



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Welfare Manager		
Directorate	Finance and Procurement		
Reporting to	Head of Revenues and Welfare		
Grade	8		
Evaluation ref:	RP278	Job Family ref:	
Role Purpose			
<p>The Welfare Manager's role at Somerset Council is pivotal in leading and managing the delivery of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, and other discretionary welfare schemes, ensuring compliance with legislation, maximisation of welfare take-up, and supporting vulnerable residents. The Welfare Manager will play a key role in shaping welfare policy, improving service delivery, and contributing to the financial resilience of the authority.</p> <p>Central Government may also ask Local Authorities to administer ad-hoc financial schemes, such as Test and Trace payments during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Welfare Manager will be key to managing these schemes and ensuring the Council meets its statutory duties in the administration of these schemes.</p> <p>This role is crucial in fostering a culture of financial accountability and continuous improvement within the council, contributing to the overall strategic objectives and service delivery excellence.</p>			
Accountabilities			
Strategic and Operational Leadership:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead the Welfare team, setting clear objectives and ensuring high performance across all areas of service delivery, whilst ensuring the service operates in full compliance with relevant legislation, regulations, and council policies.• Develop and implement strategies to maximise subsidy income and reduce overpayments, whilst being mindful of the residents being served and any vulnerabilities that may exist.• Be the responsible person for audits, both internal and external, and acting on any audit recommendations as well as being responsible for statutory returns such as HBDR and annual subsidy claims.			
Service Management:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oversee the accurate and timely processing of and payments of entitlements, and any other expenditure as directed, whilst managing discretionary and ad-hoc payments in line with statutory requirements and local policy.			

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- Support in the monitoring and reporting of key performance indicators, identifying trends and implementing corrective actions where necessary.
- Ensure payments of Housing Benefit are released in conjunction with the Business Development and Technical Support team on a weekly basis.

People Management:

- Directly line manage senior officers, providing coaching, support, and development opportunities as well as completing 1-2-1s and annual appraisals, or equivalents. This is in addition to leading, motivating, and developing the Welfare Team to deliver high-quality services, ensuring staff are trained in relevant legislation, systems, and customer service standards. This will include the promotion of a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and customer focus.
- Lead on recruitment, training, and performance management within the Welfare team.

Financial and Risk Management:

- Contribute to the council's financial planning by providing accurate forecasts of income and expenditure, including the reporting of and management contribution towards overpayment identification and subsidy income and shortfall
- Identify and manage risks associated with payments of welfare to ensure robust internal controls and audit compliance are in place to prevent fraud, both internal and external.

Customer and Stakeholder Engagement:

- Working alongside advocacy agencies such as Citizen's Advice and internal Council departments such as Housing, promote welfare entitlement take-up and ensure residents correctly receive the support they are entitled to.
- Handle complex cases and complaints, ensuring a customer-focused approach whilst adhering to the regulations in place.

Policy and Systems Development:

- Through monitoring changes in welfare policy and assessing their impact on service delivery and residents, support the development and review of Welfare policies and procedures, overseeing the effective use of IT systems (e.g. NEC) and supporting digital transformation initiatives, ensuring data quality, integrity, and compliance with GDPR and all relevant legislation, including Housing Benefit Regulations, Council Tax Reduction Schemes, and DWP guidance. This includes involvement in the annual billing exercise.



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Knowledge / Experience / Skills		
	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Proven expert understanding of relevant legislation and local policies, including Housing Benefit Regulations, Council Tax Reduction Schemes and DWP guidance.	E	
Authority and credibility to work effectively in a political environment, building productive relationships, and engaging successfully with colleagues, partners and customers.	E	
Knowledge of the annual yearend process, the legislation and processes involved and how these tie in with Council budgets and other services e.g. Finance, Revenues	E	
Knowledge of strategic commissioning and outcome-based service design		D
Understanding of data governance , predictive analytics, and digital service platforms.	E	D
Familiarity with public sector financial frameworks , including MTFS and budget setting.	E	
Experience		
Proven experience in managing a welfare team within a local authority	E	
Experience and ability to manage challenging situations , including complaints, and vulnerable customers.		D
Experience of representing a Local Authority in an official capacity and dealing with stakeholders e.g. members, financial advocacy agencies	E	
Demonstrates behaviours which model the council's values	E	
Experience in policy development, compliance, and audit response.	E	
Experience in stakeholder management and presenting financial information.	E	
Experience of the annual billing exercise, the legislation and processes involved and how this ties in with Council budgets and other services e.g. Finance	E	
Experience in negotiating with external partners, including government departments and funding bodies.	E	

