

Job Description

Senior Accountant

Final

Date: January 2020

POST: SENIOR ACCOUNTANT
SERVICE: FINANCE & COMMERCIAL SERVICES
SECTION: MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING
BAND: 8
REPORTS TO: Management Accountant
RESPONSIBLE FOR: N/A
TYPE: Hot desking in Basildon Centre

All Council posts are subject to National Joint Council (NJC) conditions of service.

Basildon Borough Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults, and expects all employees, contractors and volunteers to share its commitment to prevent abuse, harm or exploitation.

Please note that the Council applies a robust recruitment vetting process.

MAIN PURPOSE

This role is within the Management Accounting Team which is responsible for the preparation and regular budget monitoring of the General Fund budgets, including the annual Council Tax setting process. The Team also supports the corporate transformation agenda in particular with regard to accounting and monitoring efficiency targets as well as providing innovative professional accountancy support to a range of front-line and support services.

Main duties of the Management Accounting Team include:

- Development of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- Development and preparation of the Financial forward forecast modelling.
- Preparation of the Council's annual budget for the General Fund for Council Tax setting.
- Preparation of information for the completion of the annual statutory final accounts for the General Fund in accordance with accounting practices.
- Providing Members and Officers of all directorates with appropriate guidance and training on financial issues.
- Preparation of regular budgetary control reports for presentation to the Senior Leadership Team, Members and Committees in support of the Section 151 responsibilities.
- The provision of a business advisory role and guidance on financial matters and support to cost centre managers.
- Maintenance of corporate financial management systems (FMS) including General Ledger and Purchase Ordering.
- Support the organisation in the delivery of the corporate transformation agenda, including monitoring achievement of targets.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Finance and Commercial Services plays a major role in supporting effective management of Council finances and secure stewardship of Council funds. This is achieved by providing financial advice on all corporate and service developments in order to support corporate

decision making arrangements. The Service is responsible for development of the Council's medium term financial strategy and the annual budget setting process to ensure effective delivery of the Corporate Plan. The Service also has to be flexible to meet the demands of legislative changes and is required to be reactive to client needs and external influences.

Finance and Commercial Services consists of the following functions: Financial and Management Accounting; Commercial; Treasury Management; Financial Performance Monitoring; Business Engagement; Income Controls; Financial Systems; Creditors; and Banking Arrangements.

DUTIES

1. Contribute to the development of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and the annual Budget and Council Tax Setting Report, as appropriate.
2. Preparation of the annual General Fund budget estimates to agreed guidance and deadlines to feed into the overall Council Tax and budget setting process.
3. To assist the Management Accountant in regular monitoring and reconciliation of the Budget database, the Employees Note 1 database (EN1D), and to liaise with other departments to resolve any issues or anomalies.
4. To assist in the preparation of the annual Resource Management budget process, to agreed guidance and deadlines to feed into the overall Council Tax and budget setting process.
5. Assist in the collation of data for the annual review of fees and charges.
6. To ensure efficiencies are processed in a timely manner and budget pressures are highlighted as appropriate for decision making.
7. Regular budgetary control and reporting to senior management and relevant business managers. To include day-to-day liaison on budget and service issues and financial controls. Provision of other financial information to senior management and business managers, as and when appropriate.
8. To provide a business advisory role and guidance on financial matters and support to cost centre managers. There is a requirement to ensure resources are used effectively to deliver key priorities and that any budget performance issues are identified and addressed.
9. To provide specific advice on the financial implications of decisions, including for Committee Reports.
10. Provide prompt advice and guidance as appropriate to all staff, managers and Members of the Council, and to deal with difficult and/or complex enquiries arising, for example from members of the public and external agencies.
11. To contribute to the preparation of the Council's Annual Financial Report (AFR) to the agreed timetable.
12. To assist in the accurate completion and despatch of all appropriate grant claims and returns (including government returns) by the due date. To ensure that all monies the team is responsible for that are due to the Council are claimed to maximise resources.

