

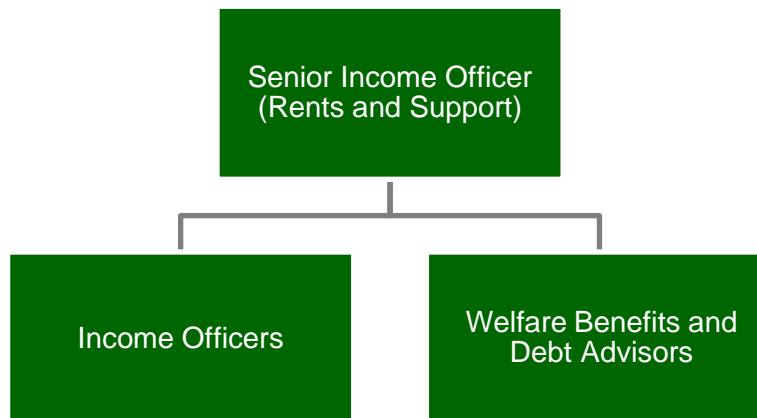
Job Description

Post Title	Income Officer
Post Number:	000492
Business Unit	Housing and Investment
Business Unit team	Managing Homes/ Income Services
Accountable To (<i>Line Manager</i>):	Senior Income Officer (Rents and Support)

Job purpose

- Delivery of an excellent income recovery, maximising income collection and delivering a modern, accessible, efficient and effective service.
- To adopt a consistent and preventative approach which focuses on tenancy sustainment emphasising tenants' responsibility to pay and allowing for help to be offered to those who need it, by monitoring and taking early preventative and appropriate action on accounts.

Organisational position



Key tasks, duties, responsibilities and accountabilities of the post

- Maximise the collection of arrears by being proactive in contacting tenants, providing them with clear information and recovery options.
- To manage rent accounts and other housing related debts, on a regular basis identifying trends and patterns on individual accounts and then liaise with tenants to rectify income issues and address arrears in line with the SBC's policies and procedures.
- To negotiate repayment agreements with tenants to clear arrears within reasonable timescales and take corrective action where such agreements are not maintained, adhering to the court Pre-action Protocol for Rent Possessions.
- Ensure recovery actions are taken within set timescales and according to relevant policy.

- Undertake affordability checks explaining payment requirements and ensure payment plans are maintained and take relevant proactive action where they are not.
- To refer tenants to welfare benefit and debt support services to maximise their income by ensuring take up of any entitlement to benefits and assist them in applying for backdated benefits, Discretionary Housing Payment and the submission of appeals.
- Identify vulnerable residents and make referrals to the support teams to ensure appropriate support is put in place.
- Liaise with Housing Benefit departments and with the DWP to ensure payments due are received and assist customers with their claims.
- Initiate and progress legal action and notices where appropriate within set timescales and in accordance with recovery policy and prepare legal documentation in accordance with the rents pre action protocol where required.
- Prepare and deliver, where required, legal documents for possession hearings and attend Court hearings and evictions.
- To work closely with other functions such as Resident and Estates, Repair and Voids, Housing options, Support and Lettings to building and maintaining strong and effective relations with residents, agencies, partners and communities and create a joined-up approach to customer needs and to income recovery.
- Working closely with the Debt Advisors, Housing Benefit and external agencies such as CAB, Credit Union, and national debt helpline to ensure that residents are fully aware of all the advice and support available to sustain their tenancies.
- To establish and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues and all involved professionals and agencies to ensure a collaborative approach to the delivery of income services
- Ensure that all housing rent accounts are correctly set up and maintained with rent adjustments being made in a timely fashion.
- Supporting other team members in income collection, recovery work, and other areas in relation to management of the Tenancy Agreement.
- To use existing resident profiling information to better understand our residents needs and behaviours
- Understand the nature and causes of debt and contribute towards SBC'S work to prevent increasing debt.
- Utilise Northgate system to monitor and record UC cases, tracking them during the first year for each case
- To deliver against annual team and individual targets for income collection arrears recovery.
- Attend and represent the SBC at court hearings, Tenancy Review meetings and multi – agency case conferences
- Maintain the housing management system with up to date and accurate information and record each customer contact in full and accurately on the housing management system.
- Required to work flexibly and use technology as required to ensure time is effectively used across the service provision.
- Meeting individual and team key performance indicators a and exceed targets
- To support and implement SBC's response to Welfare Reform changes
- Adhere to all SBC'S policies and procedures including any statutory requirements

The role's key contacts and level of relationships with individuals, groups of people, agencies and external organisations

- Executive Portfolio Holder's
- Local Councillors
- Housing management Board members
- MP's
- Ombudsman
- Resident Groups
- Tenants, Leaseholders and their representatives
- Solicitors
- Police, Fire Services and other public bodies
- Herts County Council
- Variety of Agencies and professional bodies including, local Charities, Institute of Housing, CAB, North Herts College, Probation services, Job Centre Plus, Department of Work Pensions, contractors

