

Housing Project Accountant

JE Code:



Values – We are dedicated, respectful, collaborative, we are Milton Keynes Council

Service: Finance
Reports to: Housing Finance Manager
Job Family: Professional / Technical
Grade: J
Political restricted: N
Date: 24 February 2021

Key Deliverables

1.	Financial analysis and challenging forecasts of capital projects and HRA revenue budgets ensuring that they are accurate, and explanations of variations are robust. Challenge and support managers to identify mitigating actions to manage any adverse variations within projects and assess the impact of expenditure variations and slippage on funding sources (timing of receipts, nature of funding source etc.).
2.	Work with services to develop business cases and project documentation for capital and revenue projects to ensure robust decision making. Responsible for reviewing and challenging the financial appraisal assumptions and ensure this is supported by evidence and test the appraisal against value for money and other assessment criteria.
3.	Manage the funding of the Housing capital programme; support the service to make claims for additional external grant funding, track the receipt, use of and expiry of retained Right to Buy receipts and ensure the use of borrowing is within funding limits.
4.	Provide advice and guidance on projects within the Council, participating in project boards, ensuring good project governance. Provide financial advice on procurement and contract related matters (tendering, contract extensions etc.).
5.	To work with services to ensure the accuracy of project costs in the accounts; all accruals are evidenced and supported by working papers, correct treatment for aspects such as retention. Ensure capital expenditure is in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice and accounting regulations.

Within reason these key deliverables may evolve to meet service need and it is expected that you will be flexible and adaptable in your delivery to meet both service and council wide needs

Essential Requirements (key skills & qualifications)

1.	Qualified accountant (CCAB) with relevant post-qualification experience and evidence of ongoing CPD.
2.	Experience of project management relating to the planning, delivery and reporting of capital projects. Essential, knowledge of and understanding of capital accounting in the context of housing.
3.	Experience of financial planning, control, and reporting in a complex organisation which should include some experience in working in a public sector organisation or in the housing sector.
4.	Be able to explain complicated and technical information in a manner that can be understood by others with different levels of knowledge on the subject, including senior stakeholders, using multiple tools; written (preparation of presentations and report writing including cabinet papers), spreadsheets (financial modelling) and deliver presentations.



5.	Ability to apply innovative and creative thinking to complex service challenges and deliver high quality solutions within a highly pressurised environment.
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Job Family

Professional/Technical
Grade J



Colleagues Expectations

- Be professional at all times
- Work together for the good of the team, council and local people
- Promote a supportive culture
- Challenge assumptions
- Take ownership
- Be willing to change and do things differently
- Always work in a safe manner

Managers expectations

- Be a role model by displaying positive behaviours at all times
- Make well-considered decisions
- Support, coach and communicate with my team
- Be accountable for my team's performance

Professional/Technical job holders rely upon their deep knowledge of the specialism or discipline in which they work to carry out vital tasks and provide authoritative advice to others. Often developing within recognised career paths, their evolving expertise sees them bear increasing responsibility for managing Council assets, the development of policies and procedures and the strategic direction of the functions they support.

Role Characteristics

At this level job holders usually report to a Head of Service and are responsible for the development and implementation of strategy relating to a whole function within that Service. Posts carry significant responsibilities for finance and a range of other non-financial assets and job holders will make autonomous decisions and lead the management of change throughout their functional area.

The Knowledge and skills required

The advanced theoretical knowledge required to make appropriate judgements and decisions at this level is augmented by ongoing professional development and awareness of external legislative and societal change. Also, by a deeper understanding of the Council operational structures which both support and depend upon the job holder's actions and advice. Roles will be professional experts, providing guidance to those in earlier career stages.

Thinking, Planning and Communication

Job holders will use their professional expertise to deal with complex, pressing issues on a day to day basis, but will also look well ahead and take a more strategic view of their project and service delivery objectives, shaping their teams' composition, approach and operating procedures in accordance with wider service goals mandated by Service management.

The information exchanged at this level will be routinely complex and even contentious in nature. Job holders will, however, have additional demands placed upon them by the need

to persuade others to adopt courses of action they may not otherwise wish to take, based on evidence-based and reasoned argument. This will occur in written interactions, but can also be the case in face to face verbal exchanges where job holders will advocate a position in response to opposing opinion in a formal or informal setting.

Decision Making and Innovation

The limitations to job holders' decision making will be only the broad policy and practice guidelines that exist at both a corporate and even national/professional level. At this level of autonomy, job holders will be the final arbiter of many escalated technical and professional disputes and problems. They will probably report to a Head of Service and will devise and implement strategic plans in relation to their specific functional area.

Areas of responsibility

With a diverse range of jobs being represented at this level, the precise blend of responsibilities for which the job holder is accountable will depend upon the service in which they operate.

External facing roles will focus on the needs of people, whether external service users or partners and will be responsible for critical day to day decisions with legal and reputational dimensions. Job holders will make a major contribution to the development of policy and functional procedures. Job holders will also lead the implementation of appropriate programmes on behalf of large groups of people.

Such roles are likely to have at least two other elevated levels of responsibility for such elements as finance (substantial budget management), information assets (statutory corporate databases and council-wide applications) or premises (of very high value and operational importance).

Internal facing roles are likely to have this pattern reversed, with the weightiest responsibility for very high value or significant financial and non-financial assets including policy development, but somewhat less accountability for the assessment of group needs. Roles will have full line management responsibility over a number of teams with differing functional specialties and employee profiles.

Impacts and Demands

Tasks and duties will be generally carried out in a sedentary position but there will always be a requirement for standing and walking from time to time, and the occasional need to lift or carry items.

The combination of both tactical and strategic matters that job holders deal with means that roles are inherently very complex, demanding of particularly lengthy periods of concentrated mental attention while also managing very high levels of work.

Duties of jobs at this level will not require job holders to develop and maintain working relationships with people who, through their circumstances or behaviour, place particular emotional demands on the job holder.

Many Professional / Technical job holders find themselves exposed to some disagreeable, unpleasant or hazardous working conditions. Particularly when the needs of their specialism require them to work on external sites exposed to the weather, in or around refuse and waste plant, close to particularly noisy machinery and in similar environments.

Other jobs, such as enforcement roles, may also see job holders exposed to verbal abuse and threatening environments. In all cases, job holders will minimise risk and conform to health and safety regulations to mitigate any negative effects of such exposure.