

Job description and employee specification template

Job title:	Accountant – Housing Finance	Location:	Municipal Offices
Reports to:	Technical Accountant	Working hours:	37 hours per week
Supervises:	No direct supervision but awareness of the activities of the accounting team for the HRA, comprising qualified accountants and accounting technicians.		
Purpose:	<p>Are you a motivated finance professional seeking your next career opportunity to use your Housing Finance knowledge and experience to ensure our Council are financially sustainable and ready for any future sector changes?</p> <p>Cheltenham are an extremely ambitious Council – committed to becoming carbon net zero and the Cyber Capital of the UK all whilst continuing to support all our communities in uncertain times. And our ambitions are more than words – we have won national awards for our commercial approach as a Council and our Golden Valley development has recently been named in the Government's National Cyber Strategy.</p> <p>Following the Council's transfer of housing services from Cheltenham Borough Homes back to the Council in July 2024, we are looking for a Housing Finance Accountant who can bring their knowledge and expertise to our medium and long term plans for our housing stock. With over 4,500 Council homes together with a portfolio of affordable and private rented units, there is no shortage of ways in which our finance team can support the Council's ambitions to provide affordable and safe homes for the people of Cheltenham.</p> <p>Cheltenham is only one of two District Councils in Gloucestershire who still own their own housing stock and with the proposed changes to Local Government organisation and focus on affordable housing, this provides a unique opportunity to make a lasting difference to tenants and residents in the town.</p> <p>The general fund budget has successfully delivered over £4m of savings since the pandemic and the new combined finance team is looking to bring some of the same methodology to the housing revenue account to improve the sustainability of the existing 30 year business plan. As we move into a period of recovery from the last five years, the focus is shifting across the Council to delivering the clear ambitions set out in the our Corporate Plan.</p> <p>The successful candidate will have the opportunity to develop their own knowledge and expertise within the role whilst also building technical resilience across the team to ensure that our Council is financially secure and sustainable into the next chapter of Local Government.</p>		
Key duties and responsibilities:	<p>As part of this role, you will be responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordinate the setting and monitoring of the Council's HRA and capital budget, including supporting the Head of Finance in the preparation of reports for key Committees 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate the funding of the Council's overall capital programme for the HRA, including financing and all associated balance sheet and asset management transactions • Supporting the Head of Finance and Technical Accountant in the production and monitoring of the Council's 30 year business plan for the HRA • Leading the year end close down process for the Council's Housing Revenue and Capital budget through to production of the Statement of Accounts, including some input into the Cheltenham Borough Homes company accounts • Providing advice, support and scrutiny to the viability assessments for new and existing housing investment schemes • Co-ordinating the delivery of management accounts and the annual accounts and audit for Cheltenham Borough Homes • Provide ad hoc support to housing revenue budget holders when needed <p>Other Accountabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive continuous and sustained performance improvement in line with the Council's values • Planning and reviewing workloads to ensure outputs & outcomes are delivered within agreed timescales • Work to add value to, and be a valued member of the team and to be valued by customers • Work in compliance with the codes of conduct, regulations (including financial) and policies of the council
<p>Essential requirements – qualifications, skills, abilities and experience:</p>	<p>To be successful in this role our ideal candidate will have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully qualified accountant (ACA, CIMA, ACCA) or equivalent experience • Experience of work planning and meeting deadlines for self and for others. • Experience of working in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders as a trusted finance business partner. • Experience of revenue and capital year end close down process and financial accounts preparation, including preparing working papers and liaising with external auditors • Experience of maintaining and updating a 30 year business plan for the housing revenue account • Experience of supporting the financial viability modelling of housing developments <p>Skills and abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of key Local Authority Housing Revenue Account financial and funding arrangements • Awareness and up to date knowledge of national Government funding and legislation and its impact on the local government environment • Awareness and understanding of key changes to International Accounting Standards and the Local Government Code of Practice and ability to translate their impact onto the Council's own financial reporting • Team player with the ability to take complex financial data & translate it into a lay format & deliver with political sensitivity • Ability to think on one's feet, particularly in meeting

