

Job Family:	Delivery – Front Line – Process knowledge	Grade:	6
Job Title:	Financial Assessment, Visiting and Payments Officer	Directorate:	Resources
Date:	24 July 2017	Version:	1:1

Role Profile - Details Specific to Job Family

These roles would be regarded as “front line” service delivery roles. Here, role holders are directly accountable for performance, often through the direct control of significant resources or through managed contracts. These roles may also deliver some of their results through collaborative working with co-producers or other third party agencies.

At the lower levels, operational managers may oversee a department or team and at the lowest levels, direct contact with service users will be a common feature of roles in this job family. At the higher levels, they may be in charge of a department, large operational area or the management of significant contracts and may be ultimately accountable for ensuring compliance with statutory obligations.

Role Profile - Details Specific to Grade

Operating with limited guidance or instructions so that initiative and judgement are needed to determine to address and resolve short term (daily) problems. Likely to supervise a small team, assessing workload and prioritising tasks for others.

Roles requiring a level of process expertise to deliver an advisory or supervisory service.

Brief Description of job role and department

The Shared Finance Service ambition is to add value, inspire success and this role is part of the Shared Finance Service (SFS) team collectively responsible for delivering SFS activities to realise this ambition.

The Financial assessment service within the Adult Social Care finance team comprises of Client Affairs - Appointeeship and deputyship functions, administration and monitoring of Direct Payments, financial assessments for adult social care services, benefit checks and the checking and processing payments to care providers. This role carries out financial assessment, supports income collection of £5.6m including payments to care providers for contracts valued at £35m per annum.

As a Financial Assessments, Visiting and Payment Officer, the post holder will have a key role in relation to safeguarding and joint working with Adult Social Care, will lead on service policy development and service improvement, and raise the profile of the service and ensure high levels of customer satisfaction.

Representative accountabilities

- Carry out independent but low risk interventions/assessments to identify customer needs or deliver services directly to customers.

- Assist more experienced colleagues in delivering complex service activities/assessments in order to meet or identify customer needs and develop own skills and experience.
- Provide advice and support to customers using Council procedures and policies.
- Where appropriate supervise the tasks and activities of other team members including prioritising and scheduling of work.

Budgetary accountabilities

- None

Specific accountabilities

Functional Responsibilities

- Maintain an extensive and up to date knowledge of statutory charging for residential care and non-residential charging policy and procedures, Government regulations and guidance, other associated welfare benefits and IT systems.
- Ensures Financial assessments in relation to users of care services are completed accurately and on time against set performance standards. Verifies benefit entitlement by liaising with officers from The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) in accordance with joint working protocols
- Assist in the calculation of overpayments and refers to the Accounts Receivable Team for recovery action
- Assist in Carrying out the Council's Deferred Payment policy in relation to treatment of property as an asset when a person enters permanent residential care.
- Assist in the calculation of any accrued debt as a result of acceptance to the Deferred Payment Policy.
- Assist in the processing of payments to service users and providers including schedule payments to suppliers
- Carry out financial assessments to establish applicants' eligibility for assistance with care fees. Determine the date from which the Borough will assist, and calculate the contributions service users should make towards the cost, liaising with the Department of Work and Pensions and other agencies as required. Notify service users (or their appointees) and their care managers of the outcome of assessments. Provide advice on claiming state benefits such as Income Support. Inform service users of the rules governing the end of eligibility to such benefits as Attendance Allowance and Disability Living Allowance.
- Plan and create systems for the issue of reassessment forms. Control the receipt of the forms, sending reminders as necessary. Reassess service users' contributions, notifying the service user and care home as appropriate. In cases of non-receipt, consider the withdrawal of Borough funding following consultation with the service user's care manager.
- Check, record and process invoices for payment in a prompt and accurate manner. Deal with related queries and general correspondence on a case-by-case basis.
- Create and maintain debtor accounts as necessary. Raise and issue invoices for services supplied. Raise and issue credit notes as required. Liaise with Income to reconcile accounts.
- Observe auditors' requirements for payment processing, cash-handling etc.
- Assist with the compilation of statistics and performance indicators.
- Assist in the budget monitoring process, including the production of financial management reports and the maintenance of spreadsheets.
- Keep abreast of legislation and guidelines issued by the Department of Work and Pensions, the Department of Health and implement accordingly.
- Provide advice on policies and procedures to service users (and their appointees), the general public, RBK colleagues and other professionals by telephone, letter and in person. Resolve service users' problems with state benefits claims (such as incorrect assessments), contacting the appropriate agencies as necessary.
- Monitors and reconciles direct payment accounts and service user returns to ensure funds are used appropriately in accordance with council procedures and policies. Identifies any

concerns about the how funds are used by providing relevant staff with accurate, relevant and timely information to support operational control. Applies finance and ASC procedures to decide when to escalate cases that require further attention because of their complexity or when potential financial abuse or fraud is identified.

