

1 Head of Service – Role profile – Revenues and Benefits

Job Title	Head of Service - Revenues and Benefits
Pay scale and spinal points	
Reports to	Director / ACE
Service area	Corporate Services
No of staff responsible for	[5] Staff direct reports [c210 staff in total] including indirect reports
Budget responsible for	Responsibilities as at 2009/10 £7m direct gross budget p.a. in various cost centres In addition some one off project budgetary responsibility on an ad hoc basis (currently Civica system replacement budget c£4m) Revenue Collectable on an annual basis £440m Benefit Spend on an annual basis c£215m

1.1 HOS Revs & Bens -Purpose of the Job

- As a member of the senior leadership team, to contribute to the overall leadership, direction and management of the relevant service in the context of local and national priorities.
- To provide a professional lead across the service on Revenues and Benefit issues
- Drive the improvement/transformation agenda within the service and develop capacity in key areas to support services in meeting local and Corporate objectives
- To be a key player within the service in a management capacity who is actively seeking and applying best practice and innovative methods of service delivery.
- To promote and safeguard the welfare of vulnerable people, ensuring this principle, culture and practice is embedded throughout all Council services, including stakeholders and partners in compliance with national and local procedures and protocols,
- To provide excellent services and leadership to the Revenues and Benefits service currently including Council Tax, Business Rates, Income, Cashiers, Security Collections, Control Team, Student Finance and Benefits within a climate of continuous improvement and vfm to ensure performance is maximised.
- To maximise the income collected by the Council from customers – Council Tax, Business Rates and other income within the parameters of statute
- To maximise the subsidy returned by central government to Barnet for Housing Benefits
- To lead across the Council on Revenue related issues and determine strategy regarding payment methods/options, cash and cheque security etc
- To work with the Section 151 Officer on strategy for maximising the Collection Fund,
- All in accordance with the Council's constitution and policies, budget allocation and statutory requirements.
- To be responsible to the Director for the effective management and efficient performance of Revenues and Benefits within the service
- To ensure that all activities across the Council are managed within the broader context of future shape
- To act as a change agent to assist the Council manage and implement change programmes
- To lead by example and effectively manage people, projects and budgets effectively at all times

1.2 HOS Revs & Bens - Key Accountabilities

- To develop strategy for the council in the revenue generation/maximisation environment in particular and be a key player in corporate contracts such as the banking contract and other financial contracts as appropriate
- To ensure sound processes and procedures are in place to ensure all systems (Pericles, SAP AR, AXIS etc) are reconciled, that appropriate financial controls are in place, the cashbooks are reconciled to the council's bank account and random system access and use checks are in place.
- To ensure Corporate compliance with standards such as PCI DSS and coordinate with other related departments and teams affected
- Ensure the Corporate Debt Policy is maintained, communicated and enforced as necessary
- To ensure the annual subsidy claim to the government for housing benefits is completed, ensuring this maximises the income the Council will receive.
- To work with and provide expert advice to the S151 Officer/Strategic Finance with regard to setting the councils taxbase, identifying trends both internally and externally to ensure a balanced budget is set and achievable with regard to the Collection Fund in particular
- Ensure procedures are in place to identify business critical events occur such as the annual main billing runs, debt recovery annual timetables and billing regimes, accurate and timely benefit assessment, database accuracy and access, reconciliation of the various systems etc
- Ensure effective performance management systems are in place and checks/balances and demarcation of duty occurs at key points to ensure data integrity and financial security
- To make appropriate returns to the government and other external agencies
- To work proactively with Services on delivering appropriate means of billing and recovery in the area of Miscellaneous Income in particular and advise and ensure good financial stewardship is maintained in Services across the council as applicable.
- To negotiate contracts and agreements with partners/external suppliers, aimed at securing the councils objectives and best interest at all times, some specific examples being the Revenues and Benefit IT systems contract, Corporate Banking Contract and general Revenue related contract such as bailiff/trace agencies etc
- Ensure internal and external audit recommendations are implemented or responded to where not practical or cost effective
- Ensure risk to the councils cashflow is minimised by highlighting issues early and the potential for fraud is minimised
- Make recommendations in respect to discretionary powers associated with revenues and benefits
- Maintain relationships with other Local Authorities, the IRRV and CIPFA to monitor developments in the provision of revenue and benefit services
- Maintain good working relationships with Heads of Service and coordinate Revenue and Benefit related issues across the council as required
- To ensure the Council's information systems for revenue collection and benefit payments are accurate and up to date
- To deliver an efficient, cost-effective and well-rated Student Finance service

