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Bracknell Forest Council

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	**Deputy Finance Business Partner - (Children and Young People)**

Directorate:	**Resources**	**Salary:**	**£63,107 - £68,843 per year (Level 2 qualified)** **£56,293 - £61,979 per year (Level 1 part-qualified)** **plus £753 London Weighting allowance.**
Section:	**Finance**	**Grade:**	**BG-C SCP 49-54 (Level 2 For CCAB qualified)** **BG-D SCP 43–48 (Level 1 for part-qualified)**
Location:	**Time Square**	**Work Style:**	**Flexible**

Key Objectives of the role

- To provide financial insight, analysis and advice to the Education and Learning, Children's Social Care and Early Help services within the People Directorate, including in budget preparation, monitoring and the final accounts process.
- Play a lead role in developing and implementing Bracknell Forest's local funding formula for schools by preparing reports for the Bracknell Forest Schools Forum with the Assistant Director: Education and Learning on mainstream and special-school funding issues, including allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- To provide technical advice on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and related statutory returns and to co-ordinate financial support to maintained schools.
- Work closely with Strategic Business Partner (People Directorate), Executive Director: People, Assistant Directors and budget holders within the People directorate to provide supportive, challenging financial and decision-making advice, driving efficiency, accountability and commercial thinking.
- Line management responsibility for 4 staff and assisting the Finance Business Partner (People Directorate) to shape and deliver holistic financial support services to the People Directorate.
- To oversee, manage the production of and critically appraise relevant reports, such as monthly budget monitoring, performance reports and annual processes, including budget setting.
- To deputise for the Finance Business Partner (People Directorate) as appropriate.

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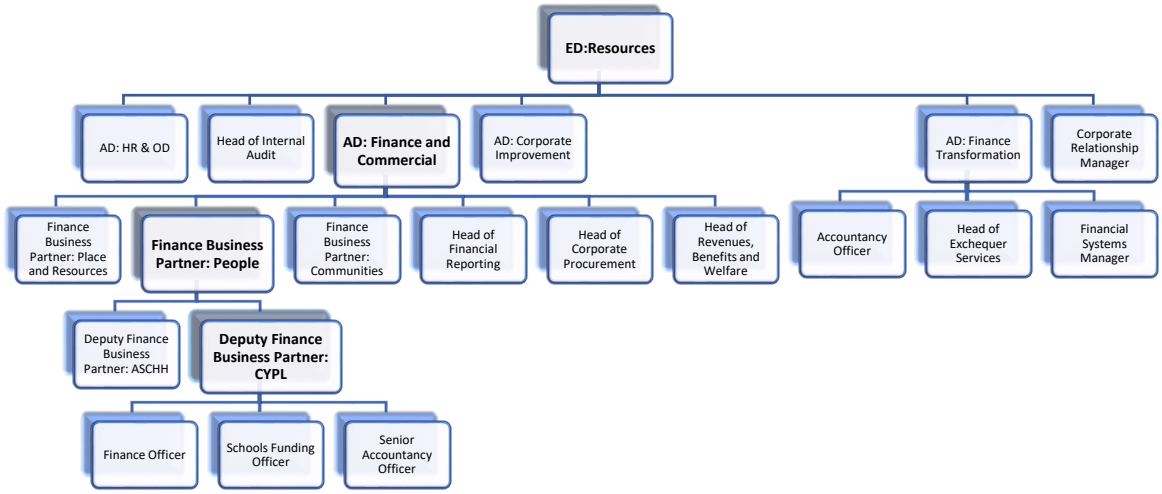
Designation of post and position within departmental structure



Daily and monthly responsibilities

Level 1 – BG-D – In support of the Finance Business Partner (People Directorate), to effectively undertake the activities below:

- Help ensure all financial risks in supported service areas within the People Directorate are appropriately identified and reported to the relevant Assistant Directors and the Finance Business Partner (People Directorate), so that mitigating actions can be put in place to deliver to the agreed budgets.

