

## JOB DESCRIPTION FORM

**Job Title:** Director of Resources (s151 officer)

**Job Holder:**

**Reports to:  
(Name & Title)** Gillian Beasley  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

### 1. Job Purpose:

- To act as the Council's Chief Finance Officer (s151 officer) and lead the delivery of high quality financial advice and support to the Council's officers and members. In addition to lead the delivery of a wide range of services through strategic partnerships, internal teams and external company appointment.
- To be a fully participating member of the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) driving strategy and performance and identifying, and championing the delivery of the council's vision and strategy with lead politicians, partners, community representatives, CMT colleagues, and all employees.
- To act as the Council's Proper Property Officer to be accountable for the delivery of the Council's Property Strategy and the commissioning and delivery of all property, facilities management and asset management Services.
- To ensure that the Risk is managed and mitigated through the Council Internal Audit and Risk Board

### 2. Dimensions:

#### Areas of Responsibility

- Chief Finance Officer (s151 officer) with statutory responsibilities to make arrangements for the proper administration of the whole Council's financial affairs,
- Lead internal financial adviser on all council projects, and principal sign off for external financial advice.
- Managing Director of Blue Sky Peterborough Ltd (dormant company).
- Representing the council on outside organisations such as Society of Municipal Treasurers, Unitary treasurers, East of England Finance Directors, localisation of council tax benefit steering group, public health funding group, LGA spending review group etc.
- The Council's Proper officer for property with responsibility to make arrangements for the proper administration of the whole of the Council's Property affairs.
- Joint chair of the Council's Joint Commissioning & Procurement Board.

Responsibility for contract management of the following strategic partnerships/ commercial projects:

- NPS (outsourced property function) + Council's client side corporate property function.
- Peterborough Serco Strategic Partnership contract (with Strategic Operational Direction of Contact Centre contained in the contract delivered through Director of Customer & Digital Services).
- Vivacity (outsourced Leisure services function).
- Blue Sky (dormant company)
- Empower

Additional Internal Income Generating Services:

- Register Office
- Cemeteries and crematorium

### **Financial Responsibility**

The post holder is directly responsible for a revenue and capital budget of approx **£69m** in 2020/2021 for the Resources department.

In addition, the post holder is also responsible for the whole of the Council's budget (revenue budget of **£413m** and additional capital budget of **£95m** in 2020/2021 **£508m** in total), as it is the post holder's responsibility to ensure that expenditure against it follows proper rules of financial accounting, and by advising on appropriate routes of approval for expenditure, procurement options, approval of exemptions from contract standing orders, and so on.

Management of Council's financial arrangement in relation to the COVID-19 emergency and other emergencies with significant financial impact.

### **Staff**

The staffing numbers across the teams fluctuate, and some posts are filled on a temporary basis:

- Strategic Finance: 36
- Internal Audit: 8
- Commercial functions: 7
- Registration Services & Bereavement Services: 40

### **3. Organisation:**

This role is a Tier 1 post reporting directly to the Chief Executive and the post holder is a full member of the Joint PCC and CCC Management Team.

The role has several distinct areas of operation as noted above.

See attached organisation charts of the services which sit within the remit of the Director of Resources.

The role has the following main areas of operation:

### **Financial Team Leadership Responsibilities:**

- Section 151 officer.
- Budgetary control.
- Financial planning.
- Financial accounting.
- Capital Programme Management.
- Treasury Management.
- VAT and Tax accounting.
- Insurance.
- Departmental Heads of Finance.
- Internal Audit and Risk Management
- External Audit.
- Financial Appraisal (projects & savings & reports)

### **Contractual Leadership Responsibilities:**

- SERCO contract: shared transactional services (payments, payroll, benefits, council tax, business rates, sundry debt, car parking income), customer services (call centre and one stop shop through the Director of Customer & Digital), procurement, insurance, telecommunications, business support, finance systems, external funding and business transformation.
- Peterborough Investment Partnership (PIP) - oversight
- NPS (outsourced property function) + Council's client side corporate property function. property management, commercial property portfolio
- Medesham (housing delivery vehicle) - oversight
- Financial Responsibility for long and medium term annual projects

