



# Candidate Brief



<b>CLIENT:</b>	Kent County Council
<b>ROLE:</b>	Corporate Director – Finance (S151 Officer)
<b>CIPFA PENNA CONSULTANT:</b>	Andrew Tromans (07805 226301 / <a href="mailto:andrew.tromans@penna.com">andrew.tromans@penna.com</a> )
<b>APPLICATIONS DEADLINE:</b>	2nd May, 2025

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***Further reading:***

You may wish to review:

- [Securing Kent's Future Cabinet Paper](#)
- [Framing Kent's Future](#)
- [Finance & Budget](#)
- [Council 2025/26 Budget Meeting](#)

## Welcome Letter

### Dear Applicant

I am delighted that you are interested in the role of Corporate Director – Finance at Kent County Council.

This is a pivotal moment for Kent. Our four-year strategic plan, *Framing Kent's Future*, set out bold ambitions to level up opportunity, transform services, and lead the way on new models of care, infrastructure, and environmental action. This was supplemented by our budget recovery plan – Securing Kent's Future - in October 2023 in recognition of the exceptional financial pressures being faced in the local government sector. To deliver on the priorities set out, we must maintain financial discipline, invest wisely, and ensure our resources are targeted where they will have the greatest impact. Your leadership will be critical to achieving this.

As our statutory Section 151 Officer, you will shape the strategic direction of our financial management and ensure we remain a credible, well-governed, and forward-looking authority. Success will require strong technical expertise, political acumen, and collaborative leadership.

You will be joining us in the early days of a new Administration following elections in May 2025 and at the outset of the 2026/27 budget build giving you a real opportunity to influence and shape its foundations. The financial challenges ahead are significant – particularly in adult social care and Special Educational Needs and Disability service – but so too is the opportunity to lead meaningful transformation at scale.

Kent is a remarkable place – in its scale, diversity, challenges, and potential. As England's largest county, with a population approaching 1.6 million, we are at the forefront of some of the most complex and pressing issues in local government: the cost of living, population growth, infrastructure pressures, economic inequality, and rising demand for high-quality services – all within a context of continued financial constraint. We are firmly committed to securing a positive and sustainable future for the people and communities we serve.

Kent is actively exploring the future of local governance through local government reorganisation. We want someone who can lead an experienced and highly capable team with clarity, supporting stability and assurance during a time of change, thinking strategically about future structures, partnerships, and financial models. This is an exciting opportunity to help shape the design of local government in one of the most complex and high-profile areas of the country – and to help redefine how public services are delivered in Kent and beyond.

While the core focus of the role is finance, you will also contribute to the wider strategic agenda across our partnerships – including health, district councils, and commercial ventures – and play an active role in major corporate projects beyond the traditional boundaries of the finance function.

If you are passionate about public service and committed to financial excellence, this role offers both challenge and reward. It demands resilience, leadership, and clarity of purpose – and in return the chance to make a lasting impact on a county of national significance.

If you are ready to take on the challenge, I look forward to hearing more about what you can bring to Kent.

Yours sincerely,

**Amanda Beer**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Kent County Council**

## Advert

### Corporate Director – Finance, Kent County Council

*Strategic finance leadership in England's largest county*

**Salary:** A career-defining role with a package to match

**Location:** Maidstone, Kent (Hybrid working available)

Kent County Council is seeking an exceptional finance leader to take up the role of Corporate Director – Finance, our statutory Section 151 Officer. This is a rare opportunity to lead one of the largest and most high-profile local authority finance portfolios in the country at a moment of opportunity, profound challenge and transformational change.

#### The Role

As Corporate Director – Finance, you will be a key member of Kent County Council's Corporate Management Team. Reporting directly to the Chief Executive, you will be responsible for ensuring financial sustainability, unlocking innovation, and leading significant transformation with clarity and credibility.

Leading a highly experienced team you'll work closely with Members, the Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team to steer the council through reorganisation and significant financial pressures while driving better value, stronger partnerships and long-term resilience.

#### Candidates

We are looking for a technically accomplished, politically astute and values-led finance professional who is keen to engage in strategic planning in its broadest sense. You will bring strategic insight, visible leadership and a collaborative mindset – and be motivated by the chance to make a genuine impact on the lives of Kent's residents.

