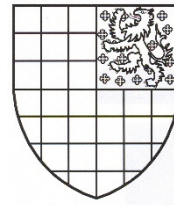


# JOB DESCRIPTION



**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

**Post:** Responsible Financial Officer  
**Responsible to:** Town Clerk

## Job purpose

1. To provide financial management, and to supervise the work of the Finance Administration Officer (FAO). To manage the Town Council's financial affairs within the legal framework for local authorities to ensure compliance with current legislation, statements of recommended practice and accounting codes of practice. To ensure that the Town Council operates in compliance with such Financial Regulations as it may adopt, and to advise and assist in drafting and regular revision of such Regulations.
2. To act as the Town Council's "Responsible Finance Officer" (RFO) who, by virtue of section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, is responsible for the administration of the financial affairs of the Council. Principally:
  - (i) establish a sound system of internal control and arrangements for the management of risk
  - (ii) determine the accounting control systems and ensure that they are observed
  - (iii) determine accounting records and ensure they are maintained in accordance with proper procedures and are kept up to date
  - (iv) carry out an annual review of the system of internal control and prepare and publish an annual statement

## Duties and responsibilities

Year-end financial statements	Oversee preparation of the Town Council's annual Financial Statements in accordance with applicable legislation and guidelines. Make the Financial Statements available to Town Council's auditors and provide such working papers, explanations and information as the auditors may require in carrying out the annual audit. Prepare the annual Statement of Internal Control and to seek the Council's approval of such statement every year.
Management Accounts	Prepare management accounts, together with explanations of major variances, for consideration by the Audit Panel. Investigate discrepancies.
Annual Estimates	Prepare draft budget estimates for the council's services and facilities, and financial reserves as appropriate, and to make recommendations to the council for the amount to be raised as Council Tax Precept in the following year.
Internal Control	Review and monitor the Town Council's systems and ensure that proper checks and controls are in place. To liaise with the Town Council's internal auditor. Carry out investigations and prepare reports on an ad hoc basis.
Risk Management	Devise and implement a system of risk management covering all aspects of the Town Council's activities. Carry out an annual review of the Council's risk management strategy.
Other strategies	Participate in the preparation of other strategic reviews <i>eg</i> fraud and negligence, investment strategy <i>etc</i> and to make recommendations.
Pensions	Monitor the Council's pension scheme administration, and review/authorize pension returns prepared by the FAO.
VAT	Review the Council's VAT exemption status and, if necessary, to prepare annual schedule of exempt inputs. Deal with HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) as required.
Investments	Comply with the investment strategy. Review periodically and make recommendations to Council.
Payroll	Remain up to date with payroll legislation.

	Prepare & run monthly payroll if Finance Administration Officer is absent.
	Review HMRC returns.
	Review annual pay award calculations.
Utilities & Services	Carry out reviews of provision of service ensuring most cost effective solutions are in place, bearing in mind relevant Council policies.
Meetings	Attend meetings of Council and/or Committees <i>etc</i> as required.
Department Budgets	Monitor and ensure implementation of all necessary procedures and documentation to ensure appropriate financial management in all service areas.
Asset Register	Ensure that the Council's Asset Register is maintained in a suitable manner to meet audit requirements and practical needs.
Leases and Licences	Ensure that a record of all of the Council's Leases and Licences are maintained in a suitable manner to meet auditor's requirement and are reviewed at appropriate times.
Insurance	Responsibility for insurance contracts.
General	To assist with the Council's overall performance management. To undertake such other tasks as may reasonably be requested, which fall within the capacity and experience of the Postholder.
GDPR/Data Protection	Ensure all work in the areas of responsibility are compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations and other Data Protection legislation generally.

**This document describes in general terms the duties and responsibilities of the post at the time it was drafted. This is not to be taken as exhaustive nor exclusive, and duties may be varied at any time, in consultation with the postholder, to meet the needs of the service. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot, of themselves, justify reconsideration of the grading of the post.**

*Drafted September 2020*

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**  
**Responsible Finance Officer ('s151' Officer)**

Competence area	Description	Evidence by
<b>Qualifications</b>	Technical financial qualification desirable	Formal qualifications <i>eg</i> CIPFA
<b>General experience</b>	Minimum of 5 years office and financial experience, to include report writing, production/presentation of financial reports and budget management, working on own initiative and/or as part of a team.	Local Government experience desirable. Experience of some management or supervision of others desirable.
<b>Financial Management</b>	Competent in management of a significant budget; understanding of budget control, and of financial analysis and process Previous direct/exclusive responsibility for a major budget (circa £0.5m+); Demonstrable understanding of issues of probity and sound financial management applying in the public sector	Experience of financial software systems <i>eg SAGE Accounts and Payroll</i> Demonstrable knowledge of payroll, VAT, pension management, and design & maintenance of financial records and accounts.
<b>Skills &amp; knowledge</b>	Policy analysis skills and the ability to address and resolve complex issues.	Evidence of giving advice on policy issues, and of recommending strategy on difficult/complex issues
	Excellent numeric, written and oral communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively with others, at all levels, both internally and externally. Ability to design & operate office systems and procedures	Previous experience in a post demanding application of these skills; involvement in services and/or in external relations Demonstrated at interview.
	A good understanding of Local Government structure, functions, responsibilities, and procedures Understanding of legal responsibilities and sufficient general understanding of the law to maintain Council's compliance in the postholder's areas of responsibility.	Previous experience of working with and advising local authority Committees and elected members or equivalent; demonstrable understanding of the legal requirements affecting local authorities finance
<b>Personal Qualities</b>	Approachable and responsive with staff and members of the public Able to secure good relationships with Councillors and other stakeholders Able to work effectively under pressure. Self-reliant, open, and honest. Practical with common sense approach to problem solving. Trustworthy with confidential information. Capable of anticipating problems and showing initiative to solve them. Receptive to change and new ideas. Methodical and thorough approach.	Previous experience in a post demanding application of these skills; involvement in services and/or in external relations Demonstrated at interview.
<b>Operational</b>	Available for some evening meetings and occasional Civic events	Acceptance at time of appointment