### **Office Manager**

Personal support to Chief Financial Officer & Commercial Director

## **4. Principal Accountabilities / Responsibilities:**

- To fulfil all the statutory duties and responsibilities of the authority's s151 officer.
- To ensure the provision of high quality financial advice to officers and members to enable them to achieve corporate priorities, and in particular support to Cabinet members and CMT colleagues in this context
- To be the Council's lead financial adviser and ensure provision of timely and pragmatic financial advice which is solutions driven, and incorporates a thorough understanding and assessment of risk – particularly on a range of high profile, high risk, "cutting edge" projects
- To personally advise Council and Cabinet meetings and other meetings as required.

- To be the Proper Registrars officer.
- To act as the Council's Proper Property Officer and fulfil these legislative requirements.
- To translate the Council's strategic priorities into appropriate service plans oversee the execution, review and improvement of these plans.
- To ensure health and safety responsibilities are fulfilled.
- To lead on liaison with external auditors.
- To maintain effective liaison with relevant government departments: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Home Office etc
- To ensure an effective response is developed to national policy and legislation

### **Leadership**

- Lead the Departmental Management Team, supporting it to effectively manage the resources of the team (within budget) and ensure delivery of corporate priorities and client requirements.
- Provide inspirational leadership to a diverse, multidisciplinary workforce, driving customer focused service delivery, embedding a culture of change, continuous improvement, common professional standards and excellent people engagement and management and ensuring that the Council meets its statutory obligations in relation to all aspects of equalities legislation.
- Actively encourage innovation and creativity across the services managed, pushing boundaries to improve efficiency, provide value for money and achieve new ways of working.

### **Performance and Risk Management**

- Develop and implement performance and outcome management of the services managed and commissioned to achieve the Council's strategic priorities in terms of partnership working and collaboration, the quality of engagement with local communities and businesses, significantly increasing the Council's visibility as a strong strategic leader and catalyst for investment.
- To ensure that all areas of the service meet the customers' needs and deliver services to the highest standards (where appropriate as assessed by external auditors).
- Evaluate, review and report performance to members, stakeholders and auditors (internal and external).
- To manage risk, ensuring full compliance with the relevant legal, financial and procurement requirements and frameworks across the Council.

### **Financial Management**

- Continually review and reshape service delivery to achieve financial efficiencies and maximise opportunities for income generation, whilst maintaining the highest standards of service delivery.

## 5. Job Knowledge, Skills & Experience

### Job Knowledge

- Qualified accountant including membership of relevant CCAB bodies (as set out in Local Government Finance Act).
- Relevant professional CPD.
- Relevant leadership/management qualification.
- Thorough knowledge and understanding of local government and of statutory and governance frameworks.
- A good understanding of the contemporary public change agenda.
- Knowledge of implementing performance management systems to meet Council objectives and performance targets, whilst handling a diverse and complex workload.

### Experience

- A successful track record and background of consistent achievement as a senior manager of financial and other support services within a large and complex multi-disciplinary organisation.
- Proven track record of leading and making a contribution to strategic decision making, resource allocation and to policy formulation and delivery
- Demonstrable track record of formulating, leading and implementing change and strategies and programmes which cross service or professional boundaries through the delivery of major projects.
- Experience of delivering major complex projects that have a high degree of external facing challenge or resistance, and ensuring delivery on time and within budget and outcomes.
- Experience of successfully working with a wide range of stakeholders.
- Significant experience of transformation and strategic sourcing
- Evidence of successful multi-agency and partnership working.
- Substantial experience of managing change, motivating staff and developing effective teams working towards a positive working culture
- Demonstrable track record of effective decision making, policy formulation and project delivery.
- Evidence of personal commitment to diversity in the workplace or in the shaping of service outcomes.
- Demonstrable track record of performance management and of having established a performance-focused, problem solving culture.
- Experience of working with elected members / working in a political environment
- Experience of working at a national level.

