

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Head of Finance (Deputy S73 Officer)
MANAGED BY:	Director of Finance, Investments and Commercial (S73 Officer)
GRADE:	Head of Service

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) is seeking to appoint a Head of Finance, to join the Finance team.

To lead the Authority's Finance function including people and budget management, team performance and development.

To develop and drive the medium-term financial strategy for the Authority, ensuring efficient, effective and sustainable financial planning.

To provide strategic financial advice to Members, the Chief Executive and the Corporate Leadership Team, ensuring that financial matters are at the heart of key organisational decision-making.

- To be an advocate for the West of England Combined Authority.
- To provide comprehensive financial services to the Authority including accounting, budgeting, business partnering, analysis, project support, financial systems and financial administration.
- To lead the development of the annual budget and medium-term financial strategy through to and including drafting the budget report for approval at Committee.
- To lead on the preparation and audit of the annual statement of accounts

- To lead on specific projects as required by the Director of Finance, Investments and Commercial.
- To lead on Counter fraud arrangements including oversight and drafting of relevant policies and to be responsible for ensuring that the fraud risk register is up-to-date and regularly reviewed.
- To manage the Treasury Management function in accordance with statutory guidance and the prudential code
- To act as the nominated Deputy S73 Officer including representing the S73 Officer at relevant regional and national forums and as required
- To be a proactive and supportive member of the Directorate Management Team

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- To lead the MCA's Finance function to deliver a comprehensive service to the wider organisation;
- To lead the development of the Authority's medium-term financial strategy, liaising closely with the Corporate Leadership Team, to ensure this both aligns with and drives the overall strategic vision;
- To oversee the development and provision of financial data and analysis to drive evidence-based decision making, developing key financial metrics against which the Authority's performance will be measured;
- To oversee the development and implementation of corporate financial objectives and policies ensuring a clear strategic focus;
- To provide high level, professional financial leadership and challenge in the development of significant business cases and option appraisals;
- To initiate and contribute to innovative ways of attracting government and external funding into the region;
- Ensuring the MCA meets all statutory and regulatory financial reporting and management requirements;

- As a senior manager within the authority, promote and demonstrate co-operative working across the organisation and together with partners in accordance with the MCA's vision and values;
- Establish effective and accessible communication with employees, service users, partners, the general public and others as appropriate;
- Ensure effective and efficient management and prioritisation of the financial resources allocated to the Directorate;
- Lead the provision of financial services and advice to the MCA including to relevant Elected Officials, Directors, Heads of Service and Budget Holders;
- Provide support to the organisational improvement plan and service reviews to secure efficiency, effectiveness and economy of delivery;
- Through the Finance Business Partners, ensure the provision of professional timely advice and information on the development and review of policies, strategies, committee reports and business cases to the Corporate Leadership Team and Members;
- To manage the accounting, budgeting and budgetary control processes for the MCA, ensuring that professional standards are maintained and that corporate and statutory deadlines are met;
- To ensure that all finance staff and finance service providers comply with appropriate professional and corporate standards in order to provide effective and efficient financial services;
- To be the guardian of sound financial management across the Authority, providing training and guidance as needed;
- To identify and consider risks of financial exposure in all decisions in order to safeguard the Authority's financial position;
- To ensure that the MCA's strategic approach to fraud is clear, documented, and in line with established best practice.
- To oversee the provision of key financial support to both revenue and capital projects and programmes, including leading on financial project appraisal, supporting business case and business plan development and managing monitoring and evaluation;
- To be responsible for the leadership and management of the Finance service, including team development, recruitment, and retention;

- Lead on the development, and ensure the communication, of clear service objectives and performance targets and establish and implement robust and relevant performance review metrics;
- To ensure equality of opportunity and effective risk management in all activities of the Team, and the health and safety of all service users and staff;
- Actively participate in the directorate management team, project groups (including cross service groups) and in the management teams of other Directorates;
- Maintain strong relationships with senior leaders and politicians across the region, working in partnership to achieve shared goals;
- Undertake other duties commensurate with the level of seniority of the role, in consultation with the Corporate Leadership Team

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Education to degree level or equivalent and Professional Qualification from a CCAB accounting body.
- In-depth knowledge of financial management and best practice, which will have been gained over a significant period of time
- Understanding of the Combined Authority and the political environment in which it operates

Experience

- Significant post qualification experience at a senior level in a financial and managerial capacity.
- Significant experience of operating as part of an organisation’s leadership team and giving strategic financial advice to senior leaders including the CEO or equivalent
- Experience of leading multidisciplinary teams at Head of Service level or above, providing strategic leadership of a variety of services to a complex organisation
- Experience of developing and implementing large-scale financial plans and strategies
- Experience of working with and advising Chief Officers, Strategic Directors, Divisional Directors, Heads of Service, Members, Trade Union representatives and Members of the public is essential.
- Significant experience of developing and presenting evidence-based reports to senior managers and politicians
- Have experience in delivering training in financial matters to non-financial audiences. Good presentational skills in terms of conveying complex and unfamiliar topic areas in an understandable manner and communicating an enthusiasm for the concepts involved.

Skills and Competencies

- Demonstrate leadership qualities, and an ability to make a positive contribution to the achievement of corporate and service strategic objectives, and the ability to lead and inspire others
- Ability to constructively challenge and influence senior leaders both internally and externally across the region

- Ability to operate credibly within a political environment, with a keen aptitude for influencing and negotiation
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Be able to demonstrate the ability to interpret, and assess the key financial implications, risk factors and drivers from complex situations.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the key rules, issues, risks and resource drivers for the finance sector both within and external to local government.
- Have demonstrated the ability to work effectively under pressure with frequent changes of priority.
- Have demonstrated the ability to work with initiative and to plan work for the team to meet conflicting and changing priorities.
- Have proven ability to communicate at all levels and in particular display fluent verbal and written communication skills consistent with operating at elected official and Senior Management level and in explaining complex financial matters to non-financial Managers.

March 2025