

CANDIDATE BRIEFING PACK

Group Manager Financial Services

Prepared for Nottinghamshire County Council

February 2024



Penna

FIND | EXCITE | SECURE

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Welcome Letter



Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in working for Nottinghamshire County Council. The role of Group Manager for Financial Services and Deputy S151 Officer is a key appointment for us. ***You will be joining an excellent local authority that is committed to equality and inclusion.***

Nottinghamshire is a great place with a great growth story. Over the years, Nottinghamshire County Council has proven to be a positive change agent for the county. Our progress has given us the courage to push boundaries and become a forward-looking and resilient council. ***We're proud to be a progressive council that champions collaboration and innovative thinking to create a more healthy, prosperous, and greener future for all.***

Our website [Home | Nottinghamshire County Council](#) provides further information on our "The Nottinghamshire Plan" as well as information relating to our Finance and Budget.

The council has strong financial and management plans in place which is reflected in both our financial reporting and level of reserves. Members and external auditors have been complimentary about the quality of our accounts and arrangements so you can be assured that you will have a strong and talented finance team to support you in your new role.

And with the implementation of new accounting systems planned, opportunities exist to look at how we work and the financial information we might provide in the future.

The job is a fantastic opportunity for an existing or aspiring Deputy S151 officer who can hit the ground running and take a lead role in ensuring the council can continue its excellent progress towards financial stability through commercial thinking and doing things differently.

You will lead the development of the authority's medium term finance plan and capital programme, together with providing strategic financial advice to senior officers and Members.

As a member of my Financial Management Team you will contribute to, and bring your experience to, the continuous improvement in services that the Finance Service's various teams provide and the ongoing development of our team members.

There are financial challenges ahead for local government and we are looking for innovative thinking and expertise, together with the ability to engage with and influence our customers and stakeholders, to enable us to tackle these challenges head on.

If you can make a difference and impact, then Nottinghamshire County Council provides a welcoming and supportive place to work and further your career. With the establishment of the new East Midlands Combined County Authority and devolution deal there is lots of exciting yet complex work to be undertaken over the next 5-10 years.

Our recruitment partner Penna can provide further information and arrange for an informal discussion with me. I look forward to hearing from you and wish you the absolute best with your application.



Nigel Stevenson

Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement and Section 151 Officer

Advertisement

Group Manager Financial Services

Play a key role in the delivery of outstanding financial services at an excellent local authority that is committed to equality and inclusion

Salary up to £87,399 (including market supplement) | Nottinghamshire County Council

In this key strategic role, you'll deputise for the council's Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure and Improvement (Section 151 Officer) and will lead all our financial management and strategy teams. We'll look to you for annual revenue and capital budgets, and the financial statement of accounts. You'll also perform dynamic financial modelling and create our Medium Term Financial Plan.

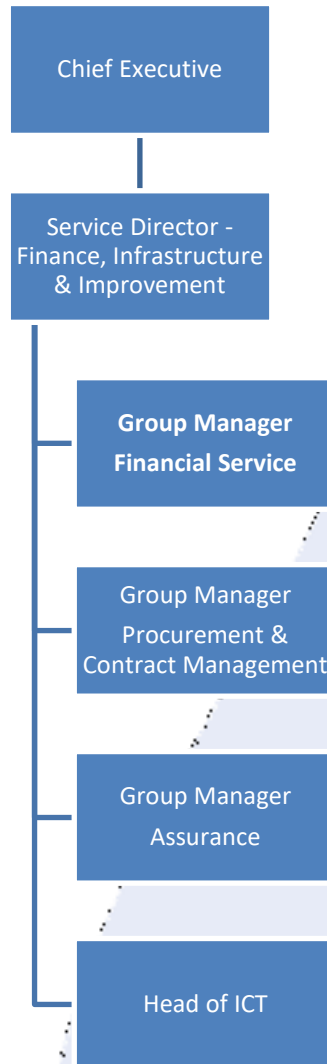
You'll be working alongside Members, senior leaders and partners who'll be looking to you for guidance. You must therefore be a confident financial advisor with proven technical expertise. Qualified, experienced and a strategic thinker, you'll relish complex challenges such as major capital projects. In fact, you'll thrive on the opportunity to approach issues with ambition and creativity. Calm, articulate and resilient, you'll be an excellent manager who explains complex matters clearly.