- Through providing technical financial advice, expertise and support, ensure compliance and accuracy for statutory returns, certificates and reports related to supported service areas.

- To support the Finance Business Partner (People Directorate) in the provision of quality assurance, robust challenge, advice and support as needed to the Executive Director: People and Executive Director: Resources (S151 Officer) in relation to the directorate's service and medium-term financial planning processes and business strategy development.

- To support the Finance Business Partner (People Directorate) in providing financial scrutiny, support, insight analysis and commercial thinking to senior officers and Members, to facilitate effective management and decision making, specifically including providing accurate and timely projections of staffing expenditure.

- To be pro-active in highlighting opportunities for service developments and enhanced service delivery within agreed budgets, ensuring knowledge and understanding of all financial aspects pertaining to the service, challenging assumptions and providing assurance regarding financial implications.

- To co-ordinate the preparation of Directorate monthly budget monitoring reports, ensuring that the financial system forecasts, monitoring reports and financial

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management information are robust, timely and consistent with known issues within the Directorate.

- To validate and provide quality assurance on the final accounts working papers for the Directorate, ensuring the outturn position of the Council's financial system, outturn reports, external grant claims, statistical returns, working papers and other financial management information requirements are robust, timely and consistent with known issues within the Directorate.

- To support the Finance Business Partner (People Directorate) by actively participating in initiatives aimed at ensuring effective financial management arrangements are in place throughout the Directorate and to help provide assurance that there is an effective internal control environment within the Directorate.

- To participate in regular reviews and updates of service risk assessments to ensure the appropriate allocation of finance resource is available within the team.

Level 2 BG-C – In addition to the above, to proceed to this level the officer must be a CCAB qualified accountant and possess sufficient specialist knowledge and expertise to be able to confidently deliver the following, with minimal oversight and support from the Finance Business Partner (People Directorate):

- Be responsible for interpreting and implementing any technical changes to accounting practices relating to services to Children and Young People, specifically including those related to the Dedicated Schools Grant.

- Take responsibility for briefing Executive Directors, Councillors and members of the Bracknell Forest Schools Forum, leading the presentation of decision reports and consultations on potentially contentious issues.

- To keep abreast of new legislation and government proposals affecting the service areas supported. To be able to articulate the financial implications of such changes and to be proactive in implementing and embedding them within the Directorate.

- Lead in identifying and implementing initiatives aimed at ensuring excellent financial management is in place throughout the Directorate and to provide assurance that there is an effective internal control environment within the Directorate.

- Provide comprehensive financial advice, support and insight for major projects and contracts across the People Directorate, advising on the revenue and capital implications of proposals, ensuring that interdependencies are identified and understood, that financial risks are identified and providing assurance on the governance arrangements.

- To analyse highly complex problems using financial forecasting and analysis methodologies (including business case production) and make informed judgements regarding assessments of financial risk and effective mitigations, including where there is no precedent and where leading opinions may conflict.

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Scope of role

This post has a key role in providing up to date advice to managers on financial law, Council policy and procedures, good practice and reducing risk in these areas.

Providing financial input to budget setting, budgetary control arrangements and decision reports for the service areas supported, working alongside the Finance Business Partner (People Directorate) (Level 1) or in a lead role Level 2). Ensuring that realistic budgets, business plans and performance indicators are in place across the service areas.

The post will act as the technical lead for Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budgets, including formulation and allocation of budgets to schools and leading on related annual DFE returns including Section 251 returns.

The post holder will also co-ordinate the Children's Services related capital budgets in liaison with the Finance Business Partner and other key stakeholders.

Line management responsibility for 2 Senior Accountancy Officers, a School Funding Officer and a Finance Officer providing support to school services.

Maintains a high standard of compliance with the Council's financial policies and procedures included with the Council's constitution.

By providing accurate, timely and relevant financial information to the service areas supported, enable effective evaluation of performance against predictions for the Council.

