

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: Accountant

REPORTS TO: Principal Accountant

DEPARTMENT: Finance and Resources

SECTION: Financial Services (Integrated Financial Management & Planning)

PURPOSE OF JOB

To develop financial management information for budget holders, and work with them to enable financial strategies that support their service areas in the effective allocation of resources and delivering Value for Money.

To provide accurate and timely budgetary, accounting and financial advice to service areas and the Director of Finance in accordance with legislation and professional guidelines.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Provide financial management information including unit costing and costed models to support the demands of the service. To develop mechanisms to capture and measure efficiency savings and other information to support Value for Money.
2. Assist the Principal Accountant and Head of Financial Services in the planning and preparation of the revenue and capital budgets for service areas. Take responsibility for corporate critical and other key budgets and ensure that team members work in conjunction with budget holders in preparing the annual revenue and capital estimates and ensuring that these comply with approved plans and policies.
3. Develop the financial forecasts for the services and agree the latest position with relevant Strategic Director and Heads of Unit summarising the Targeted Budget Management position for reports to the Strategic Leadership Team and Policy & Resources Committee within set timescales.
4. Provide financial insight, advice, support and information to Service Directors, Heads of Service and Budget Managers on complex financial issues to enable effective decision making and management.
5. To develop and maintain good working relations with budget holders and senior managers and provide a robust challenge to all aspects of financial management, performance and control to assist them in improving financial performance, value for money and service priority outcomes.
6. Develop business processes and advise on local accounting and recording systems, and using initiative and experience to analyse financial information and assess risks in support of new service strategies or initiatives. Provide financial advice to budget managers and support staff and perform other financial functions as may be required to support the operational services.
7. Assist in maintaining the Authority's accounting system, ensuring records are accurate and up to date. Support the development of Financial Information Systems.

8. Co-ordinate the closing the service area's accounts within the Authority deadlines to the appropriate professional standard. Co-ordinate the information required for the Managed Audit material and provide appropriate data as required for the Council's annual report, financial statement and the audit of grant claims.
9. Co-ordinate the timely completion and submission of grant claims and returns to Government Departments, CIPFA and other agencies and bodies, bearing in mind the need to optimise the Council's cash flow and co-ordination any payment of statutory charges to the Government.
10. Deliver effective training to non- financial managers on financial management and procedures within the Directorate.
11. Prepare financial implications for reports and briefings for use by senior management and/or councillors to assist in good decision making.
12. To represent the Council's finance function from a corporate, directorate and service perspective in appropriate any relevant meetings, working parties and projects groups for specified service areas and to deputise for the Principal Accountant as appropriate.
13. Assist in the recruitment, management and development of members of the team. Supervise the work of directly reportable staff and in conjunction with the Principal Accountant assist in the planning of the team's work to ensure that tasks are completed properly and on time.
14. Be responsible for the line management of direct reports, using a coaching and mentoring approach to support the development of team members and tackle under performance.
15. To develop practices within the directorate/division that uphold and develop the principles of the City Council's Equality in Employment Policy and the Equalities Policy in relation to staff and to service provision.

You must be prepared to be responsible for the implementation of, and compliance with, the provisions of legislation relating to the health and safety of such employees and areas of the workplace as fall under your direct control and for complying with legislation relating to such works and contracts as are within your direct responsibility.

The list of duties in the job description should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive. There will be other duties and requirements associated with your job and, in addition, as a term of your employment you may be required to undertake various other duties as may reasonably be required.

Your duties will be as set out in the above job description but please note that the Council reserves the right to update your job description, from time to time, to reflect changes in, or to, your job.

You will be consulted about any proposed changes.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Accountant (Neighbourhoods, Communities and Housing)

GRADE: M10

DEPARTMENT: Finance & Resources

SECTION: Financial Services – Neighbourhoods, Communities and Housing/Environment, Economy and Culture.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

Job Related Education, Qualifications & Knowledge

- CCAB Qualified accountant or AAT qualified plus substantial experience in a financial background.
- Possession of an up-to-date knowledge of the statutory framework of accounting requirements and other legislation, guidance and initiatives that impact upon the financial integrity of the Council.
- Understand the workings of local government and a major service department

Experience

- Experience of working effectively with finance staff and budget managers, delivering training and giving presentations to non-financial managers
- Experience of staff supervision, development and performance management.
- Extensive experience in use of computer systems (ideally microsoft office products) and local accounting systems.
- Extensive experience of producing and evaluating business cases, setting budgets, closing accounts and monitoring budgets to meet the needs of budget managers.

Skills/Abilities

- Excellent communication skills and presentation skills, including the ability to explain financial information to Senior and non-financial managers and elected members with sensitivity to the political context.
- Ability to identify, develop and deliver ideas for improving financial support to stakeholders and to analyse, interpret, simplify and explain complex data.
- Ability to work on own initiative and to lead and develop a team to deliver Corporate and Directorate objectives within strict deadlines.
- Ability to organise and prioritise work effectively, in conjunction with other team members, to plan action in order to meet deadlines, to maintain high standards at all times and complete tasks in accordance with specified timetables and other guidelines with the minimum of supervision.
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- Demonstrate a commitment to working as a positive and constructive team member, with excellent customer service, negotiation and influencing skills.
- Demonstrate a collaborative and cooperative approach with the ability to adapt to change with flexibility and to acknowledge (and act on) feedback about their own performance and behaviours.

Equalities

- To be able to demonstrate a commitment to the principles of Equalities and to be able to carry out duties in accordance with the Council's Equalities Policy.