- Undertakes visits to service users to explain the Council's personal budget policy and monitoring requirements including start-up and 6 week review meetings alongside social care workers, as required.
- Completes Financial Audit monitoring forms and collates all necessary financial documentation. Ensures that such information is appropriately shared and stored securely in accordance with the Council's and the department's policies and procedures.
- Scrutinises monitoring returns to ensure that direct payment usage complies with support plans personal budget agreements and The Councils Monitoring Procedure. Identifies discrepancies concerning non-compliant spending by liaison with ASC and finance staff. Sharing information arising from the monitoring process with the Care Manager, Team Manager and Finance Team. This may include raising issues or seeking advice on:
 1. Support needs
 2. Use of funds
 3. Safeguarding/financial abuse
 4. Capacity issues
 5. Notification of unspent monies
 6. Requests to suspend cash budgets
 7. Non-payment of contributions
- Escalates cases of fraudulent behaviour to senior finance staff in accordance with Finance Regulations and corporate procedures.
- Ensures that overpayment of direct payments is collected and paid into council funds in accordance with finance procedures
- Alerts managers to any failures in the direct payment process, and where required, works with colleagues in ASC and Finance to assist in bringing about necessary service improvements.
- Undertakes risk based assessments in accordance with the Personal Budget Monitoring Procedure to determine future scrutinisation levels
- Facilitates the transfer process where existing Personal Budget agreements are terminated to ensure alternative payment and income collection processes are implemented as required
- Interprets and conveys the requirements of direct payment statutory guidance to operational staff and senior managers in an understandable format, offering skills and expert advice when required
- Provides advice and support to direct payment service users within the context of council policies and procedures
- Works closely with the Advocacy and voluntary organisations to ensure timely support and information is given to Direct Payments users and to resolve any issues around the Council's Direct Payments policy and procedures
- Is self-motivated, with the ability to work to strict deadlines with minimal supervision, maintaining a high degree of accuracy at all times
- Visit service users to undertake benefit checks and complete claim forms as appropriate and to assist service users in completion of financial assessment forms to ensure charges are made correctly in relation to the Council's charging policy for care services
- Arrange and attend surgeries and drop in clinics to ensure benefits are maximised and financial assessment forms are completed correctly
- Maintain case notes on ASC and Finance information systems detailing outcomes of visits
- Liaise with DWP to ensure service users financial assessment information is maintained with up to date benefit income
- Ensure users are advised of the council's charging policy and provide relevant information regarding policies and processes

Performance

- Consistently achieves performance targets and celebrates success with team
- To develop, update and act on Personal Development Plans as discussed and agreed with the Adult Social Care Finance Lead
- To take responsibility for own performance, taking a proactive stance to ensure performance meets or exceeds standards required of the service.

Partnership working

- Demonstrate strong support for the Shared Finance Service, inspiring team to deliver partnership working across both councils
- Interface directly with external and internal customers to manage delivery priorities, issues and challenges
- Engage and maintain excellent relationships with the Placements Team, Care Managers, Welfare Benefits Unit, Legal Services and other RBK departments to ensure first-class communication
- Develop partnerships with rent recovery, financial inclusion, and accounts receivable finance teams internal service, service providers including Citizens Advice Bureau; and welfare reform within strategic business. Establish referral links to agencies who can give practical support and legal financial advice.
- Actively engage in the organisation of meetings, workshops and other events as required

Person specification (knowledge, skills, experience and behaviours required in the role)**Education and/or Experience**

- A minimum of 5 GCSEs (including English & Maths) or equivalent
- Experience of working in a customer-focused environment and achieving successful outcomes in areas such as financial assessments/money guidance/ debt /welfare benefit advice/ household budgeting or work in a similar finance field
- Knowledge of welfare benefits & planned welfare reforms e.g. Universal Credit

Desirable Knowledge and Experience

- Educated to Degree Level
- Member of the National Association of Financial Assessment Officers (NAFAO)

Capabilities and Behaviours

- Ability to clearly and effectively communicate verbally and in writing at all levels, with a good use of 'plain english'
- Ability to deal with members of the public in a sympathetic and tactful manner, often in a stressful situation.
- Ability to monitor and calculate payments, able to prepare & present stats
- Ability to organise and prioritise a demanding workload, working effectively under pressure, demonstrating effective time management skills
- Ability to work as part of a team as well as using your own initiative with a high degree of self motivation
- Team player – able to inspire confidence and respect
- Ability to communicate effectively with customers and understand their needs, often in emotional and sensitive situations. Empathy & a good understanding of the issues faced by customers, e.g. vulnerable people
- Use proficient ICT skills including corporate communication systems (Google, Agresso. Anite etc) and recognise the benefits and the potential of new technology
- Any other duties commensurate with the grade of the post as may be required from time to time, including attending meetings outside normal working hours.
- Must be fit / mobile in order to visit people in their own homes and able to climb stairs

- To be fully aware of and understand the principles of safeguarding as they apply to vulnerable adults in relation to work role.

Mandatory accountabilities/requirements for all LBS staff e.g.

- Ensure all health and safety standards are adhered to for the relevant work area
- To carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Council's Core Values and Equality and Diversity Policy and all other Borough and departmental policies and procedure
- Commits to the wellbeing of staff and actively promotes Health & Safety policies
- All duties should be carried out in an efficient, accurate and timely manner and in accordance with agreed procedures.
- To comply with the Council's Code of Conduct and ensure all personal data is kept confidential in compliance with the Data Protection Act and that all relevant interests are declared to your line manager.