

Director of Finance (S151 Officer)

Candidate Pack

July / August 2025

Contents

1. Welcome
2. The Opportunity
3. Role Profile
4. Organisation Chart
5. Further Reading
6. How To Apply

1. Welcome from Simon Parker



Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of **Director of Finance** (Section 151 Officer) at Bath & North East Somerset Council.

This is an outstanding opportunity to join one of the most distinctive local authorities in the country at a pivotal time.

Bath & North East Somerset is a place of remarkable contrasts – home to a UNESCO World Heritage City that attracts over six million visitors annually, as well as a network of thriving towns and rural communities. Our ambition is just as broad: we exist to improve people's lives, and we are committed to becoming a more modern, inclusive and high-performing council.

We are already in a stable financial position, supported by strong political leadership, a capable finance team, and a positive, collegiate working culture. But we now need to go further – building a more strategic and forward-looking finance function that enables innovation, empowers managers, and supports sustainable transformation across the organisation.

As our new **Director of Finance and S151 Officer**, you will play a central role in this evolution.

You will lead the development of our Medium-Term Financial Plan, provide assurance on high-risk areas such as children's services, and transform our capital and procurement programmes to help every pound go further.

You'll also oversee a diverse and complex portfolio, from our substantial property estate and capital programme to our wholly-owned housing company, Aequus.

But this is about more than systems and structures – it's about culture. We want finance to be at the heart of everything we do: empowering decision-makers, shaping outcomes, and challenging the status quo. You'll have the full support of myself, the Chief Executive and Cabinet, and you'll be part of a leadership team that is collaborative, outward-looking, and unafraid of change.

We are open to experienced S151 officers as well as ambitious deputies ready for their next step. What matters most is your ability to think strategically, lead with empathy, and use financial insight to drive progress.

Bath & North East Somerset is a unique and rewarding place to live and work. From our heritage and green spaces to our innovation economy and strong community identity, it's a place where your leadership will have real and lasting impact.

If you share our ambition and are ready to take on this exciting challenge, we would love to hear from you. For a confidential discussion, please contact our recruitment partner **Andrew Tromans** at **Penna** on **07805 226301** or **andrew.tromans@penna.com**.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Warm Regards,

Simon Parker

Executive Director of Resources

Bath & North East Somerset Council



2. The Opportunity

Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer

Salary: Up to £105,000 per annum

Location: Bath, with hybrid working available

Contract: Full-time, Permanent

Build a brilliant council. Improve people's lives.

The Role

You'll be the Council's most senior finance officer – responsible for all aspects of financial governance, leadership and assurance – and a key member of the Corporate Management Team, reporting to the Executive Director of Resources.

You'll lead the budget process and long-term financial strategy, drive innovation in our capital and procurement functions, and transform our approach to financial management across the organisation.

Your remit will include:

- Strategic leadership of finance, procurement and capital investment.
- Oversight of our diverse income base, including a significant commercial property portfolio and wholly owned housing company (Aequus).
- Drive our strategic ambition for greater economic, social and environmental value from our procurement spend.
- Supporting a high-performing organisation to deliver better outcomes through smarter financial planning and service design.



Who We're Looking For

We're seeking a finance professional with:

- A recognised accountancy qualification (e.g., CIPFA, ACCA, CIMA).
- Strong core finance skills and experience operating in a complex and political organisation.
- An appetite for transformation, innovation, and smarter investment.
- The ability to collaborate across services and build financial capability at every level.
- Experience of driving value for money through smart procurement.
- A passion for public service and the impact that good finance leadership can make.

To find out more, please contact our retained consultant Andrew Tromans at CIPFA Penna on 07805 226301 or at andrew.tromans@penna.com.

Closing date: Sunday 17th August, 2025

3. Job Description

Job Title	Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Grade	Director 1
Reports to	Executive Director of Resources
Location	Hybrid – Bath & North East Somerset Council offices and remote working

Purpose of the Role

The Director of Finance (s151) is the council’s senior finance officer charged with leading and directing financial strategy and operations. The director is responsible for the full budget lifecycle, advising senior managers and cabinet, and takes the lead role in developing the council’s overall financial capability. They hold strategic responsibility for securing value for money from the council’s procurement spend, delivering social value, embedding best practice and ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and policy.

Service Portfolio

- Financial management including government grants, capital financing, treasury management, taxation and returns.
- Framework for budgets and accounts.



