



Job Profile

August 2025

Job Title:	Head of Finance
Grade:	Head of Service & Technical
Group:	Finance
Service:	Financial Management
DBS Check:	Standard

Reporting Structure:

Reports to:	Assistant Director of Financial Management
Direct Reports:	Up to 5
Indirect Reports:	Up to 20

Contacts/Stakeholders:	Internal: All levels of staff, Directors, Councillors External: Central Government Departments, other Local Authorities, Professional bodies, NHS, External Audit
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Service Responsibilities: All services within one of the following Directorates:
Homes & Communities, Adult Services and Health,
Children and Young People's Services, Place, Finance or
Corporate Services

Budget Responsibility: Advisory responsibility for Council revenue and capital budgets of approximately £150m

Direct responsibility for managing budgets of approximately £0.6m

Job Description

Job Purpose:

1. To lead and manage a Finance Team within the Service Finance and Business Partnering Division, supporting a service directorate, advising on relevant aspects of strategic finance and business partnering, alongside comprehensive financial direction, support, and guidance. The role includes supporting a directorate in budget-setting and identifying appropriate savings or strategies to mitigate pressures; budget monitoring and reporting throughout the year; closing of the directorate accounts; and providing strategic financial advice to support the services within the directorate.
2. To support transformation and business-led projects within the directorates, ensuring that timely and robust financial information is provided to support decision-making and take an active role in shaping outcomes of projects. Ensure that budgets are realigned to deliver savings targets, reporting timing differences in delivery.
3. To ensure that Senior Management and their budget managers are supported to deliver their accountabilities for budget management and that directorates comply with Financial Standing Orders and all other financial policies and procedures as directed by the Corporate Director of Finance.
4. To provide financial leadership and strategic advice to directorates to enable them to develop robust financial plans and ensure that the future needs of the service are reflected in the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
5. To work with and support the Corporate Director of Finance and Corporate Finance Team in reporting on and delivering the Council's overall strategic financial objectives.
6. To ensure the provision of high-quality financial advice and accurate and timely financial information to Corporate Directors, Heads of Service, and budget managers across the directorates. Promote and facilitate a culture that supports a self-service approach to budget management with strategic financial management support through a business partnering model.
7. Lead on the financial modelling of demand-led budgets within the directorates to ensure robust forecasts are established, working in conjunction with relevant senior managers within the Service areas, and to use the trend data and service knowledge to inform MTFS decision-making.
8. To support the requirements of the statutory accounting process, external audit process, and legislative changes that may have a financial impact on directorates.
9. To maintain effective working relationships with colleagues within the Finance directorate to proactively support the production of strategic financial information, medium-term financial plans, and the training and development of the wider Corporate Finance service.

10. To establish effective external working relationships with key stakeholders within the community, government, professional bodies, and other appropriate public and private bodies to ensure the service has the knowledge and expertise to continuously improve its performance.
11. To coordinate the Corporate Finance training and development programme including the graduate and non-graduate apprenticeship schemes.

Responsibilities & Accountabilities:

Financial Strategy Development:

- Support the development of a strategic vision for the service to enable the council to meet its future challenges and objectives.
- Undertake a lead role in the development and implementation of the Council's financial strategy, including the development of complex financial models as required.
- Work closely with senior stakeholders to ensure the best use of limited financial resources, providing the strategic financial advice, insight, intelligence, and support needed.
- Ensure tight budgetary control and prioritise the use of resources and assets to support the delivery of the Council's objectives and help ensure that the Council receives value for money from its expenditure.
- Oversee the development of financial business cases for business improvement initiatives within the Council's transformation programme, working with other Council services or in a cross-cutting capacity as necessary.
- Support the Council's risk management process through continuous review of financial risks and opportunities, across the relevant services and directorate(s), advising how the risks can be mitigated and the opportunities exploited.
- Proactively identify trends and changes in the operating environment (e.g., legislation, technology, policy, etc.) that could financially impact service delivery; provide advice and collaborate on potential solutions.
- Ensure the financial implications for Cabinet and all other reports fully inform service and corporate decision-making.

Financial Management and Reporting:

- Draw on an in-depth knowledge of Council services and the related financial complexities to ensure the provision of systems and procedures that enable effective budgetary control.
- Ensure that variations and emerging financial pressures are drawn to the attention of budget managers, and work with Directors and the management team on options and plans for their resolution at both a directorate and corporate level.

- Promote a culture that empowers budget holders and supports the delivery of value for money services and knowledge of key cost drivers.
- Provide in-depth support for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy planning process ensuring that the Council's transformation plans are achievable and fully reflected in the budget strategy.
- Apply technical accounting knowledge, principles and regulations to a range of projects across the Council within the wider remit of the Council's transformation programme.
- Develop appropriate financial models and analytics to determine the financial impact of future service demands, changes in legislation, and other factors affecting resource requirements.
- Instigate, develop, and support the attainment of alternative sources of funding that contribute towards identified funding gaps and the Council's overall financial position. Advise on funding, financial management, and accounting requirements within the relevant service and directorate portfolios.
- Prepare and present informative, high-quality reports to members and other senior stakeholders that aid in informed service and corporate decision-making.
- Advise on investment and funding strategies including investment risk and performance as appropriate.
- Effectively manage performance indicators and relationships within service contracts towards continued service improvement, value for money, and social value.