#### Next Steps

If you are passionate about public service and ready to lead finance at scale, we'd love to hear from you.

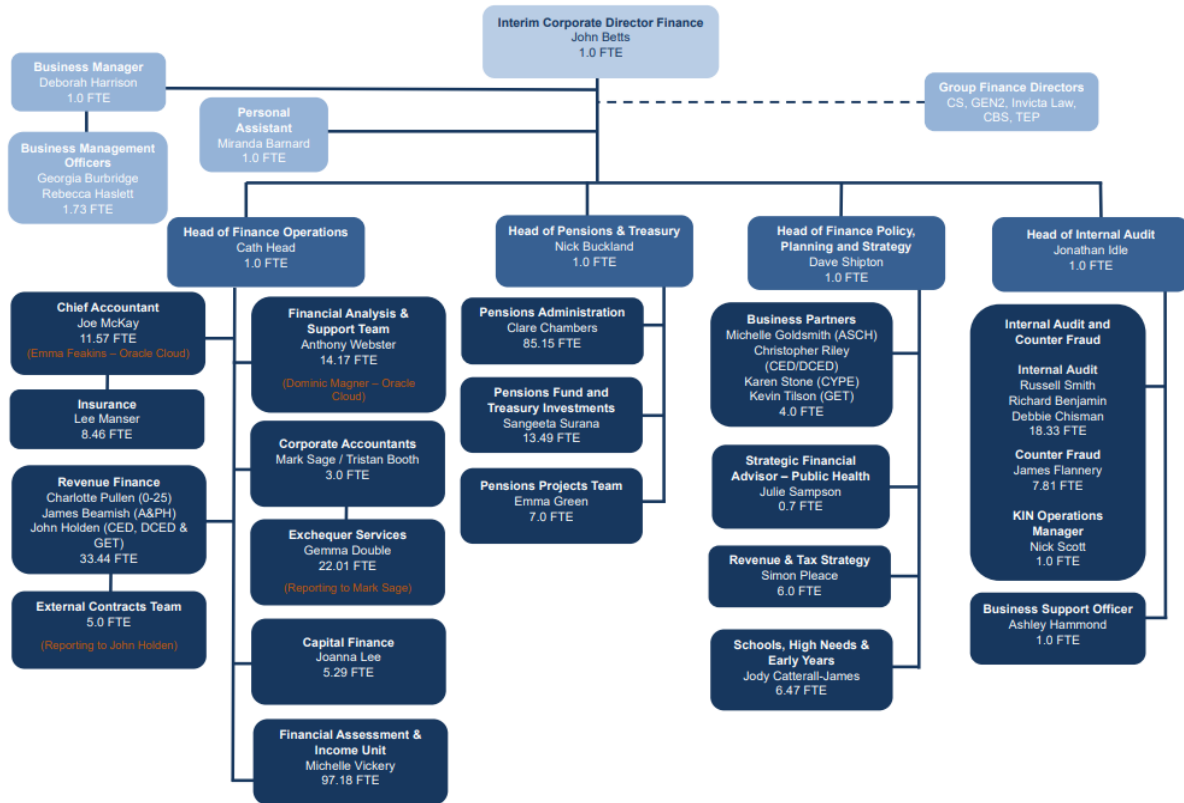
For a confidential discussion, please contact:

Kelly Ridley on 07709 512415 or email: [kelly.ridley@penna.com](mailto:kelly.ridley@penna.com) or Andrew Tromans at CIPFA Penna on 07805 226301 or email: [andrew.tromans@penna.com](mailto:andrew.tromans@penna.com)

**Closing Date:** Midnight, Friday 2nd May, 2025

*Kent County Council is committed to diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from all backgrounds*

# Structure Chart



## Role Profile

<b>Post Title</b>	<b>Corporate Director – Finance (S151 Officer)</b>
<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executives Department</b>
<b>Grade:</b>	<b>KSP</b>
<b>Salary:</b>	<b>£136,839 – £161,842 + Market Premium</b>
<b>Responsible to:</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>

### Job Outline

Corporate responsibility for the management and administration of the Council's finances and the continuous improvement of the efficient use of financial resources across the Council to ensure the effective control of the Council's revenue budget and its capital programme in order to enhance the overall value for money to customers, citizens and taxpayers. Commission any required financial services ensuring cost effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness.

