

Job Description

Executive Director – Transformation and Resources (Statutory S151 Officer)

Job Family:

Level: 5

Band: 18

Career Track: Executive

Job Purpose

The Executive Director of Finance & Resources is the Council's statutory **Section 151 Officer**, responsible for ensuring the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs, robust financial governance, and long-term financial sustainability. As a key member of the Corporate Leadership Team, the postholder will provide strategic direction across all financial and resource functions, shaping corporate policy and enabling the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives.

The role will also have strategic leadership for a corporate transformation programme, driving organisational change, service modernisation, digital innovation, and improved customer experience. The Executive Director will ensure that transformation activity is financially sound, outcomes-driven, and aligned with the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and organisational priorities.

Service Purpose

The Finance & Resources Directorate exists to provide strategic leadership and operational excellence in the management of Northumberland County Council's financial resources, technology, and physical assets. The service is integral to ensuring the financial health, sustainability, and efficiency of the Council, empowering services to meet the needs of residents and communities.

The Directorate is committed to upholding the principles of strong financial governance, and innovation in service delivery. With a focus on long-term sustainability and performance improvement, the Directorate plays a pivotal role in driving the Council's transformation agenda, modernising operations, enhancing digital capability, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement across the organisation.

Duties and Responsibilities

Statutory Responsibilities (Section 151 Officer)

- Ensure the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.

- Act as the Council's principal financial adviser, providing independent, professional guidance to the Cabinet, Corporate Leadership Team, and Members.
- Ensure compliance with CIPFA guidance, financial regulations, and all relevant legislation.
- Provide assurance on the adequacy of financial controls, risk management, audit arrangements, and governance frameworks.
- Oversee preparation of the Medium-Term Financial Plan, annual budget, and Statement of Accounts, ensuring accuracy, transparency, and statutory compliance.

Strategic Leadership – Finance & Resources

- Lead the Finance & Resources Directorate, ensuring high-performing, customer-focused, and efficient services.
- Drive the Council's financial strategy, embedding strong financial management culture across the organisation.
- Provide leadership across corporate resource areas, including:
 - Financial services
 - Digital, Data & IT services
 - Integrated Services
 - Corporate Commissioning & Procurement.
- Act as a key advisor on investment, capital strategy, commercial activity, and long-term organisational sustainability.

Transformation Programme Leadership

- Lead and oversee major corporate transformation aimed at service redesign, digital transformation, and organisational efficiency.
- Ensure transformation aligns with the Council Corporate Plan, MTFP, and modernisation priorities.
- Champion a customer-centric approach, improving outcomes for residents and communities.
- Establish robust programme governance, performance reporting, benefits realisation, and risk management.
- Drive innovation, modern ways of working, and cultural change across the Council.

Corporate & Partnership Leadership

- Contribute to cross-council strategic decision-making as a key member of the Corporate Leadership Team.
- Build strong working relationships with elected members, supporting effective political governance.
- Represent the Council in regional and national partnerships, including combined authority arrangements where relevant.
- Participate in corporate emergency planning and support statutory duties during local and national elections.

Adviser & Shareholder Representative Responsibilities

- Act as the Council's principal financial adviser in relation to joint ventures, subsidiaries, and other external commercial arrangements e.g. Advance Northumberland, ensuring that financial risks are effectively managed and the Council's interests are protected.
- Oversee the financial performance and governance of any Council-owned companies, partnerships, or investments, ensuring adherence to statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Provide advice and expertise on commercial opportunities, shareholder agreements, and business cases, ensuring alignment with the Council's broader strategy, values, and financial goals.
- Represent the Council as the shareholder representative at board meetings of any subsidiaries or joint ventures, ensuring that the financial and operational performance meets agreed targets and complies with governance frameworks.
- Ensure transparent reporting and oversight, ensuring that any returns on investments or commercial ventures are clearly communicated and reinvested in line with the Council's financial objectives.

Person Specification

Professional and Technical Requirements

Qualifications

- Full CCAB or CIMA qualification (mandatory).
- Evidence of ongoing professional development.
- Leadership or management qualification (desirable).

Knowledge, Experience and Skills

- Significant senior leadership experience in a large, complex organisation, ideally local government.
- Demonstrable experience as a Section 151 Officer or deputy, with a strong understanding of local government finance, audit, and governance.
- Proven success in leading large-scale transformation or organisational change programmes.
- Experience managing multi-disciplinary services such as finance, Digital & IT, procurement, commercial services and estates.
- Track record of delivering financial improvement, commercial development, and service efficiency.
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Core Competency Requirements

- **Working with Partners:** Work collaboratively across services and departments to deliver corporate excellence and with external partners to deliver excellent service. Seek opportunities for partnership working at a local, regional, national and European level and contribute effectively to multi-partner projects
- **Serving Our Communities:** Promote the community plan and seek and act on feedback from the community. Influence service and corporate plans to reflect community needs, and

develop, deliver and improve access to services based on an awareness and understanding of the diverse community. Promote equality of opportunity in service delivery

- **Working within the Political Arena:** Understand and actively support the role of councillors and actively support the democratic process within Northumberland County Council. Recognise the impact of government and legislation on council strategy and services, and consult, support and keep councillors informed
- **Delivering Excellence:** Understand how corporate performance is measured and monitor and evaluate services in relation to objectives and performance indicators. Establish a culture that embraces the agreed vision and values and be a positive ambassador for the organisation. Contribute to strengthening corporate leadership capacity, whilst identifying opportunities where organisational performance could be improved
- **Focusing on the Future:** Scan the external environment, look ahead, assess strategic options and develop the Council in the medium and long term and challenge what we do and how we do it. Influence relevant national and regional organisations and partners and connect plans, policies, strategies and services to provide consistent service delivery. Consider the implications of decisions across the council and act in the overall interests of Council performance
- **Building Shared Visions and Values:** Scan the internal environment and engage with employees in compelling visions of the future to create an environment in which a culture embracing our Vision and Values can thrive. Have a clear picture the direction of the organisation is taking and communicate it with insight, energy and vision and translate the Council vision into practical and achievable plans
- **Strengthening Corporate Leadership Capacity:** Continuously develop the political leadership and managerial interface and operate with others as a cohesive managerial team. Create time with staff and other managers for discussion about their development rather than fire-fighting and coach and mentor staff and other managers. Lead, delegate and empower others at a strategic level to identify and develop potential senior managerial successors
- **Promoting and Facilitating Change:** Critically evaluate the reasons that prompt change and take appropriate action to proactively steer internal change. Proactively manage the exchange of information between the public and the organisation and consider the resource implications of change. Anticipate and respond to emotional and morale issues brought about by change and monitor and evaluate the change process to ensure aims are met

Strengths

- **Strategic:** You look at the big picture. You consider the wider factors and long-term implications of decisions.
- **Change Agent:** You are positive and inspirational in leading and supporting others through change.
- **Influencer:** You influence others, you articulate the rationale to gain their agreement.
- **Analytical:** You seek and analyse information to inform your decisions, based on the best available evidence.
- **Resilient:** You have inner composure, recover quickly from setbacks and learn from them.

Desirable