Governance, Corporate and other responsibilities

- Undertake any additional responsibilities as directed by the line manager commensurate with the level and grading for the role
- Adhere and ensure compliance to the Council's policies, rules and procedures including, Health and Safety, Equality & Diversity, information management including Data Protection, HR, all other legislative responsibilities, governance, financial and procedural rules.
- Ensure compliance to the organisation's Code of Conduct in the delivery and provision of services to staff and the community.
- Be prepared to undertake additional duties not included above that are appropriate to the job grade and qualifications, skill and experience as contained within the Person Specification, recognising that this Job Description will be kept under review and may be amended at the Council's discretion to ensure organisational needs are met.

Behaviours and competencies

- Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff, volunteers and recruitment candidates to share this commitment. SBC shall take all reasonable steps to employ staff who are safe to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. For posts identified with regular contact with these groups applicants will be required to undertake a Value Based Interview. The council supports the legislative requirements for employing and maintaining safer staff and the guidance specified by [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board](#).

Person Specification

	Required Skills and Competencies	Essential	How to be Assessed Application Test Interview
Knowledge, Skills and Abilities	GCSE's at Grade A-C including English language and Mathematics (or equivalent)	Essential	Application
	HND / HNC Housing Qualification or equivalent practical knowledge and experience of housing management.	Desirable	Application
	Proficient in Microsoft Office and Intermediate level ability in Microsoft Excel, Word and Outlook and willingness to develop computer based skills	Essential	Application, Test, Interview
	Working knowledge of Housing Legislation and Housing Best Practice and understanding of the legal framework relating to Income collection arrears and debt recovery	Essential	Application, Interview
	Knowledge of Welfare Reform and changes brought about by the Welfare reform	Essential	Application, Interview
	Knowledge of Debt Advice, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit and other Welfare Benefits	Desirable	Application
	Proven ability to negotiate payments and collect debts within a social housing or credit control background.	Essential	Application, Interview
	Excellent customer focus	Essential	Application, Test, Interview
	Ability to deal calmly and confidently in emotional or potentially violent situations.	Essential	Application, Interview
	Proven ability to work in a target-driven environment.	Essential	Application, Interview
	Ability to work to tight deadlines in a pressurised environment	Essential	Application, Interview
	Excellent oral and written communication skills	Essential	Application, Interview
	Excellent organisational skills.	Essential	Application

	Required Skills and Competencies	Essential	How to be Assessed Application Test Interview
	Ability to effectively manage time and workloads and	Essential	Application, Interview
	Excellent interpersonal skills, including being able to achieve positive outcomes	Essential	Application, Interview
	Ability to deal calmly and confidently in emotional or potential violent situations.	Essential	Application, Interview
	Resilience to deal with complex and challenging cases.	Essential	Application, Interview
	Problem solving and quick learner	Essential	Application
	Ability to prepare written and digital records and maintain accurate records	Desirable	Application
	Ability to demonstrate excellent numerical skills and excellent attention to detail.	Essential	Application, Test, Interview
	Ability to work under own initiative as well as part of a team.	Essential	Application, Interview
	Ability to build effective and positive working relationships.	Essential	Application, Interview
	Ability to work to procedures, guidelines, targets and deadlines	Essential	Application, Interview
Experience	Experience of dealing with service users/public/customers	Essential	Application, Interview
	Experience of managing and controlling outstanding debts and arrears	Desirable	Application
	Experience of collaborative working across multiple departments and agencies to achieve successful outcomes	Essential	Application, Interview
	Experience of working in an environment that supports vulnerable adults.	Essential	Application, Interview
	Experience in representation at court and other legal processes	Desirable	Application
	Experience of collecting and collating information.	Essential	Application, Test
	Experience of working in a performance management environment.	Desirable	Application, Interview

	Required Skills and Competencies	Essential	How to be Assessed Application Test Interview
	Experience in the development and meeting of personal and team performance targets	Desirable	Application
	Experience of using a Housing Management systems	Desirable	Application
	Experience in negotiations with external parties	Essential	Application, Interview
	Understanding of GDPR and Confidentiality Issues.	Essential	Application, Interview
	Understanding of Safeguarding Adults and Children	Essential	Application, Interview
Any other attributes required for the role not mentioned above	Ability and willingness to travel to other locations as required for the role	Essential	Application
	Flexible attitude to working hours at early mornings and evenings having regard to the needs of the service.	Essential	Application
	Have a full UK driving License and access to a vehicle or independent means of travel to clients and external meetings.	Desirable	Application
	A commitment to continuous improvement, always looking for new and better ways of doing things	Essential	Application
	DBS check will apply.	Essential	Application