### Job Accountabilities

As a member of the Corporate Management team the post holder will work within the KCC Organisational Responsibilities for Senior Officers. In addition, the post holder will work closely with Cabinet Members, and Corporate Directors to enable organisational responsiveness to elected members; secure the best approach to resource stewardship for the council's budget and finances; ensure that overall management attention, effort and controls are commensurate to risk and opportunity across the council's functions and activities; and enhance the reputation of Kent as a place as well as Kent County Council as the democratic agent of change in the region.

Create options and strategies to develop the corporate financial framework to enable the Council to prioritise and utilise its financial resources to the greatest effect and ensure activity and process comply with Government regulations and legislation.

Provide expert advice to the Pensions Committee and ensure the delivery of an effective fund management service/function to the Pensions Authority.

Ensure the Council has effective arrangements for its internal financial controls and a coherent plan for the management of risk.

Act as Section 151 officer on behalf of the Council and Head of Profession to provide direction, leadership and guidance to staff in the Finance function and ensure the improvement and implementation of Finance standards across the Council and partner organisations.

Actively monitor and challenge the financial implications in all projects and programmes operating within the council.

Lead and develop any commissioning of finance services for the council and act as Client for all commissioned services in these areas. Act as Client for all commissioned finance services.

Directors will work within the KCC Corporate Responsibilities for Senior Officers. In addition, as members of Extended Corporate Management Team, Directors and Corporate Directors will work together to make strategic decisions on the most effective use of the Council's agreed budget, resources and policies and enhance the reputation of Kent as a place as well as Kent County Council as the democratic agent of change in the region.

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## Recruitment Selection Criteria

The qualifications, knowledge and experience criteria below will be used in shortlisting. Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

### Knowledge:

The qualifications, knowledge and experience criteria below will be used in shortlisting. Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

### Qualifications:

- Relevant Management or Professional qualification.
- Evidence of continuing professional development.
- Educated to degree level or equivalent.

### Experience:

- Successful track record of making a significant contribution at a senior strategic level in local government, or other relevant complex and diverse organisation(s), promoting and delivering a range of key strategic services innovatively and within budget.
- Proven experience and understanding of the role and function of Local Government, working directly with elected members to ensure the effective delivery of solutions that meet the council's strategic aims.
- Extensive experience of working, influencing and engaging at a local and national political level.
- Substantial track record of working and managing successfully at a senior level, including strategy development & implementation, managing complex budgets, resourcing, motivating & developing teams, managing change & performance improvement.

### Skills and Abilities:

- Able to understand strategic 'big picture' issues, understand and articulate linkages across both KCC and partner organisations and set clear direction, and goals in order to deliver effective long-term development strategies designed to deliver the council's aims.
- Able to demonstrate significant senior management capacity and ability to lead, manage, and direct the successful delivery of large complex projects through others, in support of the council's strategic aims.
- Able to establish strong positive relationships across the organisation at all levels including building and maintaining personal and professional credibility and trust with senior leaders and elected members.
- Able to lead, influence and implement strategic policies and decisions.
- Ability to apply innovative and analytical approaches to solving complex and challenging problems.
- Able to demonstrate effective motivational leadership and vision to staff at all levels including a positive attitude to change in order to deliver effective outcomes.
- Able to command respect, influence and negotiate at a strategic professional and political level both locally and nationally to ensure delivery of complex high profile projects.
- Able to communicate effectively through written, oral and presentational means, including the ability to write well organised and clear reports with good use of evidence supported by data.
- Able to produce effective strategic and business plans, costed and supported by a coherent and well-development performance framework.
- Able to work collaboratively as a member of the senior team, taking shared responsibility for the work and success of the directorate and the Council.

