) housing benefits, council tax, business rates, council tax support, discretionary housing payments, inspections and other service objectives such as undertaking interventions to reduce poverty in the community.
2. Maintain own professional knowledge of legislation, policy and best practice, and ensure that this is reflected in work practices and procedures.
3. Ensure proper arrangements are in place for the interpretation and communication of legislation, regulations, guidelines and government circulars. Maintain service policies and procedures to ensure these remain in accordance with latest legislation and guidance.
4. Ensure that proper arrangements are in place to ensure ongoing guidance and training for staff on all aspects of the service relevant to their role.
5. Ensure that computerised systems are fit for purpose, function correctly, are supported and meet relevant security and data management/protection standards.
6. Ensure that arrangements are in place for effective staff management, including the employment and deployment of resources and the formal supervision, performance management and annual appraisal reviews for individual team members.
7. Ensure that government and other statutory returns are completed accurately and on time.
8. Undertake financial budget setting and budget monitoring responsibilities for the service.
9. Act as an advocate for the Corporate Debt approach taken by the council.
10. Represent, or ensure that the council is properly represented, at professional and networking groups associated with the functions of the service.
11. Be an active participant of the Directorate management team and contribute to the development and delivery of Directorate objectives.
12. Contribute to corporate working groups and corporate projects as requested.

**Council Tax and Business Rates**

1. Ensure that effective arrangements are in place to make sure that all local tax due to the council is demanded, accounted for and recovered efficiently (including arrangements for appeals), and that these comply with statute and council policy in all respects.
2. Represent, or ensure that the council is properly represented, at appeals hearings in respect of cases referred to the Valuation Tribunal.
3. Represent, or ensure that the council is properly represented, in Court proceedings for the recovery of all local taxation debts.
4. Determine mandatory and discretionary reliefs in accordance with Statute and council policy and guidelines.
5. Consider rating assessments applied to council occupied properties and make recommendations for reductions in appropriate cases.
6. Ensure the accurate and timely provision of information for, and provide a professional contribution to the preparation of the annual Council Tax Base.
7. Co-ordinate the completion of the annual NNDR1, NNDR3 , CTB1 & quarterly revenue collection returns, ensuring that these are based on accurate and timely information and informed by appropriate professional and technical advice and support.
8. Support the council’s Finance Team by providing technical advice and support, including the provision of information, relating to the administration and accounting for the Collection Fund.

**Housing Benefit, Universal Credit and Council Tax Reduction**

1. Ensure that effective arrangements are in place for the administration of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction within agreed time limits (including arrangements for disputes, appeals and overpayments) that comply with statute and council policy in all respects.
2. Ensure that notifications received from DWP concerning Universal Credit applications/changes are actioned, where appropriate, promptly and accurately
3. Ensure that adequate publicity is given to the availability and take up of benefits.
4. Ensure the annual review and uprating of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme is undertaken and formulate proposals and reports for decision as required.
5. Represent, or ensure that the council is properly represented, at Tribunals Service hearings.
6. Work with the Finance Team in respect of Housing Benefit Subsidy projections and claims.

**General**

1. To carry out such other duties as may be required of you, commensurate with the grade and level of responsibility, as directed by management.
2. To participate as required in the Council’s Emergency Planning Operations which may involve duties outside the post holder’s normal job description and contracted hours. In the event that an incident has occurred which disrupts the council’s ability to deliver it’s critical functions, the post holder will be expected to participate in the recovery stage which may include undertaking duties within the post holder’s competencies in other departments and/or at other locations.
3. To contribute to the successful delivery of local and national elections under the direction of the Returning Officer.
4. A commitment and contribution to the Council’s Equal Opportunities Policy is an essential requirement of the post.
5. The post holder will carry out all duties and activities having regard to the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and in accordance with any instructions from senior members of staff under that Act or any Council or Departmental Codes of Practice or Procedures.
6. The post holder must ensure that data quality and integrity is maintained and that data is processed in accordance with council policy, the Data Protection Act, the Freedom of Information Act and other legislation
7. The post holder will comply with Statute and Council Policy in all respects.
8. An awareness and commitment to section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which places a statutory duty on police and local authorities to work in partnership to reduce crime and promote community safety. It is also required that community safety is to be a thread running through all functions of the Authority.
9. An awareness of the Council’s statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and of the statutory duties in respect of modern slavery and human trafficking.
10. A commitment to excellent customer service and the values of the Council.

**Gravesham Borough Council**

**Service Manager (Revenues & Benefits) - Person Specification**

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| **Skills and Abilities** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| 1. | Ability to provide strong leadership, customer focus and integrity in the delivery of a quality Revenues & Benefits Service. | Y |  |
| 2. | Ability to effectively apply performance management practices and to motivate and inspire staff in the pursuit of excellence. | Y |  |
| 3. | Ability to work effectively in the political environment; able to secure and sustain the full confidence of Elected Members. | Y |  |
| 4. | Highly-developed advocacy, influencing and negotiating skills; highly effective in partnership working. | Y |  |
| 5. | Ability to be effective in decision-making and problem solving, using own initiative. | Y |  |
| 6. | Ability to interpret complex data sets and financial information. |  | Y |

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| **Qualifications and Training** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| 1. | Must possess a relevant professional qualification from a recognised professional organisation e.g. (IRRV) | Y |  |

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| **Experience** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| 1. | Practical experience of working in a Revenues & Benefits environment at a senior level. | Y |  |
| 2. | Record of delivering service improvement; able to demonstrate high quality delivery against challenging targets. | Y |  |
| 3. | Experience of preparing and monitoring financial budgets. |  | Y |
| 4. | Experience of working with Elected Members. |  | Y |

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| **Qualities** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| 1. | Excellent communicator; articulate and persuasive both orally and in writing. | Y |  |
| 2. | Resilience to meet the challenge of operating in a high-pressure environment. | Y |  |
| 3. | Ability to think creatively and develop imaginative solutions. | Y |  |
| 4. | Ability to encourage creativity, innovation and improvement in others. |  | Y |

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| **Special Conditions** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| 1. | Attendance at evening meetings. | Y |  |