

## Head of Welfare Services

Slough is a dynamic economic hub at the gateway to London and the Thames Valley, with excellent transport links including the Elizabeth line and proximity to Heathrow Airport. We are seeking exceptional finance professionals ready for a challenging, career-defining role. With a new S151 officer and a balanced budget for 2025/26, we are poised for financial resilience and a bright future. Our Finance and Procurement Teams have a robust improvement programme focused on career development. Be part of our critical transformation and thrive in a supportive, demanding environment.

**Responsible for:** Housing Benefit, Housing Benefit Overpayments, Discretionary Housing Payments, Council Tax Support, Debt & Welfare Advice, Adult Social Care Financial Assessments, Deputyship & Appointeeship, Systems and Controls

**Role Overview:** We are seeking a dynamic and experienced Head of Welfare Services to join our management team. Reporting to the Director of Revenues and Welfare Services, you will lead a team responsible for various welfare services, ensuring compliance, efficiency, and high-quality service delivery.

### Responsibilities:

- Oversee financial responsibilities amounting to approximately £50 million
- Manage housing benefit claims for pension age and temporary accommodation, and council tax support for 6,500 recipients
- Develop and consult on council tax support schemes, working with members and preparing cabinet and council papers
- Lead the Debt and Welfare team in providing comprehensive debt and benefit advice, managing payments from the discretionary housing payments, and the household support funds
- Supervise the Deputyship & Appointeeship team in managing state benefits and wider assets for those unable to manage them themselves
- Ensure quality assurance, training, and development across revenues and welfare services, managing data quality and digital transformation
- Line manage 3 direct reports (Benefits Manager, Debt and Welfare Manager, Systems and Controls Manager) and indirectly oversee a team of 54

### Ideal Candidate Profile:

- Strong knowledge and experience of delivering and improving housing benefit, discretionary housing payments, council tax support, and debt and welfare services
- Experience in local government environment working across service boundaries and with external partners to support vulnerable residents
- Proven ability to develop and lead multiple teams, providing guidance, support and mentoring
- Proactive, driven, and able to make informed decisions quickly
- Savvy political engagement and communication skills
- Excellent knowledge and experience of using data and insight to focus resources to achieve the best results
- Ability to write and present compelling business cases and proposals

Are you ready to lead and transform Slough's financial landscape? We need resilient, adaptable professionals who can develop sustainable strategies, drive procurement excellence, and support broader economic objectives. If you thrive on complexity and see challenges as opportunities, join us in making a real difference. We offer a genuine career-defining opportunity for those who are prepared to step up, challenge the status quo, and make a real difference. If you are a finance professional who thrives on

complexity, sees challenges as opportunities, and wants to be part of a transformative journey, we want to hear from you. Apply now and turn potential into performance.

## Job Description

DBS requirement: Yes  
**Job Title: Head of Welfare Services**

**Responsible to: Director of Revenues and Welfare Services**

**Responsible for: Housing Benefit, Discretionary Housing Payments, Council Tax Reduction, Debt & Welfare, Adult Social Care Financial Assessments, Deputyship & Appointeeship**

You will report to the Director of Revenues and Welfare Services, and form part of the operational management team.

The Head of Welfare Services is directly responsible for:

### Number of reports:

Direct reports:	3
Indirect reports:	51
Total Managed:	54

### Financial Responsibilities:

c. £50m

### Main purpose of Job:

As Head of Welfare Services, you will direct, lead, and manage the provision of high-quality, cost-effective Welfare services for the council. You will be the council's lead officer and specialist advisor for all welfare, debt advice, financial care & support related matters. You will lead the welfare strategy, managing the assessment and payment of all the council's financial support to residents and developing and implementing a new welfare support strategy.

Your key deliverables will be to:

- Lead and develop the vision of the service in accordance with the relevant service plan timetables, annual budgetary planning and budget review and monitoring.
- Generate and use data and insight to deliver and develop actions in specific communities or localities, improve performance, accuracy and reduce cost to the council.
- Build and maintain professional networks with partner agencies to achieve shared outcomes for individuals and communities.
- Minimise the impact of welfare reform and maximise the support that the council provides to its residents. This includes all areas of welfare reform including council administered benefits, state benefits, local government hardship schemes to support housing costs, care costs and other forms of hardship.
- Effectively manage welfare services to a high level of accuracy and speed including Housing Benefit, Subsidy Reconciliation, Council Tax Reduction, Housing Benefit Appeals, Debt and Welfare, Adult Social Care Assessments, and Deputyship and Appointeeship.