- Maintenance of pooled budget arrangements with ICB, ring fenced budgets for public health and schools, financial relationship with Brunel Pensions, WECA, and other levying & precepting bodies.
- Reporting to Audit Committee, Cabinet and Council.
- Financial governance including the Council’s Budget Management Scheme and relationship with external auditors.
- Supporting transformation of the council’s financial management systems and processes, building organisation-wide capability.
- Strategic procurement capability to drive improved economic and social value from the council’s commissioned spend.

Specific Accountabilities

- Member of the Corporate Management Team
- Medium term financial strategy and annual balanced budget for the Council.

3. Job Description

- Investment planning and strategy.
- Financial reporting and monitoring.
- Deliver the B&NES procurement strategy
- Financial input and co-ordination linked to annual operational plans.
- Active participation in leadership and governance.
- Compliance with relevant professional financial codes and legal duties.
- Key professional adviser to the Chief Executive, Cabinet and Council on all financial matters.
- Contribution to strong overall risk management.
- The CIPFA guide to the role of the chief finance officer in local government sets out the duties of the professional aspects of the role in detail.

Specific Qualifications, Training, Experience or Knowledge Required

- Recognised accountancy qualification with significant post-qualification relevant experience at a senior management level.
- Successful record of leadership and management of a multi-disciplinary finance service encompassing a range of support services within a public sector organisation.



- Extensive experience of managing, setting and monitoring budgets and financial management information, including developing and using management information.
- Experience of working with internal partners to drive economic, social and environmental value through procurement.
- Experience of managing a large capital programme is desirable.

4. Director Profile

Role Purpose

As part of the Senior Leadership Team, lead services of a Directorate to achieve targeted results, priorities and statutory requirements. Accountable for delivery, effectiveness, community outcomes and/or corporate support, the role is critical to the achievement of change and performance. The focus is on driving performance within a culture of continuous improvement by translating strategy into successful service delivery.

Leads the strategy and delivery for a Directorate that represents a largely related portfolio, delivering substantial and complex services for the Council.

Accountabilities

- Be an active member of the Senior Leadership Team, supporting the Corporate Leadership Team to shape and develop a high performing and inclusive Council, delivering an excellent service for the residents and communities through an ambitious, integrated and successful service/function(s).
- Lead the integrated delivery, improvement, management and performance of a portfolio of Council services, commissioning and directing activity within the Council and externally as required.
- Evaluate risk and make changes to established plans in order to react to significant business challenges, opportunities or threats.



- Ensure the service/function(s) uses all available resources in the most efficient and effective way that represents excellent value for money, managing Directorate budgets and ensuring services are continuously improved to see if they can be delivered in a more cost effective and streamlined way.
- Work with the other Directorates to remove barriers and enable staff to be creative and innovative, and work with stakeholders across Directorate and organisational boundaries to co-design inclusive and joined-up services that are efficient, effective and meet the requirements of residents and communities.
- Inspire, motivate and develop service/functional leaders and staff, to create an empowering, collaborative, modern and learning culture that enables staff to perform at their best and therefore both deliver excellent services to residents as well as retain and attract the best talent for the Council.

4. Director Profile

- Align own area of the Council with corporate objectives, developing annual plans and ensuring resources (staff, resources, assets) necessary to achieve objectives against priorities with appropriate consideration for medium-term requirements.
- Lead considerable change and transformation across services, while ensuring continuity in performance, value for money and statutory obligations.
- Identify developments in the sector and region in order to take advantage of changes in the longer term within broad area of responsibility.
- Negotiate and collaborate with residents, communities, Members, other Council Directorates, and external stakeholders to develop joined up solutions that effectively serve the Bath and North East Somerset and its residents.
- Act as a Place and community Leader, creating an environment in which the Council can jointly design, commission (if required), and deliver outcomes with partners, by unlocking barriers and monitoring the success of these partnerships.
- Work with the Cabinet and the relevant Member portfolio holder as the Council's expert within a wide service area, to provide advice, guidance, clarity and insight into functional delivery and performance.
- Promote all Health, Safety and Wellbeing issues, ensuring management responsibilities designated in the HSWB policy are fulfilled.



