



# JOB DESCRIPTION



**Directorate:** Finance

**Job title:** Chief Accountant

**Location:** Kettering

**Grade:** Spot

**Salary:** NNCBANDSM12 – £70,139 to £74,652 (from 1 April 2024)

**Section:** Finance and Accountancy

**Reports to:** Assistant Director Finance & Accountancy

**Responsible for:** Senior Finance Business Partners, Finance Business Partners and Accountants



# JOB PURPOSE



This post is located in the Professional Accountancy Team which are responsible for:

* Strategic financial management
* Operational accountancy requirements
* Advice and support to budget managers
* Performance Management
* Driving of the efficiency agenda
* Closure of Accounts and the Production of the Statement of Accounts
* Exchequer Functions
* Capital

The Chief Accountant will lead in supporting the Assistant Director of Finance & Accountancy in relation to the Accountancy function which includes the close down of the Council’s accounts and the production of the Statement of Accounts and the overall financial governance ensuring controls are in place and are being effectively maintained.

Take a leading role across the organisation in supporting Executive Directors, Assistant Directors and Service Managers in the overall stewardship of the Council’s finances.

This is a high-profile role and requires good management skills to ensure finance services provided are professional and customer focused.

The Chief Accountant will be required to support the Assistant Directors in the effective management and controls in ensuring financial controls and governance are held in high regard across the organisation. The Chief Accountant will support the annual revenue budget, the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy and the capital programme.

The Chief Accountant is expected to lead and manage members of the Finance team that may include Senior Finance Business Partners, Finance Business Partners and Accountants in providing a high-quality responsive service and advice, to ensure the integrity of the Council’s assurance and control arrangements are adequate and maintained.

The role will support the Assistant Directors of Finance in servicing the strategic financial needs of internal customers and to lead and develop the provision of their accountancy, budgeting and financial advice.

As a member of the Finance Management Team you will contribute to the overall strategic and operational management of the Finance Division, leading and motivating and developing the staff of the team to ensure its objectives are achieved and to enhance its overall level of performance and morale.

Provide high level advice on accounting, budgeting and financial management to Councillors, Service Directors and other managers.

To ensure adherence to and advise on the application of legislative, regularity and both national and international accounting standards. Provide input on other financial management requirements which will lead to the development of Finance being a first class service.

Develop effective relationships with appropriate national bodies and other local authorities, to inform and enhance the quality of the work of the post-holders team.



# PRINCIPLE ACCOUNTABILITIES



1. The Chief Accountant will take a lead on all financial matters relating to the provision of accountancy which includes the close down of the Council’s accounts and the production of the Statement of Accounts including reviewing processes and timescales to enable deadlines to be met. Ensuring that the Council meets best professional standards for purposes all financial reporting and is the key contact for the external auditors
2. Manage, motivate and develop staff within the team, providing support to ensure that priorities are identified, objectives achieved and to enhance the overall level of performance and morale.

1. Ensure effective and ongoing implementation of the Council’s Performance Appraisal and Development Programme within the finance team.
2. Ensure that services perform their duties and functions in fulfilment of their financial statutory obligations, keeping abreast of the Councils changing legal obligations, mandates and responsible for ensuring relevant compliance with the Council’s Financial Procedure Rules and SORPs.
3. To manage the provision of financial support on obtaining and securing financial resources including the assessment of business options, including interpreting / analysing complex financial and non-financial information.
4. Lead the development of improved financial awareness of budget managers and staff through the development and organisation of management training.
5. Deliver Customer Satisfaction levels to support the Finance Business Partner business plan and deliverables.
6. To manage finance projects assigned by the Assistant Directors of Finance.

1. To contribute to the Financial Planning processes with strategic analysis, advice and recommendations to produce a Medium-Term Financial Plan which delivers the objectives of the Authority.
2. To lead the provision of financial direction, support, and analysis to all Service and Support Directorates. major partnership based projects, and other key capital related investment projects.
3. To lead the provision of technical guidance, both internal to and external to Finance and develop effective relationships with appropriate national bodies and other local authorities, to inform and enhance the quality of the work of the post-holders team

1. To support Councillors, Services and partners to improve their performance through the provision of strategic financial advice.

1. As Chief Accountant design and deliver bespoke financial training packages to Officers on the close down process.

1. To facilitate the execution of the Council’s Use of Resources and Value for Money strategies by providing financial support, analysis and interpretation.
2. Ensuring all financial controls are undertaken in a timely manner and leading on Balance Sheet Monitoring and reporting.
3. Leading on the timely and accurate production of reporting of financial performance and ensuring effective controls of the overall budget.
4. Responsible for ensuring relevant compliance with the financial regulations and standing orders of the council
5. Ensuring that the council has effective arrangements for internal financial controls and appropriate levels of financial governance.
6. To ensure that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons, and to comply with the policies and procedures relating to health and safety within the Service.

1. Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs.

1. To carry out any other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of this job description.



# DATA PROTECTION ACT / FREEDOM OF INFORMATION



Working with manual and computerised systems, the Postholder will need to be fully aware, at all times, of their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Acts of 1998 and 2018 for the security, accuracy and relevance of personal data held on such systems, and to be conversant with the implications of the Freedom of Information Act. The Postholder will also be required to be fully aware of, and comply with, the Council’s Data Quality procedures to ensure that all management information is accurate and fit for purpose.

##  PERSON SPECIFICATION

|  **JOB TITLE: CHIEF ACCOUNTANT**  | Essential (E)  | Desirable (D)  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING**  |  |  |
| • CCAB Qualified  | E  |   |
| • Be committed to and have evidence of ongoing professional development as required by the membership of their professional body  | E  |   |
| • Appropriate Management Qualification  |   | D  |
| **KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE**  |  |  |
| • Knowledge/understanding of effective leadership/management of a group of professional and administrative staff | E  |   |
| * Lead and manage the preparation of the annual accounts closedown process, in accordance with best practice, agreed timetables and professional and statutory guidelines
 | E |  |
| • Proven experience in the areas of Financial Planning, Control and Reporting  | E  |   |
| • Experience in the development of Financial Processes  | E  |   |
| • Evidence of developing and delivering financial training to officers and members  | E  |   |
| • Proven experience of communicating effectively with professional and technical finance staff and operational managers. Ability to negotiate and influence at a high level  | E  |   |
| * Proven experience of successfully developing and achieving agreed objectives in a service function/organisation
 | E |  |
| • Understanding of how local government works, including the specific complexities of local government finance, and the major influences and challenges it faces  | E  |   |
| • Have up to date knowledge of accounting policy such as IFRS, CIPFA codes of practice and Taxation and be able to interpret and apply as required.  | E  |   |
| * Provide technical accounting advice and guidance to other members of the Finance team and service managers

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| • Experience of working at a professional level within a local government organisation  |   | D  |
| • Liaise with external networks, government departments and professional bodies to ensure that advice and support to the team and other services is up to date |   | D  |
| • Current and in depth knowledge of Local Government Corporate Finance (including Accounts Preparation, Council Tax, Collection Fund and Capital Finance) |  E |  |
| **ABILITY AND SKILLS**  |  |  |
| • Experience of leading inspiring and motivating a range of employees and generating a positive working environment  | E  |   |
| • Experience of analysing and addressing complex issues including the need to deliver different support to different service elements.  | E  |   |
| • Ability to apply innovative and creative thinking to complex service challenges  | E  |   |
| * Committed to corporate and collegiate working across the services of North Northants
 |  |  |
| • Ability to interpret and implement complex legislative changes | E  |   |
| • Experience of Balance Sheet Monitoring and reporting and an understanding of the Capital Financing Requirement  | E  |   |
| • Strong technical finance accounting skills and have the ability to communicate these to non-technical audiences  | E  |   |
| • Committed to corporate and collegiate working across the services of North Northants  | E  |  |
| • Enthusiastic, not easily deterred and able to convey enthusiasm to others  | E  |   |
| • Demonstrate the ability to communicate, both written and oral, complex financial issues to non-financial managers, senior managers and external organisations  | E  |   |
| * The role requires a very high level of financial accountancy skills, as the primary technical accounting expert for the Council. They will need to develop specialist models based on continuing accounting changes in legislation and regulation.
 | E |  |
| • Well developed IT skills (spreadsheet, powerpoint, general ledger packages including reporting)  | E  |   |
| • Ability to constructively challenge budget holders to take a corporate approach to finance issues  | E  |   |
| • Ability to work with others to reach a common goal  | E  |   |
| • Ability to provide professional leadership to colleagues  | E  |   |
| • Ability to maintain high levels of performance under changing conditions, tasks, responsibilities or people  | E  |   |
| • Ability to plan and organise time and resources to ensure that deadlines and agreed targets are met with minimum supervision  | E  |   |
| • Ability to constantly review and improve processes and information for budget managers and senior management to aid decision making  | E  |   |
| * Evidence of significant participation in implementing successful change, particularly in responding to the demands of an organisation that is going through a process of transformation and modernisation
 | E |  |
| • Experience of writing and presenting Committee reports | E  |  |
| • Experience of delivering training to small and large groups of people  |   | D  |
| **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**  |  |  |
|  • Ability to travel to all areas of the County  |   | D  |