Job description

Senior Taxbase Investigation Officer

- Grade: SO2
- Reports to: Taxbase Maximisation Manager
- Direct reports: None
- Your team: Taxbase Maximisation Team
- Service area: Revenues & Technical Services
- Directorate: Resources

Special requirements of the post

Workstyle: Roaming (Medium presence, two days a week)

- Colleagues whose activities are a mix of remotely and periodic onsite work and/or meetings with third parties and businesses, going on site visits, and occasional resident engagement

This post is subject to the council's declaration of interest procedure

Our mission

Islington is a place rich with diversity and culture. As a council our sense of purpose couldn't be clearer: we serve. It's in the logo. We are committed to challenging inequality in the borough and as one of the largest employers we know that to look after the place and the planet, we have to look after our people. **Together we can change the future**.

To do this, everyone who works at Islington Council lives by a set of values which guide us in everything that we do: collaborative, ambitious, resourceful, and empowering. They spell out 'CARE', which is what we think public service is all about.

Overview of the role

This role supports the Taxbase Maximisation Manager in delivering Council Tax and Business Rates services through inspections, investigations, customer contact, and administration. Gathers and analyses data from internal and external sources to ensure accurate property records, billing, and entitlement to exemptions or reliefs. Conducts site visits, including lone inspections, to identify liabilities, verify information, and maintain compliance with legislation

and audit standards. Assists with new property setup, casework, and tribunal preparation, while handling enquiries and correspondence. Collaborates with internal teams and external partners, maintains system knowledge, meets performance targets, and contributes to service improvement and revenue maximisation.

Key responsibilities

1. To be responsible for assisting the Taxbase Maximisation Manager in undertaking all aspects of duties related to inspection and registration functions appropriate to the seniority of the post, in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates.
2. To Undertake duties in compliance with documented work procedures to:
    - Gain an understanding of the business of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates This includes legislation.
    - Deal with callers and telephone enquiries relating to Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates and referring difficult cases to the appropriate senior member of staff.
    - Deal with routine and non-routine correspondence and the issuing of forms, standard letters, and other documents. Drafting non-standard letters as necessary.
    - Liaison with other staff, sections, departments, and external organisations.
    - Request information from Land Registry Office as required.
    - Access records from Systems such as Companies House, Electoral Register, and other internal and external databases to obtain correct information for Tax purposes.
    - Undertake guided inspections/investigations throughout the Borough for Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates purposes.
    - Comply with the Potentially Violent Persons and Lone working procedures.
    - With guidance, assist with the review of exemptions, discounts, and reliefs.
    - Assist the Taxbase Maximisation Manager with the setting up of the new properties.
    - Gain an understanding of the various computer systems available to the team, such as Enterprise document imaging system and the Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates database.
    - Utilise new technology available to the team.
    - To treat the equipment supplied with respect and to be responsible for ensuring that all batteries for the tablet PC’s and mobile phones are charged to enable the day’s work to be completed.
    - Undertake lone Inspections throughout the Borough for Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates purposes, referring the complex cases to the Technical Officers [Taxbase & Valuation] for advice.
    - Maintain legislative knowledge relating to Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates.
    - With guidance from the Technical Officers [Taxbase & Valuation], undertake proactive inspection work.

- Give effective assistance by undertaking specific project work and tasks when required.
- Accurately set up new properties within specified timescales.
- Undertake duties in accordance with the legislation, referring any complex problems to the Technical Officers [Taxbase & Valuation].
- Undertake the review of exemptions, discounts, and reliefs. This includes the checking of void properties, in accordance with District Audit requirements.
- Undertake Charity Relief inspections.
- To operate in accordance with any specific performance targets/objectives pertaining to the officer's workload.
- Ensure good knowledge of area of responsibility within the borough by conducting regular inspections scheduled throughout the year.
- Identify and undertake proactive inspection/investigation work.
- To undertake as directed quality initiatives, including participation in specialised groups [such as working parties, task groups] as required.
- Undertake any specialised tasks to promote improved cash flow as directed and actively encourage payment by direct debit.
- Signpost older members of the Borough to other services.
- Assist Tracing Officers by undertaking gone away inspections/investigations.
- Conduct HMO Inspections/investigations in accordance with Council procedures.
- Provide forecasting information as required to assist the authority in the compilation of the Tax Base Report.
- Other information related to the payment of Council Tax/Business Rates.
- Establish and maintain contacts with internal and external services, agents, and partners to gather information to improve the database: - Liaison with other staff, sections, departments, and external organisations.

