

## Job description

### Details of the job

Post title:	Head of Finance / Deputy Section 151 Officer
JE Code:	JE1905
Grade:	N
Competency Level:	4
Hours:	37
Location:	Milton Keynes Council
Reports to:	Director of Finance and Resources
Service area:	Finance

### Overall purpose of the post

1. To support the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Services and Milton Keynes Council by providing effective, efficient, timely and robust finance support services, which both provide support for the strategic direction and change of the organisation and the regular management.

To enable the S151 Officer to deliver statutory responsibilities for the financial control, management and reporting of the Council's financial affairs. This includes deputising for the S151 Officer when required. This responsibility is shared with the other Assistant Director of Finance.

2. To lead on all corporate finance matters, including the budget setting process, financial monitoring, control and statutory reporting. This includes responsibility for managing the Council's cash deposits and borrowing, together with effective management of the Council's tax liabilities.
3. To provide leadership, advice and support to the Schools Forum to set the strategy and ensure the management of the Dedicated Schools Grant (>£150m p.a.), minimising risks to Milton Keynes Council. This will involve working with the Integrated Schools Finance Team to provide information and analysis.
4. To provide leadership, advice and support to the Directors of Adults Services, Children's Services, Housing & Regeneration, Public Health, Health and Social Care Integration, Strategy and Futures, the Assistant Chief Executive and Heads of Service. The role will provide strategic advice and support in relation to budgets excluding schools of £170m
5. This role is a key part of the Finance Service and will be expected to operate in a leadership role, both within the Finance Service and in an advisory capacity to Milton

Keynes Council. This will apply to both the direct delivery of team objectives and in a wider context of service improvement and enhancement.

6. To work effectively with a wide range of partners including NHS, voluntary and private sector, to develop system wide solutions, reshape services and deliver cost reductions and/ or improved outcomes.
7. This role will be required to represent and provide advice to Milton Keynes Council, including working with a wide variety of stakeholder and contributing to public meetings.
8. To lead, influence and implement changes as part of enabling the Finance Service to operate effectively in a shared service partnership.
9. To deliver change programmes and projects as required by the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Resources and wider Leadership Team.
10. To support councillors in bringing forward policies which support the overall vision encapsulated in the Council Plan through briefings, developing ideas, attendance at Cabinet and scrutiny forums.

## **Corporate responsibilities**

The Council's corporate leadership competencies apply to this role:

- Creates a compelling future
- Inspires others to lead
- Delivers excellence for the customer
- Takes accountability for making it happen

## **Customer & Partners**

Responsible for:

1. Engaging with and building positive relations with customers to ensure that their requirements are at the heart of the design and delivery of services in accordance with the Council's customer strategy.
2. Developing and maintaining effective partnerships and relationships, both internally and externally to enable transformational change and to manage and resolve issues.
3. Ensuring that the needs of service users are met by demonstrating behaviour which fosters equality of opportunity in service provision and employment.

## **Managing People**

Responsible for:

4. Demonstrating Milton Keynes Council's leadership competencies – providing purposive and positive leadership, acting with openness, honesty and integrity, and

instilling a clear sense of direction, priority and pace. Managing people in an inclusive way to deliver strategic and operational objectives.

5. Ensuring that effective arrangements are in place to secure the overall well-being and the health & safety of all employees and people delivering services for the Council.
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.
7. To lead, motivate and develop the staff of the team to ensure its objectives are achieved and to enhance its overall level of performance and morale.

