

**BRIGHTON & HOVE COUNCIL**  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**1950L&H**

**Directorate:** Finance & Resources

**Division/Section:** Financial Services

**Post Title:** Senior Finance Officer - Health, Adults, Families, Children and Learning Finance

**Location:** Bartholomew House

**Grade requested:** Lower and Higher (Generic)

**Accountable to:** Accountant or Principal Accountant

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**1 PURPOSE OF THE JOB**

To provide financial support to Directorates by preparing budgets, preparing monthly monitoring and forecasting reports, preparing final accounts, compiling grant claims and other returns and providing ad-hoc financial information and advice.

**2 PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES**

**Lower**

The timely and accurate compilation of financial and statistical returns and other information, such as grant claims and returns to Government Departments, within agreed deadlines.

Maintaining systems or accounting records and carrying out appropriate system or account checks and reconciliations.

To assist in the accurate and timely closure of accounts in accordance with the corporate guidance and timetable.

Where appropriate, to calculate charges for services in accordance with agreed policies and procedures.

To prepare revenue and capital budgets for Directorates in line with the corporate budget guidance and timetable and departmental policies and plans.

To provide monthly financial monitoring information to budget holders in line with the corporate reporting timetable and attend monitoring meetings with budget holders.

To identify actual and potential variances from budget and investigate the reasons.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

To develop realistic forecasts and projections for expenditure and income during the year, in consultation with budget holders, and recommend action to budget holders to control actual or potential variances from budget.

To assist in the delivery of training programmes or other relevant support to budget holders and/or systems users as required.

At the Scale 6 grade, officers may also be asked to under SO1/2 duties but with appropriately higher levels of supervision and/or guidance.

**Higher**

To undertake Scale 6 duties above but with minimal supervision, together with the following additional duties at the higher grade: –

To maintain, support and assist in the development of relevant financial systems, processes or the Council's accounting records and ensure these systems and/or records are accurate, up to date and properly reconciled within prescribed deadlines and in accordance with relevant financial regulations or other internal controls.

To collate and interpret financial data with a view to calculating Audit Commission and local performance indicators and to assist in improving these indicators.

To advise on and resolve relevant complex financial, accounting or systems problems with minimal supervision.

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 outcomes.

To train, support and advise budget holders and/or other finance staff in the effective management and control of budgets and on compliance with financial regulations and relevant procedures.

To prepare, with minimal supervision, briefings and financial information for reports for senior management as required.

To assist in the identification and implementation of improved financial policies and procedures.

To represent the Council's finance function from both a corporate, directorate and service perspective in appropriate meetings, working parties and projects groups for specified service areas.

To participate in training and skills development programmes, as appropriate, and take a pro-active approach to personal development planning.

To display an awareness of how the post of Senior Finance Officer can contribute to the Council's Equal Opportunities policy and ensure that the aims of the policy are successfully achieved.

**Specific Accountabilities**

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Senior Finance Officers are all expected to be able to undertake the above duties but specialisms have developed across the different teams. These are not additional duties, they are an explanation of the emphasis on some accountabilities rather than others across the Financial Services division. SFOs will therefore need to meet the same person specification but the accountabilities in some teams will have a greater focus on specific areas as detailed below:-

Central Accountancy Services

The emphasis is on financial accounts and reporting, financial governance and control. The role may involve balance sheet maintenance, capital accounting, interpretation and application of financial regulations, accounting standards (FRS') and other legislation and controls.

Directorate Finance Teams

The emphasis is generally on financial management, monitoring and control. These teams support the Council's corporate revenue and capital reporting framework (Targeted Budget Management) through budget monitoring and forecasting, and providing advice and training for budget holders. These teams also complete the majority of grant claims and government returns.

Financial Information Systems Team

The emphasis is on providing advice, support and training on financial systems to budget holders and other users. The role involves maintaining and controlling financial systems and designing, generating and running reports, payments, or other processes.

Schools Contact Team

The emphasis is on providing schools with financial services (e.g. helpdesk), advice and training including designing training courses and manuals for Headteachers, Bursars and other finance staff. The role also includes providing cover for absent school Bursars, supporting relevant financial management systems, developing financial planning and monitoring tools, and providing financial advice to School Governors.