1.3 HOS Revs & Bens - Managing Service Direction

- As a Head of Service, to formulate the strategic direction, priorities and plans for the service, making a major contribution to the way the Council delivers its services
- Provide clear, visible and motivational leadership to create a high performance culture that drives continual improvement, efficiency savings and high levels of customer satisfaction.
- Anticipate and manage trends and changes in the operating environment and plan to meet these changes in order to provide best value for service users.

-
- To ensure that every opportunity to maximise council resource is achieved
 - Promote, develop and manage effective partnership working and strategic alliances, with internal and external stakeholders, including, authorities, partner organisations, and agencies in order to achieve continuous improvement in the provision of services and input into policy developments in own area of expertise.
 - Build and lead strong teams, communicating the vision and objectives of the service to ensure effective delivery to the agreed service standards and targets.
 - Act as a professional advisor to the Council, Cabinet, and Chief Executive, Director and Assistant Director on all issues relating to the Revenues and Benefit service.

1.4 HOS Revs & Bens - Strategy and Policy Development

- Play a major role in contributing to the development and implementation of corporate and service strategies to secure the continuous improvement and high quality services.
- Manage strategic and tactical delivery of a suite of complex, service related systems and processes.
- Contribute to plans devised by the Director/Assistant Director to produce strategic options which implement the Council's corporate plan and service objectives as determined by Members.
- As a Head of Service identify, analyse and implement the impact of new legislation, government policy and all other developments which may impact on the Service Area.
- To lead on cross cutting projects and policy reviews in the Service, in accordance with corporate standards of project management.
- To ensure services comply with reasonable good practice with regard to revenue collection matters generally and lead on payment methods use and strategy across the council to secure the achievement of wider cross-service council aims
- Identify changes in the operating environment, trends, and development of legislation, technology , policy, and general delivery methods and prepare plans/proposals in response to these changes accordingly
- To lead across the council on revenue related issues and determine/advise on strategy regarding payment methods/options etc across the council
- Monitor the use and cost effectiveness of different methods of paying for council services/taxes etc and make recommendations on changes to the options available to council residents, businesses and other users of council services

1.5 HOS Revs & Bens - Performance and Customer Focus

- Develop and implement coherent business, service and workforce plans to support the delivery of high quality performance and provide high value for money which minimises risk.
- Develop and implement rigorous and effective performance management processes to drive forward service improvements, including managing, monitoring and reporting on service performance

-
- Communicate with employees so that they understand the aims of the council and understand how their individual performance contributes to improved services encouraging and developing optimum performance from staff.
 - Ensure all relevant performance indicators are submitted in a timely and accurate manner to Government/Council and that they are clearly understood. Ensure performance information is used to continually improve services across the division and establish a continuous improvement programme within Revenues and Benefits that constantly challenges and seeks improvement and efficiencies
 - Conduct regular bench mark activities that compares the performance and value for money from Council let contracts with other alternative internal or external service providers
 - Underline the corporate approach to customer services, as reflected in Barnet's structure and style, and ensure that the highest standards of customer care are delivered and maintained.