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Experience in developing and implementing strategic policy across multiple services.	E	
Experience in leading cross-functional projects or transformation programmes.		D
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
Membership or Qualification with the IRRV	E	
Degree level, or proven experience	E	
Formal leadership or management qualification, or equivalent experience	E	
Conflict Resolution or Complaint Handling Training		D
Skills		
Excellent leadership and team management skills	E	
Strong communication and negotiation skills.	E	
Proficiency in data analysis, report writing, and statutory returns.	E	
Strong leadership, team motivation, and performance management capabilities	E	
Proficiency in Revenues, Welfare and Benefits systems e.g. NEC	E	
Able to analyse complex information quickly, reaching, and articulating decisions with clarity, to deliver solutions that command support	E	
Excellent interpersonal skills to inspire, motivate, and develop organisational thinking to achieve high levels of performance.	E	
Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.	E	
Ability to develop and implement policies and procedures.	E	
Strong organisational and time management skills.	E	
Excellent communication and presentation skills.	E	
Good understanding of the key risks facing the service (both financial and non-financial).	E	

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Strategic thinking and systems leadership .	E	
Ability to influence senior stakeholders , including elected members and external agencies.		D
Advanced data interpretation and insight generation to inform policy and service delivery.		D
Strong change management and project delivery skills	E	

Working Conditions

This role involves working within a dynamic and supportive local authority environment. Candidates should be prepared for the following conditions:

- **Work Hours:** Standard working hours are 37, with occasional requirements for evening or weekend work to meet project deadlines or attend community events.
- **Location:** The work location will be based at one of Somerset Council's offices, to be decided upon offer of position, with opportunities for remote working as per organisational policies.
- **Travel:** Some travel within the local area may be required for meetings, site visits, and community engagement activities.
- **Work Environment:** The role involves working both independently and as part of a team, with access to modern office facilities and resources.
- **Health and Safety:** Adherence to all health and safety regulations is mandatory, ensuring a safe working environment for all employees.

Dimensions of the role

Working Arrangements

Somerset Council's Dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.

Corporate Accountabilities

- Provide clear leadership to deliver the Council's strategic priorities and meet the Council's financial targets, as a member of the Directorates Senior Leadership Team.
- Update and advise Elected Members in respect of operational and policy issues in relation to the Finance and Procurement Services teams.

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- Lead Finance and Procurement teams with a clear identity in terms of flexible and responsive ways of working, inclusive and diverse culture, and high level of employee engagement and wellbeing.
- Undertake representational and communication duties on behalf of the Council to promote and protect the Council's interests in matters concerning their specialist areas.
- Create, monitor, and review frameworks of performance measures and quality standards to be applied in the delivery of services.
- Function as an ambassador for the Council promoting, both internally and externally, the Council's vision, strategic aims, and values.
- Value the diversity of Somerset's communities ensuring equality of access and treatment in service delivery and employment.
- Function as a role model for Somerset's vision and values. Promotes a culture of continuous improvement that encourages creativity and innovation to ensure services are efficient and develop the potential and flexibility across the Council and its workforce including the motivation and development of employees within the Finance and Procurement service teams.
- Ensure that Finance and Procurement services place a high value on customer responsiveness by demonstrating a commitment to meeting and involving the broadest range of direct and indirect service users, citizens, customers, communities, and businesses.
- Support the delivery of the Councils' key strategic aims and objectives ensuring understanding and commitment from staff from across the Finance and Procurement service.
- Support Corporate and Directorate and service specific transformational change programmes with the aim of maximising efficiency, modernising services, and achieving better outcomes and opportunities for service users and customers.
- Ensure flexibility in reacting to the needs of the Council, its' customers and partners supporting a culture of continuous improvement.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, the Council's standards of conduct, organisational policy, and professional codes of conduct to uphold standards of best practise.
- Accountable for compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation and Somerset Council H&S policies.

Date: