

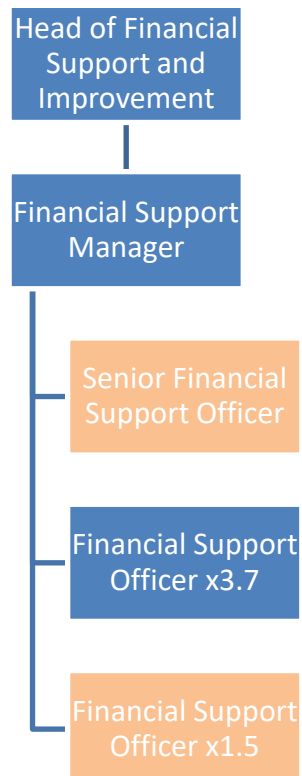
JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title	Financial Support Officer
Directorate	Finance and Assurance
Service	Financial Support and Improvement
Team	Resident Financial Support Service
Grade	E

DBS Check Required	Standard
Justification for DBS	Regulated Activity with Adults
Politically Restricted	No

Responsible to:	Financial Support and Manager
Employees directly supervised (if applicable):	None

Organisational structure chart *(job titles only, no employee names)*



1. JOB PURPOSE:

1. Deliver a compliant, consistent and person-centred resident financial support service across financial support schemes, including Home Start Essentials, crisis payments, housing payments and other schemes introduced in future, ensuring public funds are administered fairly, lawfully and in accordance with approved policies and financial controls
2. Assess and determine entitlement to discretionary financial support, using your own judgement to make independent decisions on eligibility, award values and methods of provisions through the assessment of complex financial and personal circumstances, supporting evidence including the interpretation of complex benefit awards, available resources and approved policy, evidence-based, equitable and aligned with Council policy, with timely issue of appropriate awards and clear communication of outcomes.
3. Contribute to sound financial control and consistent decision-making through accurate case assessment, independent determination of eligibility, award values and methods of support, quality assurance and continuous improvement where required.
4. Provide advice and support to residents and their representatives through a range of channels, including telephone, email, written correspondence and face-to-face contact where required by the service, including communicating sensitive or difficult decisions you have made to residents experiencing crisis, financial hardship, distress or dissatisfaction
5. Work as part of a self-managing team, taking responsibility for personal workload and shared operational delivery so that phones and emails are covered and applications are processed within agreed timescales.

2. DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:

1. Assess applications across resident financial support schemes, including Home Start Essentials, crisis payments and housing payments, ensuring decisions are accurate, timely and fully evidenced to meet policy and audit requirements, and exercising authority to determine eligibility and make discretionary awards decisions
2. Gather, verify and analyse financial and personal information, including income, expenditure, savings and housing costs, using information from Council systems DWP records and other relevant sources where available, taking the initiative to ensure eligibility decisions are based on complete and accurate evidence and a full understanding of the resident's circumstances by taking ownership of determining what evidence is required in the circumstances and assessing the information provided or sourced.
3. Determine entitlement, award values and method of provision using own professional judgement within the bounds of the approved policies, ensuring fair, consistent and proportionate outcomes aligned with scheme criteria, available funding levels, and responsive to individual need.
4. Maintain a good working knowledge of relevant legislation, policy, guidance and operational procedures relating to resident financial support schemes and associated areas of central government welfare support, applying this knowledge to make independent decisions in complex or sensitive cases.
5. Ensure compliance with statutory, regulatory and Council requirements, maintaining high standards of governance, verification, record keeping and audit readiness.
6. Identify residents experiencing immediate financial hardship and prioritise urgent cases to ensure timely and appropriate intervention, balancing urgency, available evidence, scheme requirements and risk when determining support.
7. Assess housing-related financial need, including rent shortfalls and related costs, contributing to tenancy sustainment and the prevention of homelessness where this falls within scheme rules, and use own judgement and understanding of available funds to make decisions about the degree and duration of financial support for rent shortfalls.
8. Exercise discretion within approved policies and procedures to make independent timely

decisions on applications and awards, taking account of individual circumstances, financial hardship, available resources and supporting evidence, and accepting responsibility for the outcome of these decisions.

9. Maintain accurate, complete and auditable case records across all systems, ensuring compliance with data protection and financial control requirements.
10. Provide clear, accurate and accessible advice to residents and their representatives by telephone, email, in writing and face to face where required, enabling informed decision-making and supporting access to appropriate financial assistance, including communicating complex and sensitive decisions to residents facing financial hardship, distress or dissatisfaction
11. Contribute with colleagues to the day-to-day self-management of operational delivery, taking shared responsibility for maintaining cover for phones, inboxes and application processing so service standards and agreed timescales are met.
12. Work collaboratively with colleagues to manage workloads, share knowledge, resolve operational issues and maintain continuity of service during periods of pressure, leave or change.
13. Identify potential fraud, misrepresentation or error in applications and escalate appropriately in line with Council procedures to safeguard public funds.
14. Undertake review, reconsideration or checking activity where required, including supporting the review of decisions or quality assurance of casework, to promote consistency, accuracy and learning across the service.
15. Direct residents to relevant support services, including welfare advice, debt support and community provision, enabling improved financial resilience and longer-term stability, including making referrals and supporting residents to access appropriate services where required.
16. Participate in audit, quality assurance, service review and improvement activity, identifying areas for improvement and contributing to actions that enhance consistency, performance and compliance.
17. Produce accurate and timely information and data to support service monitoring, reporting and decision-making requirements.
18. Undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the level and purpose of the post, including supporting additional financial support schemes introduced in future.

The duties and responsibilities outlined in this job profile are indicative of the role, however they are not exhaustive and may be subject to change. In addition, you will be required to undertake other reasonable duties as directed by your manager.

SELECTION CRITERIA/PERSON SPECIFICATION

Conditions to Note:

The person specification outlines the essential requirements the post holder or applicant must meet to fulfil the role and the duties outlined.

Candidates:

When completing your application form, please address your answers directly to each of the selection criteria below. This enables the panel to assess your ability to meet each criterion. It is essential that you give at least one example of your ability to meet each of the four Values and Behaviours: Putting Communities First, Respect, Integrity and Working Together.

Recruiting Managers:

The following values and behaviours are essential criteria in each post and must be addressed directly by candidates. The Guidance Notes on values and behaviours for managers give example questions to probe candidates in the interview and application stages of the recruitment process.

Resilience:

We encourage staff to assist the council during a significant emergency response which will focus on

meeting the needs of residents. This may necessitate staff involvement, and in exceptional circumstances, could involve redeployment to support the emergency response.

Informed by our learning from the Grenfell tragedy, senior managers (Head of Service and higher) are expected to play an active coordination and leadership role in the Council's broader emergency response efforts during major or serious incidents. This includes arranging urgent resources from their own services and rallying staff teams to help residents during their time in need.

Values & Behaviours

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea have identified four key behaviours and values that should be demonstrated by all council employees. Successful candidates will show the ability to meet these behaviours.

A	Equal Opportunities Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to Council policies in relation to Equal Opportunity, Customer Care and service delivery, and the ability to implement these policies in the workplace.
B	Qualifications/Training/Certificates Whilst formal qualifications are not strictly necessary, the candidate needs to be able to demonstrate the experience and skills required to perform the role.
C	Skills, knowledge and experience • Understanding of customer service and the importance of treating residents fairly, respectfully and with sensitivity, particularly when they may be experiencing hardship or vulnerability. • Working knowledge of welfare support, housing, financial support or related public services, or the ability to learn and apply this knowledge quickly. • Experience of working in a customer-facing, administrative or support role where accuracy, organisation and good record keeping are important. • Ability to gather information, check details and make balanced decisions based on evidence, guidance and the facts of each case. • Ability to assess financial and housing-related information and make balanced decisions based on individual circumstances and scheme criteria. • Ability to explain information clearly and communicate effectively by telephone, email, in writing and face to face where required. • Ability to communicate decisions clearly and sensitively, including where an application cannot be awarded, and to explain reasons in a way that is respectful and easy to understand. • Ability to remain resilient and professional when dealing with difficult conversations, distressed residents or situations where support cannot be provided. • Ability to identify and signpost residents to alternative support options, services or sources of advice where they are not eligible for a particular award or need wider help. • Ability to manage and prioritise workload, meet deadlines and work accurately in a busy environment. • Ability to work both independently and as part of a self-managing team, contributing to shared responsibility for phones, emails, application processing and service continuity. • Ability to work collaboratively with colleagues, share information and support the smooth day-to-day running of the service. • Ability to maintain accurate records and produce information to support monitoring, reporting and service performance. Awareness of the importance of following policy, procedures, data protection and financial controls.

- Ability to identify potential fraud, misrepresentation, error or risk and take appropriate action or escalation in accordance with procedures. Willingness to learn, develop knowledge and build confidence in decision-making, including supporting review or checking activity where required.

OUR VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

Our values and behaviours underpin everything we do.

They guide our interactions with residents, businesses, visitors, partners and each other.

They are also a measure of how well we've done.

Our Values & Behaviours	
D	PUTTING COMMUNITIES FIRST • We put local people at the heart of decision making in everything we do. • We seek to include and involve: all voices matter. • We provide quality services that are responsive, effective and efficient. The following examples are indicators of effective behaviour: • I actively involve and include the communities that I serve in my work. • I shall reflect the views of the communities in my daily work. • I shall improve the service I provide through seeking feedback from others. Our residents will feel that: • I have been included • I can see how my views have been taken into account • I can see improvements and developments based on my input
E	RESPECT • We listen to everyone and value the personal experiences of people in our communities and of each other. • We adopt a fair and involving approach regardless of any way in which an individual is different to us. The following examples are indicators of effective behaviour: • I adapt my approach to take account of all differences and cultures in the community and with colleagues.

	• I ensure I am equitable and fair by including those who are quiet or may not be able to represent themselves. • I communicate in a way that is respectful, encourages involvement and meets people's needs. Our residents will feel that: • I feel my culture and background are respected. • I have confidence that action is being taken. • I feel I am being treated fairly.
F	INTEGRITY • We act with openness, honesty, compassion, responsibility and humility. • We let people know what we are doing and communicate why and how decisions have been made. The following examples are indicators of effective behaviour: • I demonstrate empathy in my interactions with others. • I am honest and transparent about the decisions I take. • I follow through on the actions I say I will take and take ownership for communicating the outcome. Our residents will feel that: • I am told when something is not possible, and the reasons why are explained to me. • I feel my perspective is listened to and understood. • I feel my views are valued
G	WORKING TOGETHER We work together and in partnership with everyone that has an impact on the lives of our residents. • We want to understand, learn from each other and continually adapt. The following examples are indicators of effective behaviour: • I work with others to provide an effective service for residents, local communities and other departments within the Council. • I seek ways to work with other departments to deliver a seamless service and find opportunities to improve. • I seek out opportunities to learn from my colleagues and build on good practice. Our residents will feel that:

	• I can get my issue resolved without being passed around departments. • I find it easy to access the services that I need. • I feel the Council is open to new ideas.
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