1.6 HOS Revs & Bens - Financial Responsibilities

- The Revenues and Benefit Service is responsible for all the major income streams of the council and as such is key to the overall financial wellbeing. It is imperative that systems are maintained and developed to maximise cashflow, databases and overall income levels from all sources external and internal. With the large value of debt handled including cash and cheques, risks need to be minimised and systems in place to ensure misallocation, fraud, theft etc are mitigated.
- The Councils strongroom and cheque production are also handled within the Revenues and Benefit Service. A secure environment must be maintained at all times with limited access and controls in place re cash, blank cheques etc.
- To lead on the development and implementation of effective financial, planning, monitoring and management systems within the service to ensure the delivery of value for money, cost efficient and high quality services.
- Pro-actively manage capital expenditure, income and revenue expenditure for the Service area. Ensure that services provided are managed, monitored and adjusted to meet financial services and business targets in line with Member priorities
- Be responsible for the contract management of all projects within area of control. Including certifying payments, certificates and that instructions issued ensure the proper administration of contracts and compliance with financial regulations
- In the relevant service area, prepare bids, justification for financial support, agreement of programmes and the execution of all management functions to obtain external funding from Central Government, Greater London Assembly, and other appropriate funding sources.
- To comply with budget management responsibilities and ensure compliance of other team members managing budgets
- To respond to internal audit reviews and implement action plans within agreed deadlines.
- To manage risk assessments for the Revenues and Benefit teams
- To review business processes to minimise the risk of fraud, and alert CAFT in respect of any suspected incident.

1.7 HOS Revs & Bens - Leadership and Management

- Provide clear, visible, motivational leadership and management within the service area, and to create a high performance culture that drives continuous improvement, efficiency savings and high levels of citizen satisfaction. Contribute to the senior management team.
- Through effective planning and resourcing, provide robust strategic leadership and effective management of Revenues and Benefit services and its staff, ensuring that it is an effective, high performing team capable of delivering Member's priorities.
- Within service area, to lead on all aspects of staff management including recruitment, induction, production of personal objectives, monitoring of staff performance data, delivery of performance appraisals, management of poor performance and learning and development.
- Provide sufficient management guidance and information and embed good people management skills in managers across the service area, making Barnet Council an exemplar employer where there is high performance and high levels of productivity and morale.

1.8 HOS Revs & Bens - Programme & Project Management

- Within service area, deliver all projects to a high standard and within corporate project and programme management standards
- Monitor and control performance against plans, reporting as appropriate
- Ensure that projects are reviewed on a regular and systematic basis with lessons learned captured and appropriate action taken. Review lessons learnt and contribute these across the service.

1.9 HOS Revs & Bens - Communication & Influence

- Through clear and effective communication, secure and support the implementation of council and service priorities.
- Promote a positive image of the council and the borough, both internally and externally, and support the implementation of the council's values.

1.10 HOS Revs & Bens - Diversity

- Deliver the Council's commitment to equality of opportunity both in the provision of services and as an employer. Promote equality of opportunity for employees and service users by establishing a culture of fairness, respect and mutual support
- Ensuring that the Council is able to deliver its responsibilities in relation to equalities

1.11 HOS Revs & Bens - Health and Safety

- Promote and safeguard the welfare of vulnerable people, ensuring this principle, culture and practice is embedded throughout all council services, in compliance with national and local procedures and protocols.
- Ensure safe and efficient delivery of service by achieving high standards of health and safety and reducing risk.

