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| Role Title | Principal Accountant: Corporate Parenting |
| Team | Children & Young People Finance |
| Job Family | Finance |
| Competency Level | Principal Officer/Manager |
| Pay Range / Scale | PO6 - £45,834 to £48,819 per annum |
| Purpose A strategic financial advisory, planning and support service for the Corporate Parenting Service in Children's Social Care. This includes supporting commissioning arrangements between the LA and Specialist provisions. | |

| Generic Accountabilities | End Result/Outcomes |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and organise work to ensure the delivery of those aspects of the service for which responsible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is completed on time and to the quality and standards required. Changes to priorities are accommodated. Service is delivered to organisational requirements and reflects customer and stakeholder requirements, within organisational constraints. Professional and legal compliance is assured. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake / support consultation procedures. Identify issues, resolving as appropriate and escalating complex problems if necessary. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities are undertaken according relevant guidelines / regulations / procedures. Customer / stakeholder views are available to inform recommendations. Data and measurements are accurately recorded. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collate process and analyse complex information. Ensure all required records and information are maintained correctly. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information / applications are processed according to procedure. Information is managed efficiently and accurately. Data is recorded and stored in compliance with national standards and can be shared, as appropriate, with other agencies. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and present results / responses / reports / recommendations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurate, complete and relevant information / reports are provided for internal and/or external use. Issues are clearly summarised, progress and implications are reported. The council's position is clearly stated. |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide authoritative advice, guidance and support to colleagues, customers and stakeholders. Respond to and investigate enquiries / escalated complaints. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information, advice and support are accurate, timely and constructive. • Problems are identified. • Issues are managed through to a satisfactory conclusion, or escalated if appropriate. • Risk to the Council / customers is minimised. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to identifying and delivering information / activities to support service delivery / promote the service area /. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements are effectively identified. • All materials / activities are delivered to the required standards and timescales. • Information / activities achieve desired results. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge customers' practice and minimise risk, referring concerns to line manager. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer risks are assessed. • Relevant health, safety and welfare requirements are met. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with others to clarify changing requirements. Identify, recommend and support the development and delivery of improvements. Contribute to the development and implementation of policies, procedures and systems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement opportunities and plans to achieve them are identified and recommended. • Agreed improvements are developed, delivered and evaluated. • Changes are effectively communicated to others. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead projects or improvement programmes, or contribute to the delivery of larger projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical, effective solutions are developed and delivered in accordance with legislative requirements and good practice guidelines and address any relevant environmental / conservation / technical / design issues. • Projects are delivered to agreed specification, timescales and budgets. • All project documentation and reports are completed correctly. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support others in their development, including external organisations / customers where appropriate. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify any changes that may impact the service / profession. • Contribute to the development of others (e.g. through sharing knowledge and skills, acting as a coach or mentor, or providing feedback). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop good working relationships and communicate effectively with internal / external organisations / partners and stakeholders. Represent specialist area internally and / or externally. Model, demonstrate and promote good practice relevant to the role. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant work area reputation is maintained or enhanced. • Stakeholders are engaged with activity relevant to them. • Positive feedback is received from stakeholders. • Communications are clear, well planned and effective. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best practice is shared and promoted. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support partnership agreements and partnership working within area of responsibility. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities which support partnership working are effectively delivered. Partnership working groups produce valid and timely outputs. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to service / business plans for area of responsibility and to wider service planning and development activities. Contribute to budget planning as required. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service / business plans reflect input. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality check documents, decisions and / or presentations before delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All work meets the required standards |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act in accordance with all policies and procedures which apply to the job and understand the reasons for this. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All policies and procedures are complied with. |

| Job Specific Accountabilities: | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide service managers, senior managers and partner organisations with financial and performance data, financial information and advice, including identifying opportunities for growth and efficiencies by using the Council's financial systems and advising on these matters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing independent analysis and interpretation of complex financial and performance data, to allow decisions to be made following consideration of financial resource and control implications. Writing and presenting reports on the analysis and interpretation of financial performance and actual or implied changes to legislation. Strategic planning of expenditure in the Corporate Parenting service (Currently £21m) and, more widely, Children's Social Care. Co-ordinating the monitoring and reporting of financial performance, providing options to managers to assist them achieve a spend to budget position at the end of the financial year. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise and assist in reviews and consultations, to ensure that inefficiencies, irregularities and budget variances are investigated and reported, whilst identifying and implementing opportunities to improve service delivery and performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and assessing strategic and financial risks associated with issues relating to a defined area of responsibility. Forecasting need for specialist provision Monitoring and quality assurance processes. Developing and produce option appraisals and financial modelling |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraising spending decisions and plans to ensure decisions are made with consideration of resource implications. • Advising on medium and long term financial planning including the estimate process. • Researching, analysing, interpreting and evaluating complex financial and other business related information to support service reviews, ensuring senior managers are provided with robust information to make informed decisions. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assist senior finance managers in the overall financial management of the service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring compliance with Finance and other regulations. • Ensuring compliance with any Operational Guidance and grant conditions. • Considering, developing and implementing changes to operations systems and procedures to ensure inefficiency, error or loss is minimised and accurate financial information is available as and when required. • Assisting with the development and improvement of the Council's and departmental systems |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure partnership working | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both Directorate-wide, Council wide and with the Council's partners whilst ensuring that the Council's interests are safeguarded. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To complete relevant statutory accounts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The completion of financial and grant returns where relevant |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide financial information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to requests for information from senior officers within the Council, partner agencies and internal & external auditors where appropriate |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent the Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representing the Team, Directorate and Council at meetings as directed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide financial advice, support and financial training to service managers on systems and procedures, to improve service delivery and standards of financial management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the maintenance and configuration of corporate financial management systems. • Creating, maintaining and developing financial coding and reporting structures within corporate financial management systems. • Ensuring service managers make full and effective use of financial systems. |

