

Role Profile

Part A - Grade & Structure Information

Job Family Code	12BF	Role Title	Farming & Rural Business Support Advisor
Grade	PS12	Reports to (role title)	Strategic Programme Manager - Made Smarter
JE Band	519-613	Directorate / School	Place
Date Role Profile was created	Dec-25	Service / Department	Economy & Growth
Agile	Information	<u>DBS Requirement</u>	Not Required

Part B - Job Family Description

The below profile describes the general nature of work performed at this level as set out in the job family. It is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and responsibilities which may be required. The role will be further defined by annual objectives, which will be developed with the role holder. The Council reserves the right to review and amend the job families on a regular basis.

Role Purpose including key outputs	<p>The Farming and Rural Business Support Advisor plays a central role in strengthening the resilience, productivity, and long-term sustainability of Surrey's rural and land-based economy. The postholder will tailor support to the unique needs, challenges, and opportunities of Surrey's farming and rural businesses, providing a blend of technology adoption guidance, business growth support, and diversification advice.</p> <p>Acting as a trusted advisor, the postholder will lead diagnostic assessments, identify opportunities for innovation and business development, and support rural enterprises to adopt new technologies, improve financial resilience, and explore new markets. The role also involves guiding businesses through relevant funding pathways, connecting them with specialist providers, and ensuring they can access the full breadth of support available across Surrey County Council and the wider regional ecosystem.</p> <p>The Advisor will play a key role in building strong relationships with rural stakeholders, including the NFU, land-based colleges, community groups, and local networks. They will also contribute to Surrey County Council's wider economic development objectives through horizontal working with the Economy & Growth directorate, the Growth Hub, and other internal teams.</p> <p>This post will end no later than 31st March 2027 with the possibility for extension subject to ongoing funding.</p> <p>Key Outputs for the Role</p> <p>Business Support Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diagnostics, action plans, and transformation/diversification plans - Technology adoption or business growth recommendations <p>Insight Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rural needs assessments and intelligence summaries - Priority recommendations for SCC <p>Funding Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completed applications and readiness assessments - Monitoring reports for funded projects <p>Stakeholder & Partnership Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement logs, partnership activity, and event summaries <p>Cross-Team Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared casework notes and referral pathways - Joint workshops or interventions <p>Programme Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accurate CRM entries - Monthly/quarterly performance reports - Case studies demonstrating impact
Work Context	<p>This is a unique, cross-cutting role operating at the intersection of rural development, business support, and digital innovation. The postholder will work across Surrey's diverse rural landscape, engaging directly with farms, estates, agri-food producers, and rural SMEs. They will be responsible for understanding the specific characteristics of Surrey's rural economy and for leading research, insight gathering, and prioritisation of local needs based on their sector expertise.</p> <p>The role requires regular travel across Surrey to conduct on-site visits, deliver workshops, and build relationships with rural stakeholders. It also involves close collaboration with colleagues across Surrey County Council's Economy & Growth directorate, ensuring that rural businesses can access a comprehensive and joined-up support offer. This includes working with Made Smarter Adoption, Growth Hub, Skills teams, Inward Investment, Innovation, and other business-facing services.</p> <p>The postholder must demonstrate strong stakeholder management skills and the ability to operate confidently in a high-profile environment. The role demands adaptability, credibility, and the ability to tailor support to the varied needs of Surrey's rural and farming community.</p> <p>Key responsibilities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tailored Rural Business Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide bespoke business and technology support to Surrey's farming and rural SMEs, adapting TAS/MSA methods to local needs 2. Diagnostics & Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead diagnostics and produce clear action plans covering technology adoption, diversification, and wider business growth 3. Surrey-Specific Insight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gather intelligence on rural needs, identify priorities, and feed insights into SCC's rural economic strategy 4. Funding Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guide businesses through funding pathways, assess readiness, and support applications 5. Cross-Team Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work horizontally across SCC's Economy & Growth directorate and with the Growth Hub to deliver joined-up support. - In line with cross team working practices, the post holder will be required to attend team anchor days once a week at Woodhatch Place, Reigate or other venue as required. 6. Stakeholder Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build strong relationships with NFU, CLA, colleges, and rural networks; represent SCC in high-profile settings. - Supporting wider engagement and awareness of the programme by carrying out marketing tasks, including Social media, other marketing and event management 7. Programme Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain accurate CRM records, contribute to monitoring and reporting, and ensure delivery aligns with programme principles.
Line management responsibility if applicable	The postholder will have responsibility for external and internal stakeholder management and may manage direct reports if required. The postholder has no team or line management responsibility.
Budget responsibility if applicable	The postholder will support the Strategic Programme Manager to inform the delivery of budget allocations.