## **General Accountabilities:**

### **Strategy development**

Help shape the direction of the council to drive forward the public service reform agenda and ensure delivery of its priorities and value to residents. Provide a strategic vision for the future development of the service to enable the council to meet its future challenges, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

### **Corporate leadership**

As a senior leader working as part of a wider leadership team across the council, work together take collective responsibility and drive forward a range of cross-council initiatives which are required to ensure changes are embedded in a sustainable way throughout the organisation. Provide corporate leadership that encourages our staff to recognise their contribution to the strategic objectives the council has set.

### **Service leadership and management**

Lead the integrated delivery, improvement, management and performance of the service, commissioning and directing activity within the council and externally as required, and ensuring overall objectives are translated into effective plans and that the service is efficient and locally responsive. Provide inspirational and professional leadership to staff, strengthening skills and competence and fostering a strong culture of standards, performance, and accountability.

### **Resources / Financial management**

Ensure tight budgetary control and prioritise the use of resources and assets to support the delivery of the council's corporate vision and help ensure that the council receives value for money from its expenditure. Drive and/or support the development of outcome-based commissioning models to better ensure strong price competition and transfer of risks through contracts with third parties. Champion and drive the development of commercial opportunities where appropriate.

### **Partners and stakeholders**

Actively engage, communicate, and influence within the council, across partners and with the wider local and central government community to champion the council's approach to unified public services. Foster the bringing together of local services and decisions across agencies to reduce demand and help communities more independently support themselves.

### **Business change**

Lead, develop, implement, and review change management programmes to deliver continual improvement. Assist the Chief Executive and Executive Directors in developing a single council-wide corporate culture to engender a strong and shared approach to delivering services and provide better support for staff to deliver savings.

### **Compliance**

Ensure that all activities within the service comply with the council's Constitution, Standing Orders, financial regulations, health and safety and safeguarding responsibilities and that effective systems operate within the service to manage performance and risk.

### **Equality and diversity**

Uphold and promote the aims of the council's equality and diversity policies to ensure non-discriminatory practices in all aspects of work, and that diversity is embedded in everything, from workforce planning and policy development to service delivery.

### **Specific responsibilities**

1. Set the strategic direction for Welfare Services and ensure a robust service plan is in place that

supports early prevention, resolution and problem solving to help residents maximise their income and become more self-sufficient and resilient.

2. Lead an effective Welfare Services, taking accountability for all aspects of planning, finance, performance, people, change and risk management within the service. In doing this, the postholder will ensure delivery of the highest quality service that can be provided to customers with the resources available.
3. Lead the development and delivery of the council's Welfare Strategy, which sets the ambition and framework for how customers access Welfare Services and the standards of service they receive, whichever service areas and teams they interact with.
4. Lead the development of the council's Welfare Services policies and hold ultimate accountability for compliance with these policies across the organisation. Ensure the Welfare service meets its statutory responsibilities.
5. Develop effective relationships with members, officers, internal and external partners, stakeholders, third sector and community groups, setting the right balance between the council's own objectives and shared goals with other organisations.
6. Contribute to the council's corporate plan and the business plan for the Executive Director's wider department, specifically contributing advice and formulating strategy relating to Welfare Services.
7. Have a strong awareness of relevant national policy change, interpreting this as appropriate to ensure service level compliance and shared understanding across the council.
8. Be the council's lead officer and most senior expert on Welfare Services, providing expert advice and guidance on matters of demand and improvement opportunities to members and the council's most senior stakeholders, including the Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet.
9. Manage complexity while removing unnecessary processes and systems to create leaner, and more efficient services. Challenge ways of working, manage performance, development, and embed new cultures and skills to deliver required outcomes.
10. Work collaboratively with senior leaders and members to identify and deliver service improvement opportunities, using the voice of the customer as the driver. Through the integration of services, create cost savings, efficiencies and tangible improvements to the customer experience.
11. Design, implement, and review service data that creates insight and use this to improve service performance in line with the council's targets, benchmarking against external comparators.
12. Ensure adequate levels of performance for individuals and teams against agreed standards and outputs.
13. Work closely with community, faith, and voluntary sectors to deliver partnership working that yields measurable outcomes for individuals or families being supported.
14. Maintain effective networks in order to seek out new ideas and innovations to improve services to customers.
15. Lead on the creation and implementation of preventative service delivery looking for ways to identify the council's most vulnerable residents and provide mechanisms to ensure they are supported in conjunction with Revenues and other council services.
16. Establish Welfare Services as a centre of excellence that integrates services to provide a seamless customer journey ensuring performance is of the highest standard and governance is created that ensures customers are responded to within set timelines.