Knowledge / Skills / Experience required

- Experienced and effective professional, with a breadth of understanding and demonstrable experience in leading a portfolio of services.
- Degree and post graduate qualifications in relevant disciplines, and/or leadership and management qualifications.
- Holds appropriate membership to professional body (if required).
- In-depth understanding of regulations/legislation and best practice within their area of specialism and the wider sector. Understanding of national and local government developments, policy, and emerging trends.
- Experience of leading a large Directorate within a complex and diverse organisation, and leading constant change and transformation, establishing a mandate for change and inspiring the workforce to improve.

4. Director Profile

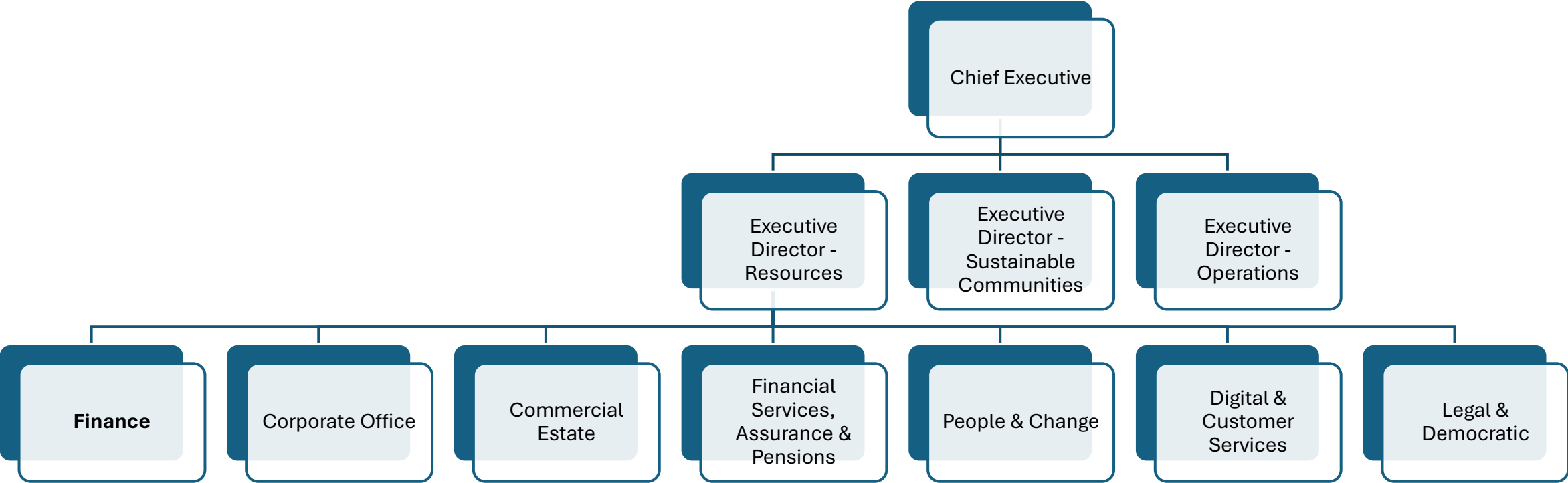
- Significant experience of leading diverse and multifaceted teams at a senior level, bringing activities together to achieve an aligned objective.
- Experience of working with key stakeholders including other public bodies and government
- Experience of delivering large-scale change and innovation.
- Excellent commercial acumen and financial management skills.
- Ability to use deep personal understanding of the agendas or motivations of others in order to keep them positively engaged, building behind the scenes support for ideas and initiatives.
- Ability to recognise and make use of alliances/relationships in order to gain support for the Council vision and its implementation.
- Excellent knowledge of the impact of underlying demographic, social or political drivers, and understands the formal and informal politics at the regional and national level and what this means for the Council.
- Evidence of cultivating a high performance, cost effective culture, which delivers outstanding outcomes, through a variety of mechanisms, including structure, working methods, contracts, etc.



Dimensions of role

- The role will be leading a Directorate for the Council, developing a vision and leading strategy.
- Significant financial oversight as part of the role, typically managing an annual budget of £40m - £50m.
- Planning will be over a multi-year horizon.