Representative Accountabilities Typical accountabilities in roles at this level in this job family	<p>Analysis, Reporting & Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify issues, trends and opportunities that may have an impact in their area of responsibility to enable appropriate action to be taken. Lead the development of policy in the own area of specialism, contributing to the delivery of organisational objectives. <p>Service Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate existing service provision taking account of feedback and broader external developments, to ensure innovative solutions are proposed to maximise service quality, efficiency and continuity. Apply specialist expertise and use judgement to make decisions where solutions are not obvious, to deliver services that meet customer requirements and service standards. Drive change and embed new ways of working to ensure high quality service delivery and value for money. <p>Planning & Organising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and ensure implementation of operational plans and play a key role in the formulation of strategic longer term plans for the area to fit broader functional and organisational strategy. Lead major projects and reviews and represent the business area in internal and/or external initiatives to enhance reputation and service delivery. <p>Finance/Resource Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage allocated budget/resources/funding effectively and flexibly and control all related expenditure to ensure delivery of targets/objectives within budget. Contribute to resource and budget planning within own area. <p>Work with others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise internally and externally at senior levels to establish service requirements and priorities and ensure the department/service issues are appropriately represented and acted upon. Work with managers, service representatives and partners to identify and apply cost effective means of delivering improvements to business processes and strategies. <p>People Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage a group of staff across a function/service, or as a significant part of a wide function to ensure all relevant annual targets and goals are delivered within budgetary/resource constraints. Lead, motivate and develop individuals using a coaching approach, to better meet current and future requirements. <p>Duties for all</p> <p>Values: To uphold the values and behaviours of the organisation.</p> <p>Equality & Diversity: To work inclusively, with a diverse range of stakeholders and promote equality of opportunity.</p> <p>Health, Safety & Welfare: To be responsible for ensuring health & safety policies, procedures and legislation are implemented, communicated and managed including making sure that health and safety responsibilities are fully understood and carried out by employees within their service area.</p> <p>To have regard to and comply with safeguarding policy and procedure as appropriate.</p>
Education, Knowledge, Skills & Abilities, Experience and Personal Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree or equivalent professional qualification plus experience at management level in a specialist area. Knowledge of the principles of change management, project management and continuous improvement, and their practical application. Authoritative knowledge of the work practices, process and procedures relevant to the role including broader sector/commercial awareness. Ability to manage budgets and resources to deliver effective support to their area of responsibility. Strong written and oral communication and interpersonal skills with high level negotiation and influencing skills and the ability to work collaboratively with internal and external partners/professionals. Comprehensive knowledge of computerised business systems. Understands how to inspire and motivate others. Advanced problem solving and analytical skills with the capacity to devise and implement practical and creative solutions. Wide experience in successful leading, coaching, mentoring and developing of staff.
Details of the specific qualifications and/or experience if required for the role in line with the above description	<p>Essential Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience working with farming, land-based, or rural businesses (e.g., agriculture, horticulture, agri-food, estates, rural SMEs). Practical understanding of digital technologies relevant to rural enterprises, such as precision agriculture, automation, sensors, data platforms, or digital record-keeping. Experience delivering business support, consultancy, or advisory services. Proven ability to assess business needs and develop tailored recommendations or action plans. Experience building relationships with diverse stakeholders, including farmers, rural networks, colleges, and industry partners. Strong communication skills, with the ability to explain technical concepts in clear, practical terms. Experience managing a varied workload across a large geographic area. Experience in managing grants and procurement of services, preferably within or with knowledge of the local authority context <p>Essential Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to build trust quickly, especially with businesses that may be cautious about change. Strong analytical and problem-solving skills. Confident in facilitating discussions, running diagnostics, and guiding decision-making. Ability to translate business challenges into practical digital or diversification opportunities. Excellent organisational skills, including accurate record-keeping and reporting. Adaptability to seasonal pressures, on-site working conditions, and varied business maturity levels. Competence with digital tools, data interpretation, and basic technology troubleshooting. <p>Desirable Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of rural funding schemes, innovation programmes, or environmental initiatives. Experience supporting business diversification (e.g., agritourism, renewable energy, value-added products). Familiarity with supply chains, compliance requirements, or sustainability challenges in agriculture. Background in agri-tech, rural development, or digital transformation. Experience working within a local authority setting <p>Desirable Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to design and deliver workshops or community engagement activities. Understanding of change management principles. Confidence in navigating complex stakeholder environments. Ability to identify opportunities for collaboration, innovation, or cross-sector partnerships.
Role Summary	<p>Roles at this level are substantial management roles, they are either managing a multi functional support service within one of the organisation's service areas, or coordinating a specific business development or advisory area. This may involve significant coordination of complex or diverse services, e.g. leading business support services to professional teams, or coordinating teams carrying out specialist advisory or administrative services. More specialised roles will require a full understanding of a professional or specialised field and will work with those both inside and outside the organisation, to influence the development of services or delivery of specific projects or organisational objectives. They will provide overall guidance to more junior managers in terms of planning, service standards and resources which underpin service level agreements. Planning takes place over a one year horizon. They work closely with customers, staff, agencies and/or contractors to ensure that the services meet and exceed expectations. Roles at this level require extensive management experience and high level expertise. They exercise flexibility and independence for decision making within their particular functional area, working to broad parameters and policy guidance. Roles at this level are accountable for the professionalism of service delivery under their remit.</p>
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