Value for Money and Compliance:

- Drive the delivery of productivity and efficiency improvement and cost reduction plans across the Council aligned to the transformation strategy.
- Together with the senior finance leadership team, take ownership of the Council's financial control environment including the proactive assessment, monitoring, and implementation of effective financial controls for the supported directorate(s).
- Advise on business processes and financial compliance issues within the Council's transformation projects, identifying proposals for improvement and ensuring the purpose of the process, key controls, and operational steps prioritise the needs of residents and customers and maximise value for money.
- Manage the annual statutory accounts process for your team(s), support the external audit process, and complete and submit appropriate financial returns.
- Provide a lead on relevant internal and external audit processes and ensure recommendations are implemented as appropriate.
- Ensure that all activities within the service areas 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.

- Support the service area in the assessment of key suppliers or prospective suppliers to monitor supplier resilience and mitigate the impact of any potential supplier failure on Council services.
- Ensure that all financial systems within the directorate(s) are fit for purpose, link with Corporate financial systems, meet statutory requirements, and financial regulations.
- Support continuous improvement and work collaboratively with Finance and other corporate colleagues in working to improve financial management (as currently being addressed through the Council's Finance Modernisation Programme).

Customer Focus & Stakeholder Engagement:

- Act as a key financial advisor and service delivery partner for internal and external stakeholders, providing strategic support and constructive challenge through exercising negotiation and influencing skills.
- Contribute to the delivery of a high-performing, customer-focused finance service that is proactive and creative, looking for ways to shape and influence service decisions and taking joint responsibility for the outcomes achieved.
- Ensure members of the team, directors, and budget holders receive the financial management training required to be effective in their roles, including awareness of Financial Regulations and financial approval requirements prior to taking decisions.
- Work with service managers at all levels to develop the financial business cases for the Council's Business Improvement projects.
- Develop and maintain relationships with the relevant professional bodies (e.g., CIPFA) to support the service's training offer.

Corporate Leadership & Accountabilities:

Leadership and Management:

- Provide leadership that encourages staff to recognise their contribution to the strategic objectives the Council has set.
- Foster a high-performance culture including carrying out internal service reviews to improve value for money and efficiency.
- Develop and promote positive people management that ensures appropriate performance management, quality standards, monitoring, and review are used to optimise employee motivation and satisfaction.
- Build a credible and responsive team who are respected for their depth of knowledge, expertise, and customer focus.
- Enable and encourage a flexible working environment in accordance with the Council's flexible working policy.

- Contribute to corporate areas of activity, organisational development, and Council-wide, cross-departmental strategies, projects, or policies, as required from time to time.
- Support and develop the business continuity process for Corporate Finance and participate in the Council's wider business continuity processes as required.

Continuous Improvement:

- Support the implementation and review of change management programmes to deliver continual improvement.
- Proactively seek and take responsibility for implementing internal process improvements, demonstrating the business case for change and benefits achieved.
- Support opportunities for Council-wide transformation and alternative service delivery models.
- Contribute to the development of a digital culture within the service by embracing technology in everyday activities and seeking digital improvement opportunities in support of a service-wide digital strategy.
- Drive the development of commercial opportunities that are aligned with the Council's vision of 'Residents First'.

Additional Responsibilities

- Complete other reasonable tasks in order to fulfil role purpose or as instructed by management.
- You may be required to undertake periods of on call which are related to your role
- This profile/JD is not intended to be exhaustive list of duties the post holder will carry out. Other reasonable duties commensurate with the level of the post, including supporting emergency and priority situations will form part of this role.

Person Specification

Head of Finance

This person specification will be used for recruitment to this post. It will form the basis of the application form, and candidates will be also assessed against aspects of this person specification at interview.

1. QUALIFICATIONS	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Fully qualified Accountant - CIPFA, ACCA, CIMA	✓	
Educated to degree level or equivalent	✓	
Significant post qualification experience in relevant service areas	✓	
Evidence of post qualification continuing professional development	✓	
2. STATUTORY or ROLE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
	✓	✓
Attendance at evening Committee and Schools forum meetings as required.	✓	
3. EXPERIENCE	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
	✓	✓
Significant experience of preparation of annual budgets, budget monitoring reports and final accounts for local authority.	✓	
Significant experience in a management role with direct management experience of leading professional and managerial groups in areas of service responsibility.	✓	
Evidence of successful participation at senior management level in developing and delivering strategies, policies and programmes within relevant statutory and policy requirements.		✓
Highly developed oral, written and presentational skills – being able to summarise and present complex data in an understandable manner	✓	
Strong communication skills in order to influence and persuade stakeholders	✓	
Evidence of formulating, leading and implementing successful strategies and programmes which cross service or professional boundaries.		✓
Evidence of leading and managing change in a large multidisciplinary organisation and taking a lead role in the financial aspects of service improvement and transformation programmes.		✓

Evidence of successful management and development of staff in a large multi-disciplined organisation, harnessing the strengths and talents of employees at all levels, including establishing effective performance objectives and appraisal to achieve corporate and service objectives.	✓	
Strategic budget management in a comparable public sector organisation, managing significant financial resources and evaluating competing budget priorities within tight financial limits.	✓	
A successful track record of building and developing partnerships and working effectively in co-operation with a wide range of internal and external bodies including both statutory and non-statutory organisations and community groups.		✓
Effective working within a political environment, providing clear, balanced advice and guidance on issues that achieve the corporate and service objectives of the organisation.	✓	
Evidence of a clear understanding of the legal, financial and political context of management within a Local Authority.	✓	