VAT/Banking Team

The emphasis is on financial management and monitoring, at a corporate level, of income, banking, cash, imprest, VAT and the related transactions and links with various corporate systems. The role often involves assisting in the development of new systems or devising new processes for the management and control of the many forms of income, cash and credit handling across the authority.

**General Accountabilities**

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. You will be consulted about any proposed changes. Significant permanent changes in duties and responsibilities will require agreed revisions to be made to this job description.

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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;
- complying with legislation relating to such works and contracts as are within your direct responsibility.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Post Title:** Senior Finance Officer - Health, Adults, Families, Children and Learning Finance

**Grade:** Lower and Higher  
Appointment to the scale is subject to relevant qualifications and experience being gained. Persons without the higher relevant experience will be appointed to and remain on lower scale. Progression to higher scale will normally require attainment of both a professional qualification and relevant experience, however, “exceptional” experience will be accepted in place of qualification (see criteria below).

**Directorate:** Finance & Resources

**Section:** Financial Services

| CRITERIA                                           | ESSENTIAL CRITERIA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Job Related Knowledge, Skills and Abilities</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Up to date knowledge of the statutory framework of accounting requirements and practices.</li><li>• Good understanding of the structure of modern financial systems and the practices and controls surrounding them.</li><li>• Ability to communicate effectively with both internal and external customers.</li><li>• Ability to prioritise tasks and work accurately under pressure and within prescribed deadlines.</li><li>• Ability to work sensitively in a political environment.</li></ul>                                                                 |
| <b>Experience</b>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience of maintaining systems or accounts and associated reconciliations.</li><li>• Experience of working effectively with finance and non-finance staff.</li><li>• Experience of assisting in the preparation of budgets, monitoring and forecasting of budgets and preparing final accounts.</li><li>• Experience in developing financial monitoring and reporting systems and the use of computerised accounting systems.</li><li>• Evidence of extensive spreadsheet skills and familiarity with other applications (word processing, database).</li></ul> |
| <b>Qualifications</b>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evidence of commitment to updating/further development of skills, knowledge and qualifications e.g. AAT (Association of Accounting Technicians), or other relevant professional training;</li></ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relevant skills and 2 years experience of working in the financial management function of a local authority or other organisation.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                          |

## JOB DESCRIPTION

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| <b>Equal Opportunities</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To be able to demonstrate a personal commitment to the principles of Equal Opportunities and be able to carry out duties in accordance with the Council's policy.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Other Requirements</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evidence of ability to be a team player and contribute positively to achieve a common goal.</li><li>• Ability to demonstrate excellent numerical and verbal and written communication skills and good financial awareness.</li><li>• Knowledge of Health and Safety issues, such as risk assessments and the implementation of good Health &amp; Safety practice.</li></ul> |

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| ADDITIONAL CRITERIA                                | ESSENTIAL CRITERIA FOR Higher grade                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Job Related Knowledge, Skills and Abilities</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to communicate financial information to non-finance staff and senior managers.</li> <li>• Ability to resolve complex problems/issues or undertake complex system or account reconciliations effectively and efficiently, with the minimum of supervision.</li> <li>• Detailed understanding of standing orders and financial regulations and the ability to convey to non-financial staff.</li> <li>• Understanding of relevant accounting standards and practice.</li> <li>• Advanced knowledge of financial systems and application software.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Experience</b>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of reviewing and implementing new financial working practices.</li> <li>• Experience of providing financial training to non-financial staff.</li> <li>• Experience of preparation of budgets, monitoring, forecasting, interpretation of variances and preparing final accounts in liaison with budget holders.</li> <li>• Experience of contributing to working parties, project groups and other meetings.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Qualifications</b>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A CCAB qualification, part qualification or AAT <u>and</u> at least 3 years relevant skills and experience of working in a local authority or other organisation's financial management function, including at least 1 years experience of supporting the financial management function with minimal supervision;</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Exceptional" experience which will normally require 3 years relevant skills and experience of working in a local authority or other organisation's financial management function, including at least 2 years experience of supporting the financial management function with minimal supervision.</li> </ul> |

**Explanatory notes: –**

Work in a "financial management function" refers to experience in a strategic finance, financial planning, management accounts, financial control, financial accounts or similar team. Financial systems experience will constitute financial management experience provided it relates to General Ledger support and associated financial reporting and control.