4. Organisational Chart



5. Further Reading



**Corporate Strategy
2023-2027**
[https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Corporate Strategy 2023-2027.pdf](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Corporate%20Strategy%202023-2027.pdf)

Bath & North East Somerset Council		Decision Register Entry	
Cabinet Meeting Resolution		Executive Forward Plan Reference	E3590
Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 and Financial Outlook			
Date of Meeting	13-Feb-25		
The Issue	This report presents the revenue and capital budgets together with proposals for increases in Council Tax and the Adult Social Care Precept for 2025/26.		
The decision	<p>(1) To recommend Council to approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The General Fund net revenue budget for 2025/26 of £161.7m and the individual service cash limits for 2025/26 as outlined in Annex 1 of the report.The savings and income plans outlined in Annex 2(i), funding requirements 2(i), in conjunction with the Equalities Impact Assessment Report in Annex 3 of the report.An increase in Council Tax of 2.99% in 2025/26 (an increase of £51.92 per Band D property or £1 per week).An increase of 2% to Council Tax for the Adult Social Care Precept in recognition of the current demands and financial pressures on this service. This is equivalent to an increase of £34.72 on a Band D property (£70 per week).The movement in reserves outlined in section 5.6 and the adequacy of Un-audited Reserves at £12.58m within a risk assessed range requirement of £11.8m - £13.0m.To note the Children's Services management plan update set out in section 5.2.6 of the report.The Efficiency Strategy attached at Annex 4 of the report.The Capital Programme for 2025/26 of £76.41m including new and emerging capital bids outlined in Annex 5(i), planned sources of funding in 5.8.3, and notes the programme for 2026/27 to 2029/30 and that any wholly funded projects coming forward during the year will be added to the Capital Programme in line with the Budget Management Scheme.The delegation of implementation, subject to consultation where appropriate, of the capital programmes set out in Annex 5(i) to Annex 5(iv) to the relevant Director in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder.		

Financial Outlook
<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s85778/E3590%20Decision-Budget%20and%20Council%20Tax%202025-26%20and%20Financial%20Outlook.pdf>

Our budgets and spending

View our Annual Accounts	View the Auditor's Annual Report	Explore Council budgets
Your Council Tax 2024 to 2025	Treasury management and investment	Policy and Budget Framework
Councillor allowances	Regulatory committees	Notice of Public Rights

Budgets & Spending
<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/our-budgets-and-spending>

6.How To Apply

This guidance contains important information to help with your application:

- (i) Please apply by submitting a CV and Cover Letter (no more than four sides of A4 in length per document aligned to the person specification). Please also include your contact details.
- (ii) Please ensure your full employment history is outlined in your CV; where there are essential criteria, competencies and/or qualifications please make clear how you meet these. We may wish to verify this information during the recruitment process.
- (iii) Please provide the details of two referees. Note that we will only approach referees for candidates proceeding to final selection and only with your permission. Please clearly indicate whether we can approach each referee before the selection date.
- (iv) Please share with us in your Cover Letter the values and behaviours that you bring to your leadership, and how you will transfer your skills and experience into this role.

- (iv) Please complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form when you upload your details via our website.
- (v) Please upload your application by the closing date – no applications will be accepted once the long listing process has begun.
- (vi) Please upload your application by the closing date – no applications will be accepted once the long listing process has begun.
- (vii) Following long-listing, you will be contacted directly by a Penna consultant to update you on the status of your application.
- (viii) Asking for adjustments – we’re committed to making our recruitment practices barrier-free and as accessible as possible for everyone. This includes making adjustments or changes for disabled people, neurodiverse people or people with long-term health conditions. If you would like us to consider doing anything differently during the application, interview, or assessment process, including providing information in an alternative format, please contact us.

Applications deadline	Sunday 17th August, 2025
Technical Interviews	w/c 18th August, 2025
Final Interviews	28th August / 1st September / 4th September (TBC)

To apply for this role, please visit the following link to upload your CV and Cover Letter:
<https://execroles.penna.com>

Please contact Andrew for a confidential discussion or for any information, insight or guidance about the role or the recruitment processes:



Andrew Tromans
07805 226301
andrew.tromans@penna.com

CIPFA Penna Executive Search

Public Finance Recruitment, Redefined

CIPFA and Penna have partnered to establish a unique and market-leading public finance recruitment and career advisory service. Penna is a full-service executive recruitment and HR consultancy, dedicated to supporting local government.

Through our exclusive partnership with CIPFA, we provide specialist recruitment and career advisory services for public finance professionals – combining the expertise of a leading recruitment consultancy with the insight of the UK's only public sector accountancy body.

We pride ourselves on our ability to give clients and candidates a competitive edge while making the recruitment process smooth, straightforward and – dare we say it – enjoyable.

Whether you're taking the next step on the career ladder or building a bespoke and targeted recruitment strategy, our team will work hard to deliver a first-class service that meets your exact requirements.

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