### **Performance, Finance and Risk**

Responsible for:

8. Managing a performance culture that delivers results through rigorous challenge, disciplined execution and continual improvement. Managing the improvement of corporate and service performance by ensuring that resources are targeted on business priorities and meeting customer needs.
9. Improving the overall management of resources (financial, human and other). Discovering new ways to reduce the cost of services to the customer and their overall productivity and value for money to service users through a range of approaches, including: the strategic re-design of services and their costs; the use of business and operational process improvements; the smarter use of supply (through out-sourcing, co-sourcing and in-sourcing where appropriate); the better use of demand management; and improved asset management.
10. Ensuring that effective risk management arrangements are in place to minimise the Council's exposure to risk and uncertainty. Responsible for resilient business continuity arrangements and robust response and recovery arrangements in the event of emergencies and critical incidents locally – in accordance with the requirements of Council's Emergency and Business Continuity Plans.

### **Principle Responsibilities**

Responsible for:

11. Ensuring that the Finance Service meets the performance outcomes as defined through Key Performance Indicators; Service Level Agreement; Finance Improvement Programmes and customer satisfaction. Essentially this also includes fulfilment of its statutory obligations, though enforcement of Financial Regulations, Procedure Rules and schemes of delegation.
12. A collective leadership responsibility for the Finance Service, and to lead part of the finance team which will report in to either the Chief Executive's management team or Deputy Chief Executive's service team as part of the Chief Executive's Leadership Team and the direct management of those services and functions that are set within the direction of this post. The two post holders will be expected to work closely together and alternate between their respective service roles.
13. Demonstrate cross-organisational team working, and across boundaries with other agencies and partners, to develop innovative solutions; managed issues and support integration and joined up delivery.

14. To lead the provision of strategic financial management and support, covering all aspects of financial planning; management; reporting and control (for capital, revenue and other resources). Working proactively to provide ideas and support work on changes and solutions.
15. To work with Key partners and stakeholders in developing and shaping future models of service delivery from a financial perspective. This will involve cross organisational working with the NHS, 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and Private providers and will be a key element of the role.
16. To lead the support for the Schools Forum in setting the strategy for the Dedicated Schools Grant (> £150m); making decisions, which minimise the risk exposure to the Council and managing changes. This will involve working closely with the Integrated Schools Finance Team on the analysis and support and input to these meetings.
17. To lead the support and challenge arrangements for the Council, working through the Integrated Schools Finance Team to address schools in financial difficulty, minimising the risk exposure for Milton Keynes Council.
18. To lead either the Chief Executive's services or Deputy Chief Executive's in developing an effective medium term financial plan, supported by strategic analysis, advice and recommendations which delivers the objectives of the Authority within the directorate financial envelope >£170m or £211m, Both postholders will be expected to alternate between these service responsibilities.
19. To support and lead specific projects which help to deliver transformational changes in Service Delivery or methods of working.
20. Influence the design of and deliver bespoke financial training packages to Directors, Councillors, Officers and budget managers as required. To lead the development of financial business processes both within Finance and Directorates and support the implementation of these improved processes.
21. 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 improvement of the Finance Service.
22. Carry out any other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of this job description and which are commensurate with the grade of the post.

This job description reflects the major tasks to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the major tasks may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Post Title:	Head of Finance / Deputy Section 151 Officer
Grade	N
Service Area:	Finance and Resources

<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>	<b>ESSENTIAL CRITERIA</b>	<b>DESIRABLE CRITERIA</b>
<b>Education and Qualifications</b>	Qualified CCAB/ CIPFA Accountant	<p>Appropriate Management Qualification or evidence of sustained formal training in management</p> <p>Demonstrate evidence of continual updating of professional and management skills</p>
<b>Experience and Knowledge</b>	<p>Knowledge/understanding of effective leadership/management of a group of professional and administrative staff</p> <p>Experience of working at a senior professional level within a large complex organisation</p> <p>Proven experience of communicating effectively with professional and technical finance staff and operational managers</p> <p>Proven experience of successfully developing and achieving agreed objectives in a service function/organisation</p> <p>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</p> <p>Understanding of local government finance.</p>	<p>Demonstrate direct experience of working in partnership with private, public and voluntary organisations</p> <p>Demonstration of success in managing human and financial resources</p> <p>Experience in working with Company Directors, Non Executive Directors and Councillors and attendance on cross member/officer working parties or panels</p>

