

Job Description and Person Specification

Role: Lead Accountant



Job Description

Job Title	Lead Accountant
Grade	9
Service	Financial Management
Reports to	Finance Manager
Location	Friargate
Job Evaluation Code	A6039



About Coventry City Council

Who we are: At Coventry City Council we are dedicated to making a positive difference to the services we deliver to the diverse citizens of Coventry. The work we do improves people's lives – from helping them into work to providing clean and green places to live, to keeping people safe and protected.

As a Coventry City Council employee, you have our ongoing commitment to your growth and development with opportunities to work across multiple service areas including customer contact, public health prevention and education and skills, adults and children's services and provide support for the most vulnerable.

Our aim is simple – to be globally connected, locally committed, deliver our priorities with fewer resources whilst effectively managing our performance and measuring our progress.

Our Values: We expect everyone who works for us to be committed to our One Coventry values and to share our commitment to becoming a more diverse and inclusive organisation:



About the Service your team will provide

To act as the primary financial business link with service leads and provide strategic financial support and advice to enable effective financial planning and management, through pro-active partnering arrangements and the development of effective financial information.

To provide effective annual financial cycle services to professional standards leading a Directorate or Corporate team.

To provide lead financial advice to projects and commercial investment opportunities.

Main Duties & Key Accountabilities

Team Management

Management of a Team including the motivation and development of staff, performance appraisals and the identification and delivery of training needs to ensure service objectives are met.

Representation

To represent Financial Management on directorate management teams, political meetings, project teams, ad-hoc working groups, and other forums as appropriate in a lead capacity.

Represent the Council in commercial negotiations with third parties including partner organisations and suppliers.

To act in a support capacity for the Finance Manager and deputise as appropriate.

Budget Management

Preparation and interpretation of complex financial information and presentation of this to senior managers, management teams and elected members. Ensure the accuracy and completeness of all financial information through analysis and challenge.

Challenge and support senior managers to facilitate solutions to financial issues.

Financial Accounting

Provide flexible support in the delivery of all activity driven by the Annual Financial Cycle including budget monitoring & management, treasury management, final accounts and budget setting whilst ensuring these meet professional standards.

Facilitate and be responsible for producing financial accounts to appropriate professional standards and input into the overall corporate processes to produce good quality financial statements.

Support the compilation and submission of financial sections of routine reports, government returns and grant bids / claims.

Financial Planning and Control

Develop medium to long term financial planning solutions based on an understanding of service policy issues and developments.

Ensuring robustness and transparency of financial information for decision making including political and managerial reporting arrangements.

Understanding the objectives of a broad range of service areas, to provide effective financial support whilst proactively recognising and prioritising areas of financial risk.

Ensure the financial implications of business developments comply with relevant legislation, accounting regulations and local / national policy.

Lead on planning, development and review of financial activity across projects and initiatives to ensure co-ordination and alignment with budget setting processes.

Proactively support policy options and practical solutions that deliver the Council's priorities and enable the financial targets within individual projects and overall programme to be met.

To promote value for money and efficiency throughout all areas of the Council's operation and to look for commercial opportunities and innovation both in the operation of the finance function and in the activities of relevant service areas.

Business Information

Provide professional finance support as required to senior officers and elected members. Respond to ad-hoc requests for financial information.

Work strategically with various stakeholders including directors, service managers, trade unions and external partners to build, maintain and promote effective working relationships.

Development and interpretation of complex financial models to inform financial analysis, consistent business focussed decisions and to present a compelling rationale for the recommended options in the form of reports and presentations.

General

To participate in and lead on financial management training and development activities, including Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

To undertake all duties and responsibilities in accordance with Professional Accounting Standards.

There may be a requirement to undertake specialist work commensurate to the grade within Financial Management, and should this be the case, the appropriate training and support will be given to carry out this element of the role.

Any other duties and responsibilities within the range of the salary grade.

Key relationships

External Role will involve working with external provider organisations, national, regional, and local government bodies, external advisers, and partner organisations both in and out of the city	Internal Director of Finance, Heads of Finance, Finance Managers, Directors, Senior Managers, Management Teams and Project Teams.
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Standard information

Post holders will be accountable for carrying out all duties and responsibilities with due regard to Code of Conduct, Safeguarding, Health & Safety and the City Council's Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Policies.

Duties which include processing of any personal data must be undertaken within the corporate data protection guidelines.

Smoke Free

The City Council is Smoke - Free. Smoking is not permitted on any of our premises or the surrounding land including car parking facilities.

Training

The postholder must attend any training that is identified as mandatory to their role.

Responsible for:

Staff managed by postholder: Accountants, NGDP / Trainee Accountants, School Finance Officers, Accounting Technicians (inc. Apprentices), Finance Assistants, Clerical Assistant (Post Dependent)

Person specification

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Knowledge	
Public finance and policy developments affecting local government	
Accounting principles and practice to a Professional Standard	
Detailed and thorough knowledge of financial systems and accounting	
Understanding and commitment to equal opportunities and how this is applied to financial strategies and policies	
Appreciation of project management techniques	
Skills and Abilities	
Very high level of numerical, analytical, problem solving and creative thinking skills	
Excellent written and oral communication skills to include production and presentation of complex financial models and reports for technical and non-technical audiences	
Strong management and organisational skills to inform planning and prioritisation of the work of teams, develop and motivate staff	
Ability to understand, interpret and apply relevant financial procedure rules and legislation, ensuring proper practices are followed	
Ability to apply a commercial approach to maximise cost effectiveness of service delivery	
Able to analyse and use complex financial data and provide sound financial management advice	
Advanced spreadsheet and interrogation of financial system skills	
Able to deal with conflicting priorities and work to policy and operational objectives and timescales	
Ability to think strategically whilst maintaining attention to detail as necessary	
Ability to contribute to Finance policy, strategy, and organisational developments	
Demonstrate an awareness of the business impact of operational decisions (e.g. value for money, risk, reputation)	
Ability to build and maintain effective working relationships, including stakeholder management, and work as part of a team	

Experience
Of work in a challenging financial environment where policy considerations are important
Support to senior managers in discharging their financial responsibilities
Effectively prioritising and planning workloads
Application of accounting principles and effective financial management to the achievement of objectives
Involvement in multi-disciplinary working groups
Management and/or supervision of staff
Working in a customer-focused finance environment
Qualifications
A CCAB / CIMA accounting qualification
Evidence of commitment to continuing professional development

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