Interpretation of the effects of rules, regulations and accounting best practice on the financial policies and procedures adopted by the Council and making appropriate recommendations.

Commitment to the Council's Equal Opportunities policy at all times

Commitment to working within the bounds of the Data Protection Act and GDPR legislation at all times

Such other duties as may from time to time be necessary, compatible with the nature of the post. It should be noted that the above list of main duties and responsibilities is not necessarily a complete statement of the final duties of the post. It is intended to give an overall view of the position and should be taken as guidance only.

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

KEY CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Skills and qualifications	The ability to analyse and interpret complex financial information to inform decision making. Level 1: Relevant technical knowledge and experience in Education Finance from a local authority perspective. Minimum part-qualified CCAB or CIMA. Level 2: Significant experience and technical knowledge in Education Finance from a local authority perspective. Full CCAB or CIMA qualification.	
Competence Summary (Knowledge, abilities, skills, experience)	In depth knowledge of local authority accounting guidance and practice. Comprehensive understanding of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and related funding formula and regulations. Significant knowledge and experience of completing DFE returns including but not limited to the Section 251 Returns. Proven experience of interpreting, implementing and ensuring compliance with technical and regulatory financial guidance. Credible advisor to Executive Directors and Assistant Directors in a range of complex financial issues. Authority and credibility to work effectively in a political environment and build productive relationships and engage successfully with colleagues, internal and external partners and customers. Experience in business partnering, supporting complex service delivery with expert technical knowledge and	

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	experience and the ability to analyse, interpret and explain information to non-finance experts. Excellent persuasion and negotiating skills, to motivate people and partnerships and influence outcomes critical to the success of the People Directorate / Corporate priorities; including the ability to provide insight and constructive challenge that directly influences decision making. Good understanding of financial management, business planning, corporate governance and risk management processes and procedures, with sound knowledge of how these are applied in a local authority environment. Ability to plan and deliver complex work to statutory deadlines. Strong ICT skills including extensive knowledge and ability to use spreadsheets; and able to utilise business systems effectively. Experience using Agresso is desirable. Able to think and act strategically, be proactive, solve problems and make decisions. Excellent leadership skills to inspire, motivate and develop organisational thinking and promote staff performance and development. Keeps up to date with developments affecting local government generally and the services delivered by the People Directorate specifically.
Work-related Personal Requirements	A lateral thinker who is highly motivated, positive and inquisitive with an aptitude for learning, problem solving, developing innovative ideas and continuous improvement. Anticipate the Council's future needs and requirements, demonstrate a can-do attitude and focuses energy and commitment on identifying

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opportunities that can achieve positive results for the individual and organisation.

Take responsibility for professional development by seeking out opportunities that enhance knowledge, skills and experience.

Adapt approach to assist the Council and individuals to manage conflicting priorities as circumstances change.

Is commercially aware – i.e. understands the cost drivers and true costs of services and considers the value in everything we do.

Apply a questioning mind to conditions which may indicate a possible misstatement of financial information due to error or fraud.

Able to challenge constructively, and see the wider implications, across services, processes and issues.

The ability to communicate clearly and openly with others to inform, instruct, persuade and encourage feedback.

Understands the role of the organisation, and the needs and expectations or internal and external customers, working professionally and innovatively to meet or exceed those needs and expectations.

Demonstrates an open mind to challenge traditional approaches in a positive way, develops innovative idea, solves problems and continually improves performance.

Collaborates and consults with others effectively, in joint pursuit of team and organisational goals.

Understands the environment in which the organisation operates and considers the financial and wider commercial implications of their decisions and actions.

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Other Work Requirements	No criminal record involving theft or fraud.

Role models and demonstrates the Council's values and behaviours	Our values define who we are. They outline what is important to us. They influence the way we work with each other – and the way we serve our residents and engage with our communities. We make our values real by demonstrating them in how we behave every day.

All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the Council's Equality & Dignity at Work policy at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality & Diversity legislation and Council policies/procedures.