13. To assist the Management Accountant in delivering all work assigned to the team, including communication of work related and general policy issues.
14. To ensure that relevant internal controls are in place within the team and that they are adhered to and continue to be effective. Including the implementation of internal and external audit recommendations as appropriate.
15. To provide effective relevant training to both the Service and the organisation when required.
16. Represent the Service at relevant internal working groups and external user groups.
17. Have an up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislation, professional practices and developments and undertake system enhancement and development reviews as required to meet any changes to legislation or service provision.
18. Develop and introduce new financial methods and procedures that will continue to improve processes both within the Service and the Council as a whole.
19. Ensure that decision making follows the requirements of the Financial Regulations and other specific policies to ensure compliance including regular review of the Financial Procedures Notes.
20. Have an awareness of overall Council policies, aims and management initiatives and ensure that all new developments by the team are in accordance with any corporate protocols or guidance.
21. Be committed to the aims and objectives of Finance & Commercial Services and to be aware of the service's responsibilities in achieving these aims. Effectively promote and support a team approach to achieve this.
22. To promote positive communication across the organisation, encourage constructive relationships, including with the Council's key partner agencies.
23. Be part of multi-disciplinary teams as required to deliver corporate projects, involving working with other managers from other services and partner organisations.
24. Undertake all the duties within the framework of Equal Opportunities.
25. Any other duties appropriate to the post: These other duties must be equivalent to or below the salary and status of the role and, where appropriate, under the Equality Act 2010, due consideration must be given to any employees with a "protected characteristic".
26. You must cooperate in all matters relating to Health and Safety and implement all procedures for your job role. The identification of Health and Safety related risks within the working environment must be highlighted to your management.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Position Title:	Senior Accountant	Date Prepared:	January 2020
Department:	Finance & Commercial Services	Band:	8

AF= Application Form	I = Interview	T= Test
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	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
1.	EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE			
1.1	An in-depth knowledge of local government finance and general local government procedures.	✓		AF/I/T
1.2	Relevant staff management experience including the ability to deliver through others.	✓		AF/I/T
1.3	Experience of liaison with budget managers and senior staff.	✓		AF/I
1.4	Experience in producing written reports on complex issues tailored to the needs of different audiences.	✓		AF/I/T
1.5	Track record of improving the quality of service to customers.	✓		AF/I
1.6	Good communication and inter-personal skills combined with a flexible and thorough approach. A high level of written, oral and presentational skills.	✓		AF/I/T
1.7	A professional and motivated self-starter with the ability to work well both as an individual and as part of a team.	✓		AF/I
1.8	Ability to work under pressure and achieve pre-determined deadlines including responding quickly to new initiatives with tight deadlines.	✓		AF/I
1.9	Numerate with the ability to handle complex statistical and financial data and the ability to interpret such data accordingly.	✓		AF/I/T
1.10	Excellent IT skills including strong technical experience of financial management systems and desk top analytical tools.	✓		AF/I/T
1.11	To be able to assess a dilemma logically and laterally and deal with it accordingly, including knowing when to refer the problem to more senior management.	✓		AF/I
1.12	Ability to achieve results through influence and negotiation.	✓		AF/I
1.13	Ability to cope with personal and organisational pressure, maintaining the quality of contribution when facing conflicting requirements.	✓		AF/I

	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
1.14	Ability to train others effectively on the use of the financial systems and the application of financial procedures.	✓		AF/I
2.	COMPETENCIES			
	LEADING AND SUPERVISING			
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provides others with clear direction b) Sets appropriate standards of behaviour c) Delegates work appropriately and fairly d) Motivates and empowers others e) Provides staff with development opportunities and coaching f) Recruits staff of a high calibre 	✓		AF/I/T
	RELATING AND NETWORKING			
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Establishes good relationships with customers and staff b) Builds wide and effective networks of contacts inside and outside the organisation c) Relates well to people at all levels d) Manages conflict e) Use humour appropriately to enhance relationships with others 	✓		AF/I/T
	APPLYING EXPERTISE AND TECHNOLOGY			
2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Applies specialist and detailed technical expertise b) Develops job knowledge and expertise through continual professional development c) Shares expertise and knowledge with others d) Uses technology to achieve work objectives e) Demonstrates appropriate physical co-ordination and endurance, manual skill, spatial awareness and dexterity f) Demonstrates an understanding of different organisational departments and functions 	✓		AF/I/T
	CREATING AND INNOVATING			
2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Produces new ideas, approaches or insights b) Creates innovative products or designs c) Produces a range of solutions to problems d) Seeks opportunities for organisational improvement e) Devises effective change initiatives 	✓		AF/I/T

	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
2.5	<p>PLANNING AND ORGANISING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sets clearly defined objectives b) Plans activities and projects well in advance and takes account of possible changing circumstances c) Manages time effectively d) Identifies and organises resources needed to accomplish tasks e) Monitors performance against deadlines and milestones 	✓		AF/I/T
3.	EDUCATION AND TRAINING			
3.1	AAT qualified (or higher) with 5 years' experience of working in a local authority financial environment.	✓		AF/I