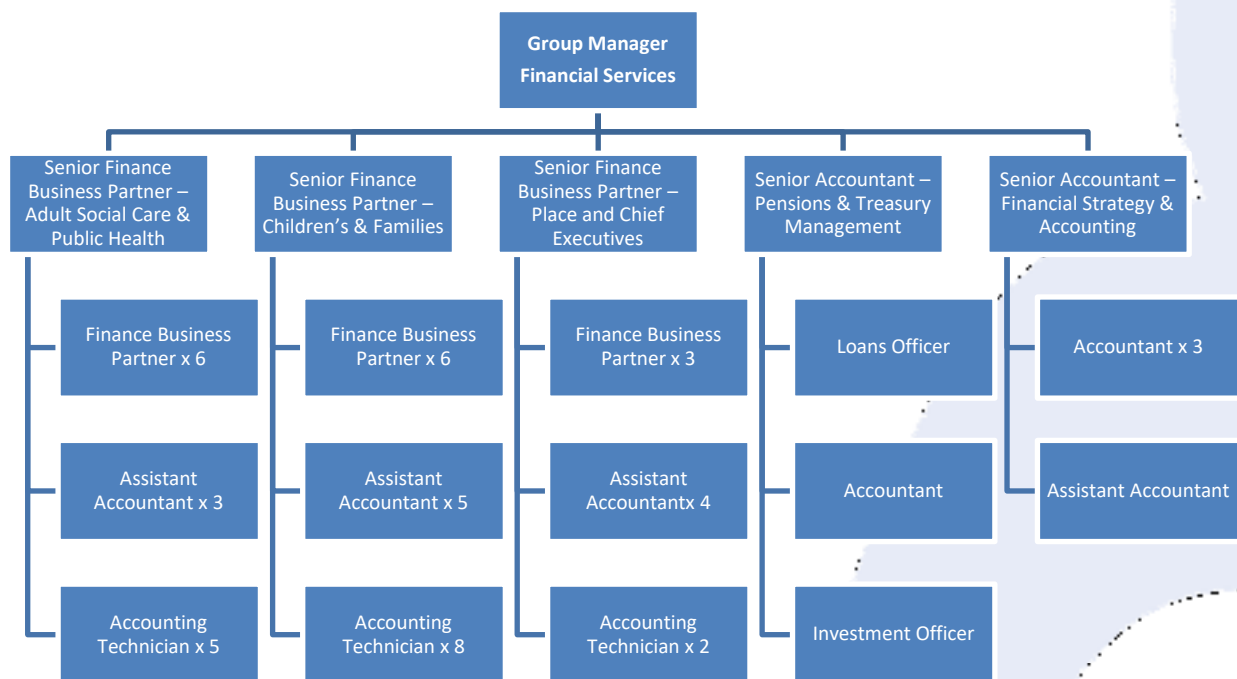
With the option to work from home for 1-2 days per week, you'll enjoy the best of both worlds: an excellent work/life balance as well as being an important member of an established, stable and extremely well financially-managed organisation – and you'll be playing a critical role in helping to shape its future whilst accelerating your career.

If you'd like an informal and confidential discussion about this role, please contact our retained CIPFA Penna consultants: Andrew Tromans on 07805 226 301 or Zara Bruton on 07743 980 867 or for further information please visit <https://execroles.penna.com/>

Closing Date: Midday on Wednesday 20th March 2024

Structure Charts





Job Description & Person Specification

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Purpose

The Group Manager Financial Services is responsible for the delivery of all aspects of financial management and in supporting the Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement in the development of all aspects of financial strategy within the Council and is expected to operate at a strategic level.

