

Folkestone & Hythe District Council Job Description

JOB DETAILS	
Job Title	Chief Accountant
Service Area / Team	Finance
Reports to	Chief Officer – Financial Services
Grade	J
Politically Restricted Post	Yes
DBS Requirement	Basic

ROLE PURPOSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support the Chief Officer – Financial Services (Deputy s151 Officer) and Director of Finance (s151 Officer) in ensuring that their statutory, regulatory and profession obligations are met with regard to maintaining effective financial administration and stewardship for the Council and associated organisations.

KEY TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that budget preparation, budget monitoring and preparation of the Council's annual financial statements are completed to the specified standards and deadlines.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide professional advice to Members and to service management on the financial implications of current and proposed service delivery activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide professional support (for example, financial modelling, options appraisal and business planning) for new initiatives and opportunities to enable informed decision-making.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out professional and technical research to ensure that all financial management activity and reporting is in line with current best practice and legislation/regulation. To include providing timely advice to the Chief Officer and Director on the impacts of any changes or developments and the required action to address them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support the Chief Officer – Financial Services in the preparation of estimates for inclusion within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that financial reporting is accurate, relevant and timely to support effective decision-making and meet statutory responsibilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that budget preparation, monitoring and preparation of the Council's annual financial statements are completed to the specified standards and deadlines.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead on the delivery of the annual financial statement and audit for the council, including HRA, subsidiary companies and charities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support (and lead where appropriate) the development, review and delivery of key financial strategies, returns and plans including the HRA Business Plan, HRA Revenue and Capital budgets, general fund revenue budget, collection fund, charity accounts, final accounts and reserves.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the Council's management of the Collection Fund, ensuring that all relevant accounting is undertaken, returns made and monitoring of pooling arrangements undertaken.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with the Chief Officer, manage the reserves position of the Council.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Chief Officer with ongoing reviews of the Finance team's service plan, including monitoring delivery against targets/deadlines and taking action to address shortfalls in performance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead, develop and motivate accountancy staff, by providing direction, identifying emerging issues and determining priorities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the management of the succession plan for the Finance team, including any resulting training plans and actively developing staff within the team.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and deliver continuous improvement/best practice initiatives.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network with professional and technical contacts and external advisors to identify best practice and follow up opportunities/challenges identified.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead service development projects to deliver agreed outcomes/benefits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take lead responsibility for liaising with external audit and responding to audit queries during their work on the annual statement of accounts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take lead responsibility for liaising with internal audit when carrying out reviews of financial processes and taking lead responsibility for agreeing management actions in response to their recommendations and for implementation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make effective use of resources allocated for service delivery, including managing the team budget.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimise the use of technology in service delivery and identify new opportunities for investment to improve performance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake any required procurement activity within the service area in a timely manner and within the requirements of the Financial Procedure Rules, Contract Standing Orders and Constitutional requirements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have oversight of the management of the Public Inspection to the Accounts period.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead on activities relating to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which will include budget setting, reviewing and contributing to the business plan, capital programmes, financial reporting, producing financial statements and liaising with external auditors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work with consultants and advisors on strategic projects to ensure there is an internal understanding of the financial modelling undertaken in respect of projects, assessing the robustness of estimates made.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Corporate Leadership Team and Committee meetings, as required, to brief leadership/Members on matters related to finance and/or financial reporting.

CORPORATE EXPECTATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adhere to the council's safeguarding policies and procedures and undertake relevant training to help protect children and vulnerable adults within the district.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To comply with legislation, council policies and procedures including the Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act, Information Security Policy, the Code of Conduct for Officers and to participate in any Emergency Planning activities as required.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To actively demonstrate the values and behaviours of the council.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To ensure our customers are valued by considering their views and needs in all that we do.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To contribute to the development and achievement of relevant corporate and service objectives by suggesting ideas for service improvements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To communicate openly and honestly with colleagues, members and customers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To undergo any training necessary to be able to fulfil the requirements of the job.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To carry out other duties commensurate with the grade, skills, experience and qualifications of the post holder as directed and as may be required from time to time.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council Person Specification

Post Title: Chief Accountant

Important Information for Applicants:				
The criteria listed in this person specification are the requirements for the post. Where the method of assessment is stated to be the application form, your application needs to demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria, even if other methods of assessment are also shown. If you do not address these criteria fully, you may not be shortlisted. Please give specific examples wherever possible.				
Factors	Criteria	Means of Assessment		
		Application	Interview	Test
Qualifications	Essential ▪ CCAB part-qualified Accountant.	x		
	Desirable ▪ CCAB qualified Accountant. ▪ Management qualification	x x		
Experience and Knowledge	Essential ▪ 4 years recent and relevant experience within a financial environment, ideally within local government	x	x	
	• Extensive experience of providing professional advice to senior stakeholders and to service management in a local authority on the financial implications of current and proposed service delivery activities.	x	x	
	• Taking action to ensure that financial reporting is accurate, relevant and timely to support effective decision-making and meet statutory responsibilities.		x	
	• Ensuring that financial record-keeping arrangements are managed in line with legislation, the council's Constitution and current professional standards.	x	x	
	▪ Leading the development and review of key financial strategies, returns and plans	x	x	
	▪ Leading, developing and motivating staff.		x	
	▪ Forward planning and monitoring delivery against service delivery plan.	x	x	
▪ Identifying and delivering continuous improvement / best practice.	x	x		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agreeing and monitoring service performance targets. ▪ Leading service development projects ▪ Managing service budgets. ▪ Optimising the use of technology in service delivery including identifying new opportunities for investment to improve performance. ▪ Embedding customer focus throughout a service ▪ Networking with professional and technical contacts and external advisors to identify best practice and follow up opportunities/challenges identified ▪ Managing service complaints and information requests. 	 X X X	X X X X X X	
	Desirable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 			
Skills and Abilities	Essential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excellent service and team leadership skills ▪ Experience of working with/advising senior stakeholders ▪ Ability to adopt a strategic perspective while overseeing operational delivery ▪ Ability to operate on own initiative with minimal supervision ▪ Excellent written and oral communication skills ▪ Proactive and committed to continued service and personal development ▪ Ability to adapt and proactively organise and prioritise work effectively in order to meet deadlines and maintain high standards at all times. ▪ Strong project management skills ▪ Ability to demonstrate a professional and customer orientated approach ▪ Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to operate and build excellent working relationships at all levels ▪ Very competent user of IT, particularly Microsoft Office ▪ Very experienced in use of financial/ERP systems 	X X X X X 	X X X X X X X X X	 X X X X
	Desirable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience in Advanced Business Solutions financial management/reporting tools 	X	X	