### Knowledge:

- In-depth knowledge and understanding of the policy context, strategic challenges and operational realities of services provided by this post
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- Proven commercial knowledge with a focus on commissioning for outcomes that meet customer needs.
- Good understanding of the Authority's transformation agenda and how innovation can be used to improve services and outcomes for residents & businesses.

## **Organisational Responsibilities**

All Corporate Directors, Directors and Heads of Service have an explicit responsibility to work as part of a team to deliver, collectively, the agenda of the County Council. These are fundamental elements of their role not an addition and are summarised as follows:

### **Whole Council**

- Seek to improve the lives of all residents in Kent and the economy of Kent.
- Act as corporate parent to the Council's looked after children.
- Take an active role in promoting and ensuring the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding are met.
- Understand, communicate and contribute to the delivery of KCC's strategic aims.
- Meet statutory obligations and promote and ensure compliance with policies and procedures and the Council's Code of Conduct (Kent Code).
- Advise elected Members and support the democratic process.
- Promote the Council brand and enhance the overall reputation of the Council.
- Understand and monitor the measures of performance, including customer insight, which define successful outcomes for KCC services.
- Maintain and ensure a relentless focus on the customer.
- Act to support the Council-wide need to deliver services within budget, thereby avoiding an overspend that could damage the financial viability of the Council.
- Overcome professional and service silos to achieve the County Council's objectives.

### **Integration of Services**

- Focus resources where they have the biggest impact.
- Deliver services that are flexible and adaptable.
- Integrate services within KCC and work with partner agencies to ensure a seamless customer experience.
- Fully and inclusively engage all staff in the delivery of services, demonstrating the Council's leadership values and competencies.

### **Embedding Commissioning and Engaging Relevant Markets**

- Establish an outcome focused organisation.
- Meet the financial regulations and standing orders of KCC.
- Challenge the status quo and engage with the market to constantly improve.
- Ensure all services are delivered effectively and efficiently.
- Proactively and continuously seek to improve service delivery.
- Proactively manage risk to avoid inertia whilst not exposing the Council to needless and avoidable challenge or loss.

### **Managing Change**

- Understand and support the Authority's overall change agenda.
- Deliver required outcomes of service specific change on time and to budget.
- Understand the quality of staff, support their development, nurture those with talent.
- Identify the skills for the future and the level of staff through robust workforce planning.
- Identify and deal with underperformance.



- Deliver to agreed budget and income targets.

### **Kent Values**

- Open
  - Acting with integrity, honesty and transparency; healthy attitude to risk; welcoming and expecting change and evolving technology; working in new ways; willing to learn; working as a whole-Council and treating people fairly and with respect.
  
  - Invite contribution and challenge
  - Working collaboratively and innovatively to find new solutions that put the interests and wellbeing of customers first; open to challenge and actively encouraging and expecting contribution.
  
  - Accountable
  - Self-sufficient, taking personal and professional responsibility for our actions, the pace at which we work; performance and the council's money.
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## How To Apply

This guidance contains important information to help with your application:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Please complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form when you upload your details.
- Please return your application by the closing date – no applications will be accepted once the long listing process has begun.
- Following long listing, you will be contacted directly by a Penna consultant to update you on the status of your application.
- 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,
- Please contact Kelly Ridley on 07709 512415 or email: [kelly.ridley@penna.com](mailto:kelly.ridley@penna.com) or Andrew Tromans on 07805 226301 or email: [andrew.tromans@penna.com](mailto:andrew.tromans@penna.com) for a confidential discussion or for any information, insight or guidance about either the role or recruitment process.

Please note the key dates in the recruitment process:

<b>Closing Date</b>	Midnight, Friday 2nd May 2025
<b>Longlisting meeting (applicants do not attend)</b>	7th May 2025
<b>Technical interviews (remote, via Teams)</b>	9th May 2025
<b>Stakeholder interviews (remote, via Teams)</b>	2nd – 4th June 2025 (TBC)
<b>Corporate Director Interviews (remote, via Teams)</b>	2nd – 4th June 2025 (TBC)
<b>Member Interviews (in person, in Maidstone)</b>	6th June 2025

To apply for this role, please visit the following link to upload your CV and Cover Letter:

[Corporate Director – Finance s151](#)