

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Recovery, Revenues and Welfare Senior Officer – Recovery		
Directorate	Finance and Procurement		
Reporting to	Recovery Manager		
Grade	12		
Evaluation ref:	TR0277	Job Family ref:	
Role Purpose			
The Senior Officer role (Recovery) at Somerset Council is to lead and support the effective delivery of debt recovery services across multiple income streams, including Council Tax, Business Rates, Housing Benefit Overpayments, and Sundry Debts. The Senior Officer (Recovery) plays a pivotal role in managing complex and sensitive cases, ensuring legal compliance, and promoting ethical recovery practices that balance income maximisation with customer support. The postholder will supervise day-to-day operations, provide technical guidance to colleagues, and contribute to service development, performance improvement, and the safeguarding of vulnerable customers. This role requires a high level of legislative knowledge, decision-making capability, and stakeholder engagement. The senior officer role will be responsible for the management and support of Recovery Officers across Somerset, including 1-2-1s, appraisals and performance. The role will also be required to deputise for the Recovery Manager where required.			
Accountabilities			
Operational Delivery			
- Lead on the end-to-end recovery process for unpaid debts, including issuing statutory notices (reminders, final notices, summonses), initiating enforcement action, and progressing cases through to liability orders and committal proceedings where appropriate. This will include attendance at courts for legal proceedings. - Manage a caseload of complex, high-value, or sensitive accounts, including those involving bankruptcy, insolvency, charging orders, and corporate debt recovery, whilst overseeing the referral and monitoring of cases passed to enforcement agents, ensuring compliance with contractual standards and ethical recovery practices. - Ensure timely and accurate updates to customer accounts, recovery records, and enforcement logs, maintaining audit trails and data integrity. This will include acting as a key contact for internal and external audits, ensuring compliance and proactively addressing risks to income loss or reputational damage.			

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Case Management & Customer Support

- Act as a senior point of contact for escalated customer queries, complaints, and disputes, providing clear, empathetic, and legally sound explanations of recovery processes and options.
- Assess individual customer circumstances, including financial hardship, vulnerability, and safeguarding concerns, to determine appropriate recovery action or alternative arrangements. This will require negotiating and monitoring of payment plans, ensuring they are realistic, sustainable, and compliant with council policy. To assist in this, the role will need to liaise with internal teams (e.g., Welfare, Housing, Adult Social Care) and external agencies (e.g., CAB, debt advice services) to support customers in financial difficulty and promote early intervention.

Compliance & Legislation

- Maintain comprehensive records to support enforcement action, legal proceedings, and audit requirements, whilst ensuring all recovery activity is conducted in accordance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including (but not limited to):
 - Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992
 - Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) Regulations
 - Housing Benefit Overpayment recovery rules under the Social Security Administration Act
 - Local Government Finance Act 1992
 - Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
 - Equality Act 2010

This will require the role to keep abreast of legislative changes, case law, and best practice, and disseminate updates to the team.

Team Support & Supervision

- Lead, manage supervise Recovery Officers, including allocating workloads, monitoring performance, and providing day-to-day guidance and the promotion of a collaborative and supportive team culture, encouraging knowledge sharing and continuous learning. This will be achieved through day-to-day interactions as well as more formal meetings, such as 1-2-1s and appraisals, to identify opportunities for improvement and innovation.
- Support the induction, training, and ongoing development of Recovery Officers, sharing knowledge and promoting best practice. This will include contributing to team meetings, service planning sessions, and performance reviews, offering insights and suggestions for service improvement, aiming for continuous improvement, fostering a collaborative and supportive team culture.

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- Deliver training and coaching on recovery procedures, system use, and customer engagement techniques.

Systems & Reporting

- Use Revenues, Welfare and Benefits systems (e.g. NEC) to manage recovery workflows, update account information, and generate reports.
- Monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) and recovery targets, analysing trends and identifying areas for intervention, producing regular and ad hoc reports for management, highlighting progress, risks, and recommendations.

Knowledge / Experience / Skills

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Strong understanding of local government finance regulations, including recovery legislation and best practices in debt collection.	X	
Awareness and expert knowledge of enforcement legislation, insolvency law, and ethical recovery practices, including Breathing Space, insolvency procedures, and enforcement protocols.	X	
Knowledge of vulnerability assessments, safeguarding protocols, and welfare support mechanisms.	X	
Understanding of Revenues and Welfare service and the environment in which the service operates.		X
Experience		
Proven experience in debt recovery within a local authority or similar public sector environment	X	
Proven experience of managing a recovery team in a Local Authority setting.	X	
Experience of representing a Local Authority in a legal setting and dealing with stakeholders e.g. members, Enforcement Agents, customer	X	
Demonstrates behaviours which model the council's values	X	
Experience working in a local authority or public sector environment.	X	
Experience in interpreting and applying complex legislation, including case law and statutory guidance.	X	
Experience in responding to audits, FOIs, and complaints.	X	

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Experience in court representation and legal proceedings related to debt enforcement.	X	
Experience in stakeholder management and presenting financial information.		X
Experience in policy development, compliance, risk assessment and audit response.		X
Experience in managing financial risk, including subsidy loss prevention and budget monitoring		X
Experience and ability to manage challenging situations, including complaints and vulnerable customers.		X
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
Membership or Qualification with the IRRV	X	
3 'A' Levels at Grade A* to C, or equivalent qualification	X	
Formal leadership or management qualification, or equivalent experience	X	
Conflict Resolution or De-escalation Training		X
Skills		
Excellent leadership and team management skills	X	
Strong communication and negotiation skills.	X	
Proficiency in data analysis, report writing, and statutory returns.	X	
Strong leadership, team motivation, and performance management capabilities	X	
Good understanding of the key risks facing the service (both financial and non-financial).	X	
Able to analyse complex information quickly, reaching, and articulating decisions with clarity, to deliver solutions that command support	X	
Excellent communication and presentation skills.	X	
Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.	X	
Ability to develop and implement policies and procedures.	X	
Ability to coach and mentor staff, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and professional development.	E	
Strong organisational and time management skills.		X

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Excellent interpersonal skills to inspire, motivate, and develop organisational thinking to achieve high levels of performance.		X
Proficiency in Revenues, Welfare and Benefits systems e.g. NEC		X
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		
<i>Somerset Council's Dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.</i>		
Corporate Accountabilities		
Understand, uphold, and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.		

Date: 23/01/2026