Nature of Contacts

- Typically involves Heads of Service and Senior Managers across the authority, and external agencies and organisations providing advice.
- Work directly with colleagues internal and external, other providers and external agencies to gather and exchange information and co-ordinate actions.
- Develop sensitivity, persuasiveness, and negotiation and assertiveness skills to communicate with diverse audiences in emotive circumstances. Deal with people at all levels confidently, sensitively and diplomatically.
- Provide specialist advice, guidance and support on issues within area of responsibility; develop and maintain joint working and promote the Council position.
- Consult with stakeholders to identify requirements. Communicate changes in policy and working practice to contacts.

Procedural Context

- Work within a policy framework and regulatory guidelines, applying knowledge of systems, procedures and best practice. Work to broad managerial direction, within a policy framework and regulatory guidelines, to ensure performance standards are met within a framework of policy and legislation.
- Plans own time and co-ordinates the work of others. Plan, organise and deliver interventions and actions. Responsible for professional advice, assessments or referrals.
- Exercise professional judgement in assessing stakeholder requirements, potential risk and quality assurance of service. Monitor and evaluate performance / service delivery, ensuring all parties are informed of progress / issues as required.
- Provide support to customers, colleagues and other stakeholders through applying knowledge of systems, procedures and best practice.
- Responsible for meeting performance standards within a policy framework and regulatory guidelines. Accountable for proper use and security of information, resources, equipment and/or facilities within area of responsibility.
- Use initiative to deal with complex issues and respond appropriately in an unpredictable work environment. May involve isolated working outside core hours.
- Reports to Group Accountant, Children and Young People Services

Key Facts and Figures

- Enhanced DBS disclosure will be required.
- Flexible working at times outside standard office hours.

Resourcing

- Budget Responsibilities: Corporate Parenting service £21m
- Supervisory Responsibilities: Principal Accountant, PO3, and needs to co-ordinate the work of others

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Ability to demonstrate sufficient knowledge and experience of Corporate Parenting services to provide the level of leadership and support required in this senior position, including knowledge of current legislation and legislative proposals, the challenges affecting the service area and the strategies being applied to address them.
- Experience of assisting a group of budget holders to understand and manage their budgets and prepare robust forecasts of outturn expenditure for the year in a large public sector organisation.
- Experience of analysing performance data for a range of services with a view to highlighting potential areas of budget scrutiny.
- Experience of producing annual accounts in accordance with relevant standards and timetables, supported by comprehensive working papers.
- Experience of supporting a group of budget holders to undertake their financial responsibilities consistent with the Corporate Accounting Framework.
- Experience of interpreting and analysing accounting regulations and codes of practice.
- Experience of liaising with external bodies (for example, government departments, external auditors and other Local Authorities)
- Experience of managing a team of staff to deliver high quality financial advice to Councillors and Senior Officers.
- Experience of supporting partnership working and/or alternative forms of service delivery.
- Experience of managing complex projects/financial issues.
- Experience of implementing sound and prompt solutions in the event of real, or potential, reconciliation difficulties in key systems.
- Experience of working closely with senior managers to ensure that financial implications are properly identified at the early stage of policy development.
- Ability to interpret funding and guidance pronouncements and assist in the preparation of models showing the financial consequences of the Budget Strategy.
- Ability to encourage effective budgetary control and to assist in the identification of corrective strategies to contain expenditure within Budget.
- Ability to contribute to financial strategies that are based on thorough analysis of needs and risks.
- Ability to monitor progress against timetables and to implement corrective strategies in the event of slippage or potential problems.
- Ability to convey complex financial and regulatory information in styles that meet the needs of internal and external recipients.
- Ability to offer financial advice in a manner that ensures that business planning is linked to all aspects of financial planning and management.
- Ability to identify potential changes to systems or processes to improve the timeliness and robustness of the reconciliation process.
- Commitment to a scheme of Job Rotation.
- Self-motivated, and able to demonstrate initiative and commitment.
- Experience of working with Children's Social Care finance.

- IT skills, including Microsoft Office suite, and skilled in the use of a computerised general ledger system, including experience of developing systems to achieve desired business outcomes.
- Experience of SAP.

Indicative Qualifications

- Part-qualified Accountant (CCAB recognised) or fully qualified AAT or significant experience of working in a Public Sector finance environment.
- GCSE (or equivalent) English Language and Maths grade A-C.
- Excellent ICT skills , including high proficiency in Excel and Word
- Excellent standards of written and verbal English

The above profile is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by employees in this role. It is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and responsibilities which may be required. This role profile will be supplemented and further defined by annual objectives, which will be developed in conjunction with the post holder. It will be subject to regular review and the Council reserves the right to amend or add to the accountabilities listed