1.12HOS Revs & Bens – Person Specification

1.12.1 HOS Revs and Bens - Qualifications Required:

Type	Level required
Professional qualifications/memberships	<i>Recognised professional qualification and substantial continuing professional development. Fully qualified IRRV is desirable</i>
Management	<i>Management qualification or on the job experience supplemented with relevant training</i>
Education	<i>Educated to degree standard, post graduate qualification, MBA or equivalent, or relevant experience</i>

1.12.2 HOS Revs and Bens - Technical / Knowledge Requirements:

Type	Description
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>At least 5 years experience of having successfully led a Revenues and/or Benefits team in a similar sized organisation is essential</i>• <i>Experience of having delivered significant improvements/change in a Revenues and/or Benefits environment is essential</i>• <i>Extensive knowledge, experience and understanding of the major issues facing the service specifically in a Revenues and Benefits area</i>• <i>Experience of managing within a complex environment.</i>• <i>Experience of leading and managing a large and successful team.</i>• <i>A thorough understanding of the legislation and statutory framework affecting service delivery in this area</i>• <i>Extensive experience of successfully implementing projects and/or programmes</i>• <i>Evidence of successful leadership and financial management at a senior level</i>• <i>Experience of effectively managing and supporting people</i>• <i>Experience of effectively managing change</i>• <i>Experience of effectively managing complex budgets</i>
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Advanced level of specific and general IT skills relevant to the position</i>• <i>High level of verbal, written and numerical skills</i>• <i>Extensive working knowledge of analysing, interpreting and applying data effectively</i>• <i>Extensive experience specifically in a Revenues and/or Benefits environment</i>

1.12.3 HOS Revs and Bens - Behavioural Competencies:

Competency	Level
Political Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Able to work effectively in a political environment and establish positive relationships with Councillors, senior managers, staff and external partners, to establish confidence, trust and credibility.</i>
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Able to provide leadership to staff in a complex environment</i> • <i>Able to provide vision and direction to team members</i> • <i>Able to make independent decisions that have a significant impact on daily operations and strategic direction.</i> • <i>Ensure there is a culture that values continuous personal and professional development</i> • <i>Promotes a culture that values continuous personal and professional development</i> • <i>Knowledge of leading multi-professional teams to deliver project goals. Able to formulate and implement strategic and operational plans.</i> • <i>Able to ensure that users of services and community interests are the focal point of decision making.</i>
Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Able to analyse complex information quickly, reaching and articulating decisions with clarity, to deliver solutions that command support.</i>
Staff Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Able to develop individuals or groups of staff with clearly identifiable milestones for progress and achievement.</i> • <i>Able to create positive employee relations climate where staff are involved, empowered and committed.</i> • <i>Able to motivate staff, set priorities and targets, direct and plan work to provide an integrated service to meet service standards/deadlines.</i>
Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Able to adopt an imaginative, flexible approach in achieving Barnet's vision of "a successful suburb in a successful London".</i> • <i>Capable of reviewing and evaluating results against quality standards, sharing this learning with others and taking decisive action to ensure that plans are delivered.</i> • <i>Proven experience of managing in a change environment to achieve success</i> • <i>Able to analyse change proposals to ensure best fit with future shape</i>
Team work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Highly effective communication and influencing skills</i> • <i>Proven experience in, working effectively as part of a senior leadership team.</i> • <i>Success in building, maintaining and leading teams, working in partnership with others and delivering to a shared goal.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Able to enthuse and motivate staff to achieve challenging objectives.</i>
Communication, Influencing & Negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers professional and persuasive presentations to large internal and external groups • Maintains composure in difficult situations or when faced with opposition • Speaks up, even when views or messages may be unpopular • Positively influences the perceptions of people internally and externally • Builds strong and internal networks and uses them positively to benefit the organisation and its stakeholders • Applies skilful negotiation techniques to resolve conflict resolutions • Able to communicate complex issues in a clear and effective manner adapted as appropriate to the audience on matters affecting the service
<i>Performance Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A record of achievement in promoting and delivering service improvement, customer care, safeguarding and equality and diversity • Ability to maintain, develop and monitor performance indicators for services and use them proactively to improve performance • Able to deliver the council's commitment to equality of opportunity both in provision of services and as an employer • Ensure that managers and team leaders effectively undertake their responsibilities for managing the performance and development of their staff • Proven ability to manage own delivery in a planned and structured manner to initiate and implement service improvements