3. At all times support the management team in the efficient running of the Section including participating in management meetings and implementing management policy decisions.
4. Analyse, visit if necessary and report on a range of matters [investigations] relating to property liability and other information pertinent to the proper payment of Council Tax/Business Rates.
5. Assist as required with work relating to Valuation Tribunals and attend as directed giving evidence where appropriate and assist with the preparation of court documentation as required.
6. Ensure the adequate checking of void properties and charitable properties and that they are inspected in accordance with District Audit requirements.
7. Liaise closely with other sections of the Council, such as Street Naming and Numbering, Building Control, Planning Enforcement, and the HMO Licensing Team to ensure the system is fully compatible.
8. Assist the Management Team in ensuring that customer standards are met and maintained:
    - Plan, organise, allocate and monitor the work as appropriate.
    - Ensure that the Council's administration procedures/guidelines are always followed.

- Maintain appropriate records and controls to conform to set Quality Performance standards and provide statistical information as required.
- Ensure that exception reports, suppression codes and other reports are checked and updated as necessary.
- Provide help, support, and advice to other members of staff with regard to enquiries, deal with the more complex enquiries on a personal basis.
- Ensure a good knowledge of Council Tax and Business Rates legislation and advise lower grade staff as necessary.

9. Any additional duties consistent with the grade and level of responsibility of this position, for which the holder possesses the required experience and/or training.

ADDITIONAL:

- To use and assist others in the use of information technology systems to carry out duties in the most efficient and effective manner.
- To achieve agreed service outcomes and outputs, and personal appraisal targets, as agreed by the line manager.
- To undertake training and constructively take part in meetings, supervision, seminars and other events designed to improve communication and assist with the effective development of the post and post holder.
- The post holder is expected to be committed to the Council's core values of public service, quality, equality and empowerment and to demonstrate this commitment in the way they carry out their duties.
- Ensure all the services within the area(s) of responsibility are provided in accordance with the Council's commitment to high quality service provision to users.
- Ensure that duties are undertaken with due regard and compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations [GDPR] and other legislation.
- Carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and relevant Health and Safety legislation.
- At all times carrying out responsibilities/duties within the framework of the Council's Dignity for all Policy.

Compliance

Ensure adherence to legal, regulatory, and policy requirements under GDPR, Health and Safety, Employee Code of Conduct and in your area of expertise by identifying opportunities and risks, and escalating issues as necessary.

Person specification

Your application form needs to demonstrate how you fulfil the role's requirements. It is essential to address the criteria, as this will be used to evaluate your suitability for the position.

Essential and desirable criteria

Essential: the basic requirements that must be met for someone to be considered for a particular job. These criteria are mandatory and cannot be negotiated. Essential criteria directly impact the core qualifications or skills necessary to perform the job effectively.

Desirable: the additional qualities, skills, or qualifications that would be advantageous for a candidate to possess but are not mandatory. Not meeting them does not automatically disqualify someone from consideration for the job. This also allows candidates who do not possess certain desirable criteria the opportunity to explain how their other knowledge, experience and skills relate to these and what they may be in the process of doing or willing to do to achieve these.

Knowledge, experience, and skills.

Point	Criteria description	Essential/desirable
1	Extensive experience of Inspection, investigation or Visiting in a Revenues or Benefits Environment.	Essential
2	A working knowledge of all matters relating to Council Tax inspection/investigation, the Council Tax Regulations and Audit requirements.	Essential
3	Ability to deal with contentious situations while on visits and to deal with members of the public sympathetically on the telephone and face to face.	Essential
4	Demonstrable ability to work with new staff and assist in their training. To give advice and guidance to new and lower grade staff on Inspection and Council Tax Regulations ensuring that they are supported.	Essential
5	Ability to take written statements from customers. Clear and concise report and letter writing skills.	Essential
6	Demonstrable interviewing skills and organisational skills.	Essential
7	Ability to understand the needs of the service and work flexibly to achieve them.	Essential
8	Ability to use a wide range of IT systems related to Council Tax including mobile wireless technology.	Essential
9	Demonstrable liaison ability with internal and external bodies which relate to inspection/investigation work.	Essential
10	Ability to travel around the Borough in order to undertake visits.	Essential

Our accreditations

Our accreditations include Disability Confident Leader, The Mayor's Good Work Standard, London Living Wage Employer, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and Employer with Heart.