Key Responsibilities

1. Lead the development of financial strategies that will promote effective decision making regarding the use of the Council's financial resources and are an integral part of the strategic direction.
2. Support the Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement in the discharge of their role as Chief Finance Officer as set out in Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.
3. Develop and maintain effective working relationships with members, officers and external parties.
4. Ensure, in all activities, the services make decisions in the knowledge of the impact those decisions will have financially on the Council.
5. Provide strategic advice and direction to Corporate Leadership Team, elected members and senior officers on financial strategies, policy, standards and practices.
6. Support the Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement on the overall management of the Council's finances, including responsibility for maintaining the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and establishing the Council's Annual Budget.
7. To provide a high quality, consistent, and customer oriented monthly financial monitoring and reporting process for all Service Areas, for both Revenue and Capital expenditure.
8. Deliver the Council's statutory reporting requirements, including the Statement of Accounts, on time and to the required standard.
9. Deliver effective systems of internal control and establish a framework of accounting policy and standards that ensures the Council maintains the highest standards of governance in all its decision making and operations.
10. To lead on any project or programme as agreed by the Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement.

Key Accountabilities

1. Discharge the function of the Council's Deputy Section 151 Officer in support of the Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement in the discharge of their role as Chief Finance Officer as set out in Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.
2. Lead the Council's strategic financial planning and budget setting process putting strategies and tools in place to ensure that benefits are maximised in relation to Use of Resources and Value for Money.
3. Formulate, maintain and develop the long term financial model based on NCC's strategic plans, taking into account variable in terms of risks and uncertainties to determine ranges of potential outcomes.
4. Lead the delivery of effective systems of internal controls and assurance processes to ensure probity and transparency in the spending of public funds, and ensure the Council has a well developed set of financial controls and financial policies supported and monitored by Audit.

5. Responsible for setting and maintaining all required financial policies, practices, budgetary disciplines, regulations accounting requirements and performance standards.
6. Ensure that systems are in place so that the organisation is properly governed in terms of financial transactions, financial reporting, financial performance, financial planning and in securing value for money. Ensure effective audit is achieved with the External Auditor, Internal Audit, and partner auditors.
7. Lead the development of financial planning across the Council's services, provide expert advice on plans, monitor performance and propose remedial action as required. To be responsible for preparing NCC financial plans and budgets and influencing NCC senior decision makers to produce balanced performance across the Council to achieve its strategic objectives.
8. Ensure the provision across the Council of effective, timely and accurate financial performance information on a regular and consistent basis to enable achievement of underlying business objectives. Provide expert advice on interpreting the information, risks, and forecasts.
9. Take the lead finance role on current and future capital investment plans. Ensure robust arrangements are in place for financial management of the Council's Capital Programme.
10. Take the lead on the management of the Nottinghamshire LGPS investments and statutory reporting requirements.
11. Take the lead finance role in the financial development and evaluation of all business cases, identifying and quantifying all costs and benefits and testing the underlying assumptions.
12. Monitor the Council's performance against the financial strategy including an evaluation of reserves, contingencies and risks and propose corrective action to ensure financial targets are met, considering the wider issues of performance management.
13. Taking decisive action and reporting issues where unforeseen events impact on service delivery targets.
14. Leading the development of the Council's approach to Commercial Development.
15. Staff performance within the services managed.

The post holder will perform any duty or task that is appropriate for the role described.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Education & Knowledge

1. Full CCAB qualification
2. Relevant Treasury Management / Pensions Qualification (desirable)
3. Significant Post Qualification Experience, preferably gained in a corporate accounting role
4. Evidence of continuous professional development
5. Extensive knowledge & understanding of strategic financial management and financial frameworks in a local government setting
6. Financial planning and management in a large, complex, customer focused organisation
7. A detailed understanding of local authority pensions and treasury management
8. Developing and managing world class financial management systems
9. A comprehensive knowledge of local government finance, capital and revenue accounting, accountancy standards and regulations including the Code of Practice, SERCOP, et cetera