<p><b>Ability and Skills</b></p>	<p>Proven experience in leading the delivery and improvement of services across a finance function including in the areas of financial planning, management, control and reporting</p> <p>Ability to analyse and address complex issues including the need to deliver different support to different service elements</p> <p>Ability to lead and participate in the development of innovative policies and practices</p> <p>Ability to proactively apply creative and innovative thinking to complex services challenges</p> <p>Able to negotiate and deliver improvements and outcomes through working with and influencing key internal and external partners</p> <p>Well developed interpersonal and leadership skills. Including; influencing and persuading, offering an alternative perspective, and being willing to express it, understanding all financial actions in light of the needs of Council</p> <p>Enthusiastic and resilient, and able to convey enthusiasm to others</p> <p>Able to inspire and motivate a range of employees and generate a positive working environment</p> <p>Demonstrate the ability to communicate, both written and oral, complex financial issues to members, non financial managers, senior officers and external organisations</p>	
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<b>Equal Opportunities</b>	Commitment to and experience of promoting equality of opportunity in service delivery, employment or in the community with an understanding of the issues underpinning these values	
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	Understanding of and commitment to effectively implementing and promoting Health & Safety within the team	

**SPOKEN ENGLISH FLUENCY DUTY REQUIREMENT** - The ability to converse at ease with members of the public and provide advice in accurate spoken English is essential for this post.

Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 this post is classified as a politically restricted or sensitive post. Holders of such posts are disqualified from seeking election to or being a member of the House of Commons, the European Parliament, or a local authority, other than a parish council.

## Explanation of the Role

These two roles will report directly to the Director Finance and Resources and will undertake a strategic advice and leadership role for the Council. Whilst each postholder will lead on supporting the service areas either within the Chief Executive's or Deputy Chief Executives portfolio, both of these will be interchangeable. Being responsible for the range of advice and support required to deliver statutory functions.

This role includes a shared responsibility for the Deputy S151.

The role is split due to the size and complexity that this covers across the organisation and to ensure that there is sufficient resilience within the professional finance team to meet the increasing challenges. The role has a corporate focus around the overall management of the Council's finances, including budget setting, monitoring and reporting as well as a leadership role supporting the organisation develop and grow an effective culture which drives value, performance and continuous improvement.

The role also includes specific focus across the broad range of service areas, including:

Schools which is a large and complex role, the Dedicated Schools grant is in excess of £150m pa – this role is responsible for estimating, identifying and managing risks and ensuring that the Council minimises its exposure.

Children's social care and Adult social care (excluding the DSG) account for c£200m of expenditure and income per year. There are many complex redesign issues and areas of change to address financial challenges.

The role will also involve providing advice and support in respect of the Council's Housing responsibilities, including the joint venture with YourMK.

The capital programme for children is often in excess of £100m pa, including new school builds. This role will work with the service and the capital planning role in finance to manage the delivery of the programme; address issues and align the revenue position. The capital programme for housing (including HRA) is often in excess of £30m per annum.

This role will also provide advice on complex service changes such as the proposed integration of adult community health and social care services; the £15m pooled Better Care Fund with health; the creation of an adoption partnership and will lead the Council's financial relationship across the Health sector to influence and deliver redesign and more effective, lower cost solutions.

This role will also lead the improvement of key systems from a financial perspective, to improve payments, reduce process and make improvements. This will affect over £60m of care and other service costs billed per year and £53m of rental income from the Council's HRA.

This role will regularly attend cabinet and scrutiny committees and will support Cabinet and other councillor briefings.

The Director of Finance and Resources will have 2 direct finance reports, as well as 6 other direct reports covering, HR, ICT, Customer Services, Internal Audit, Revenues and Benefits and Procurement. Fill some of the support, networking and challenge functions previously addressed by the Service Director of Finance and Resources.