

Service Accountant

JE Code:



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

Service Finance
Reports to: Finance Manager
Job Family Professional / Technical
Grade: H
Political restricted N
Date: 24 March 2021

Key Deliverables

1.	Challenge forecasts of budget managers and school business managers (providing training and guidance where this is needed). Budget managers and schools are responsible (and accountable) for their forecast but in the case of some complex budgets (such as high needs, early years) you will provide modelling and datasets to support the managers to forecast accurately. Responsibility for finalising all numbers for the monthly report (including savings tracking, reserve analysis) and providing explanations of all material variances. Responsibility for ensuring establishment control is in place and reflects the available budget.
2.	Support the service to develop fully costed proposals for business cases such as pressures and savings proposals, contractual inflation and demographic growth (fully supported by working papers) for the MTFP including identifying issues from the in-year position that will impact the medium term.
3.	To support maintained, special and nursery schools which have a deficit budget plan to develop a costed action plan including timescales. Ensure that you have a detailed understanding of the Dedicated Schools Grant technical guidance in relation to school budget shares, early years and high needs funding to provide advice and guidance to schools. This will be delivered as part of the schools traded service.
4.	Ensure compliance of services with Financial Regulations (scheme of delegation, procurement thresholds etc.) and look to improve how we share information with and train service managers, school business managers and governors on good financial management (such as the content and accessibility of the finance and local management of schools intranet sites). Provide positive assurance looking to promptly evidence or escalate issues.
5.	Responsibility for submission of grant claims and returns, ensuring compliance with conditions and appropriate working papers to evidence spend. Grant income for service area should be projected and tracked, ensuring prompt allocation of income to budgets.
6.	Provision of any financial information or modelling to support project boards, procurements, Freedom of Information requests and guidance to budget managers.

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.	Part qualified CCAB with up to date CPD (relevant to qualification).
2.	Comprehensive skills in all Microsoft applications; Excel (spreadsheet modelling and reconciliations), Word (report writing, including business cases) and PowerPoint (presenting financial information). Experience of using financial systems.

3.	Experience of a budget planning cycle, ensuring compliance with governance processes and analysing and reporting on financial issues.
4.	Be able to build strong relationships with external stakeholders (head teachers, schools and other LAs) in order to provide good professional advice.
5.	Be able to explain financial information in a manner that can be understood by others with different levels of knowledge on the subject, including delivery of presentations and training.
6.	Inquisitive and challenging with the ability to apply innovative and creative thinking to challenges within a fast-paced environment.

Job Family

Professional/Technical
Grade H



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 roles will have many day to day professional, technical and management issues to deal with but must also take a longer-term view of the service sector they support, assessing its changing needs and demands and making significant contributions to resource planning. This will see job holders dealing with serious issues without recourse to managers and making autonomous decisions based upon their specialist knowledge and dedicated experience.

The Knowledge and skills required

The broad knowledge requirement needed to deal with the technical and business challenges of roles is usually underpinned by an appreciation of the theoretical basis of the particular discipline such that job holders can fall back on the first principles of their specialism to make decisions and offer advice.

This level of knowledge is often indicated by the need for a degree level education in the relevant field, but for some roles this is substituted by a significant level of on the job training and focussed experience such that the level of expertise confers a similar level of authority.

While the majority of roles will have demands for manual dexterity in relation to typing and similar functions, other jobs at this level will use a range of equipment requiring precision in their use and handling.

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.

At this level, the information exchanged with internal and external colleagues, and members of the public will call for developed communication skills on the part of the job holders. Matters will be technically complicated, requiring careful explanation, or sensitive, requiring significant listening skills to interpret information and provide appropriate advice.

Decision Making and Innovation

Job holders will have the freedom to interpret policy and broad operating guidelines in order to shape their teams' detailed approach to meeting their corporate objectives and targets. They will deal with escalated, multi-faceted problems independently and will tend to only consult their manager on fundamental policy or resource issues.

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 high impact decision making and the implementation of appropriate programmes on behalf of individuals or groups of people or enforcement of regulations which have direct and significant consequences upon those served. Such roles are likely to have at least one other elevated level of responsibility for such elements as finance, information assets, equipment or premises.

Internal roles are likely to have this pattern reversed, with the weightiest responsibility for highly valuable or significant financial and non-financial assets, but somewhat less accountability for the assessment of needs of individuals and groups.

Jobs will generally have formal line management responsibility and will not only allocate and check work, but also be directly involved in assessment, recruitment, and other human resource related procedures. Posts that do not have this level of managerial responsibility are likely to have compensatory levels of accountability in relation to the users of Council services, finance or other major asset(s).

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 complex, demanding of lengthy periods of concentrated mental attention while also managing high levels of work-related pressure from

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.

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.