17. Set and deliver the Welfare Services annual budget ensuring it is effectively controlled and ensuring that all services provide effective value for money.
18. Continually review the customer experience at an individual, household and community level as appropriate, leveraging customer data to assure future performance.
19. Champion a customer focussed culture across the whole of Welfare Services, promoting good customer service and advising other services and colleagues on improvements required to place customers at the heart of service delivery.
20. Visibly lead and motivate staff at all levels within the Welfare Services team to work within a culture that is open, honest, shares knowledge and develops best practice, underpinned by rigorous support and development.
21. Continually review and develop capability across Welfare Services proposing development opportunities that will enhance individual performance across multidisciplinary generalist teams, developing succession and resilience within roles.
22. Attend and represent appropriately as required, local stakeholder or government representations of the service. Develop and promote integrity and value of the services, and the wider reputation of Slough Borough Council.
23. Own complaint resolution to ensure that staff at all levels learn from customer challenge.
24. Optimize resources available, effectively planning for current and future need to mitigate against service failure or avoidable cost.
25. Ensure that a proportionate approach to risk is maintained and managed.
26. Undertake any other duties commensurate with level of responsibility of the post.

#### Person Specification- Head of Welfare Services

Specification	Essential / Desirable
<b>Qualifications</b>	
Educated to degree level or equivalent experience in relevant roles.	E
A professional qualification in either Revenues & Benefits or Welfare Services.	D
Evidence of continuous professional development which reflects commitment to effective management in a large organisation.	E
<b>Experience</b>	
Substantial senior management experience in a major organization relevant to the provision of Welfare Services.	E
A proven track record of improving services and creating efficiencies and cost savings alongside improving the customer experience.	E
A successful track record of achievement including leading transformational change whilst maintaining a committed and engaged workforce.	E
Evidence of leading large volume Welfare departments with successful delivery against targets.	E
Evidence of success in delivering Welfare Services within tight budget constraints and with limited resources.	E

Specification	Essential / Desirable
A proven track record of building strong relationships with the ability to influence change that meets the needs of customers.	E
Successful experience of leading a performance culture, including people planning, target setting, performance appraisal and the management and motivation of diverse staff groups.	E
Experience of working with strong accountability systems, either through elected boards, strategic boards, shareholders, or political governance systems.	E
<b>Skills and abilities</b>	
A good balance of strategic thinking and ability to understand future trends balanced with the operational knowledge to create high performing teams.	E
The ability to capture and measure data to identify areas of improvements, such as failure demand, applications processing, satisfaction rates	E
Ability to work collaboratively, working across teams and functions to develop shared solutions to deliver wider organisational goals.	E
Good judgement and the ability to anticipate and plan for future developments.	E
Strong analytical and project management skills, the ability to use data and information intelligently and bring this to life while communicating customer needs to stakeholders.	E
Ability to offer services based on customer needs in the most efficient way, to support digitally excluded and identify behaviours that will accelerate automation and the digital transformation	E
The ability to develop practical and creative solutions to both service and corporate problems.	E
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>	
The highest personal integrity and loyalty, supportive to colleagues, with a drive to deliver corporately on the Council's vision and values.	E
An understanding of the service offered by a local authority and the importance of getting it right first time and creating a holistic view of the customer.	E
An understanding of and a personal commitment to the vision, aims, values and priorities of Slough Borough Council.	E