Leadership & Management Skills

1. A high level of personal drive and integrity and an understanding of how their personal leadership style impacts on service outcomes
2. Strong interpersonal skills enabling the post holder to provide purpose and direction to others in a changing environment to ensure effective engagement with customers, staff and other key stakeholders
3. Acumen and judgement to successfully operate in a politically dynamic, complex and cross cutting environment

4. Ability to make decisions and solve problems in a changing and complex service environment, involving planning solutions and prioritising personal and service resources
5. Ability to meet agreed broad service objectives and delivery targets through the organisation of human, physical, and financial resources
6. Ability to listen and respond to the needs of our customers and set a personally high standard of customer service
7. Ability to challenge the way we work and to find creative and innovative solutions
8. Demonstrates fairness and equality in the treatment of customers and staff

Experience

1. A proven track record in financial management at a senior level, including development of financial strategies, budgets and final accounts
2. Substantial experience of providing corporate financial management support, preferably gained in an upper tier local authority
3. Financial planning and management in a large, complex, customer focused organisation
4. Providing strategic financial advice at board level
5. Engaging and working with the most senior management teams to achieve strategic outcomes
6. Significant experience of working in a political environment and advising/supporting Elected Members
7. Developing and managing world class financial management systems
8. Experience of Local Government Pensions & Treasury Management
9. Experience of VAT and Partial exemption calculation
10. Experience in operating and using computerised accounting systems
11. Identifying and delivering innovative and effective means of financing the delivery of large scale services
12. Inspiring and motivating staff and colleagues, setting targets and goals for the delivery of services
13. Leading and influencing at the most senior management level across NCC to achieve strategic outcomes

Role Dimensions

1. The post-holder will have direct responsibility for all the Financial Services, which provides dedicated financial management support to the County Council's main service Departments and leads on the maintenance and development of the authority's corporate accounting processes, in particular the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the production of the statutory accounts and the specialist finance and accounting functions.
2. The post-holder will be the nominated Deputy S. 151 officer.
3. The post holder will support the S151 Officer in the exercise of their statutory function and will also act as the day to day contact with the Finance staff in the Business Support Centre, to ensure that the core financial systems and processes are robust. The post-holder will be required to be customer and performance focused.
4. The Financial Services team will be responsible for:
 - The maintenance and development of the County Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and the coordination of the County Council's annual budget and capital programme
 - The production of the statutory year end accounts
 - The provision of Treasury Management and Pensions Investment
 - Supporting the development of budgets and the maintenance and development of financial monitoring/month end reporting procedures
 - Offering financial advice and commentary, and producing financial reports
 - Ensuring that financial implications of decision are understood and incorporated into appropriate reports

- Developing financial management capacity and capability in departments (e.g. through providing financial training to budget managers)
 - Developing service costing models
 - Carrying out service and investment appraisals
 - Connecting strategic financial information with day-to-day management information
5. The post operates within the financial policies and procedures of the County Council, particularly Financial Regulations
 6. The post is responsible for operating within the standards of probity and professionalism determined by the CCAB and member organisations
 7. Lead and manage the Financial Service Group, managing expenditure of £2.9m and 58 fte

How to Apply

This guidance contains important information to help with your application:

- Please apply by submitting a CV and Covering 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; and that where there are essential criteria, competencies and/or qualifications you 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 supporting statement, 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 / short listing, you will be contacted directly by a Penna consultant to update you on the status of your application.
- At any point throughout the process our retained consultants at Penna will be happy to help you with information, insight and guidance about the process and our clients.

The following timetable sets out the key dates in this recruitment process:

Date	Activity
Closing Date	Midday, Wednesday 20 th March 2024
Shortlist Meeting	3pm on Friday, 22 nd March (candidates are not required to attend)
Interviews	4 th / 5 th April 2024 (TBC) Interviews will be held in-person, in Nottingham

To apply for this role, please click the link below:

<https://execroles.penna.com/>

For further information or confidential discussion, please contact Andrew Tromans on 07805 226 301 or Zara Bruton on 07743 980 867.