

**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**  
**CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>POST TITLE:</b>	Head of Revenue and Benefits and Shared Bailiff Service
<b>Grade:</b>	MG2
<b>DIVISION/SECTION:</b>	Customer Services
<b>Location:</b>	Merton Civic Centre
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Assistant Director of Resources
<b>Post number:</b>	<b>Date: August 2019</b>

#### **MAIN PURPOSE**

1. To lead on all aspects of the strategic development and operational management of Merton's revenues and benefits service (council tax, business rates, benefits, sundry debt, welfare benefits and in house Civil Enforcement) ensuring that the service meets the diverse needs of Merton's residents.
2. To be a member of the Divisional Management Team and participate in the overall management of the Division.
3. To provide leadership and direction to develop effective working within the Council Tax Collection, Recovery, Business Rates, Shared Bailiff service, benefits claims and appeals processing teams, sundry debt, welfare benefits and local welfare support.
4. To make a proactive contribution to the overall management, development and reputation of the department and the Council taking the lead on specific cross service and corporate initiatives such as welfare reform.

#### **MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. To provide advice to the Leader, Members, the Director, Assistant Director, Head of Services and managers across the authority on council tax, business rates, benefits and debt recovery.

2. To ensure that current legislation and best practice principles for the provision of local taxation and benefits services are adhered to and that the Council's statutory duties are met at all times with regards to the collection of local taxes and award of housing benefit.
3. Provide strategic leadership, direction and support to staff within the service to ensure effective management of resources to achieve standards and continuous improvements in the delivery of the service
4. To be responsible for the section budget in excess of £5 million per annum, (staffing budget £4.2 million) responsible for achieving income targets of over £2 million through fees, collecting in excess of £200 million in council tax and business rates and awarding £80 million in housing benefit.
5. To represent the Director and Assistant Director or council as appropriate at external meetings.
6. To develop with Sutton Council the strategic and operational plan for the Shared Bailiff Service to maximise income. To identify opportunities for expansion of the unit both internally and externally through bidding for external contracts where appropriate.
7. To represent Merton Council on the Shared Bailiff Governance Board and to be responsible for providing strategic reports and performance statements to the board.
8. Responsible for the collection of business rates, council tax and sundry debt ensuring high levels of collection ensuring robust measures are in place to maximise income collection whilst dealing sensitively with vulnerable residents and Adult Social care debt
9. Responsible for the payment of housing benefit and local council tax support to the Council's residents ensuring accurate awards of benefit. Responsible for completion and verification of the yearly housing benefit grant claim, meeting external audit and DWP validation.
10. Manage the external audit of grant claims and systems audits ensuring accurate and value for money audits are completed
11. Ensure customer focussed, effective and efficient provision of a comprehensive range of services including but not exhaustively the following:
  - Council Tax
  - Business Rates
  - Sundry Debt
  - Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support
  - Bailiff Service
  - Shared Bailiff Service

- Local Welfare Support Scheme
- Welfare Benefits

12. Advise the Assistant Director and Director on forecasted income for the medium to long term relating to council tax and business rates.
13. Responsible for forecasting medium to long term business rates appeals provision for the council having regard for the potential loss of income for the council.
14. Lead of the effective provision and management of outsourced services relevant to revenues and benefits including, Civil Enforcement contracts, debt recovery contracts for Adult Social Care debts and relevant IT systems
15. Ensure adherence to the Council's policies, standing orders, financial regulations, scheme of management and other departmental and corporate procedures and policies.
16. Manage the section ensuring that recruitment, training, development, appraisal, performance, workload allocation, supervision, quality assurance, risk and other management activities are carried out in accordance with council policy.
17. Responsible for the security of all the systems used in the section and the integrity of the information having full regard to the Council's statutory duty and adherence to the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation.
18. Any other duties as requested by the Assistant Director or Director.

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**CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**POST TITLE:** Revenue and Benefits Manager

**Grade:** MG2

**Date:** August 2019

**Knowledge**

Detailed knowledge of housing benefits and local taxation legislation, including council tax and business rates.

In-depth knowledge of the legal framework within which local government finance operates and in particular those acts relating to Housing Benefits, Council Tax and Business Rates.

Knowledge and ability to contribute to the introduction and development of new systems both manual and computerised.

Sound working knowledge and experience of housing benefit and council tax support.

**Experience**

Experience of managing multi-disciplinary teams in revenues and benefits services and to manage a heavy workload and competing priorities.

Experience of successfully managing, supervising and training staff in a variety of functions.

Experience of managing high level and technically complex or high profile projects.

Experience of managing and controlling substantial budgets.

Experience of court attendance.

## **Skills**

Establish and maintain a culture of performance management to meet all elements of associated performance targets, including BVPI's and CPA inspection criteria.

Highly effective verbal and written skills to produce a range of committee, policy or similar reports and represent the organisation in a variety of forums.

Highly effective negotiation skills.

Ability to provide effective leadership in the management and motivation of staff to deliver the objectives of the section.

High level financial skills.

High level IT skills.

Demonstrable commitment to customer-focused/sensitive services and its application to the borough's population with particular reference to housing benefits, council tax and business rates and the needs of the community.

Understanding of and commitment to quality and equality of opportunity in all areas of activity of the service.

Ability to effectively promote and expand the services of the service as appropriate.

Innovative to secure service improvements and respond to customer needs.