## Skills

- Outstanding interpersonal skills with the ability to relate to a wide range of audiences in a manner that inspires respect, trust and confidence.
- An ability to relate to and win the confidence, trust and respect of Members colleagues, partners and the wider community.
- An innovator and motivator, who can provide inspirational leadership, which encourages commitment from others and promotes a positive, motivated organisational culture.
- Highly developed networking, advocacy, oral, written and presentation skills, which are clear, persuasive and influential with others.
- Excellent negotiation skills and an ability to influence outcomes through reasoning, persuasion and tact.
- Strategic and logical thinker and decision-maker able to provide practical and creative solutions to the management of partnership, corporate and directorate issues.
- High intellectual and analytical abilities; able to assimilate and analyse information quickly, identifying issues, priorities and solutions and using effective models, techniques and resources to resolve issues.
- Strong financial and budgetary awareness with the ability to manage finance and wider resources within a strong performance management culture.
- Ability to use information technology to improve service delivery and reduce costs.
- Demonstrable continuous development and improvement of own leadership and professional practice.
- Ability to lead and manage high quality, responsive and cost effective services, both directly and through partnerships where appropriate.
- Ability to communicate and secure working relationships and develop those in a way which enables service users to take a greater part in decision-making.
- Ability to work with local partners to develop joint strategies for implementing government requirements and local services.

## 6 Job Context:

The services for which the post holder is responsible play a central role in the Council – both internally and externally.

### **Internally:**

#### **Finance**

Efficient and effective financial management – from annual budget setting, medium term financial planning, budgetary control and annual final accounts. Ensuring financial regulations are complied with, contracting standing orders and an effective internal audit assurance function is maintained.

## **Property**

Efficient and effective management of the Council’s Property portfolio, ensuring all legislative requirements are delivered.

## **Commercial Agenda**

That new sources of funding and incomes are pursued, appropriate charging policies are in place and that new forms of strategic partnerships are pursued.

## **Externally**

The department is responsible for services that are vital to people’s everyday lives and that make Peterborough an attractive place to live and work:

- From cradle to the grave – registrars to bereavement services.
- Poverty – payment of benefits
- Cash collection of taxes and debts
- A vibrant city - Property services and project management.
- Businesses – prompt payment of bills to suppliers and options to become a council contractor

## **7. Job Challenges:**

The post holder leads on a number of high profile projects, working with the internal teams, and external lawyers and technical experts in projects (for example the Peterborough Limited LATCo project).

All of these projects are high risk, both in terms of the political challenges, and the legal risks as they are new and untried areas.

These projects also entail high risk to the post holder personally and professionally because of the high risk of challenge, as well as reputational risk to the Council. All of these projects are under intense scrutiny both from within the Council and externally.

Operating in a political environment with 5 different political groups – this means that the post holder and the services he is responsible for need to be aware of, and take into account political considerations when giving advice, in addition to financial / governance and commercial considerations (yet remaining politically neutral at all times).

Being able to advise the Conservative administration (particularly Cabinet members) on how to achieve their priorities, yet also be able to provide advice to opposition groups as to how to challenge should they wish to do so – which is particularly relevant at budget

setting. This requires careful handling to ensure all groups maintain confidence in my impartiality.

Advising the opposition as per the Council's standing orders on Financial and property matters.

## 8 Key Relationships:

### Manager (Chief Executive)

- 1:1 meeting monthly.
- Joint CMT meeting fortnightly.
- Annual PDR and mid-year review.
- Regular e-mail, telephone and personal contact and ad hoc meetings as required.

### Direct reports

- 1:1 meetings monthly.
- Departmental management team meeting fortnightly.
- Regular e-mail, telephone, personal contact and ad hoc meetings as required. Direct access for high profile, high risk operational matters where advice and guidance are needed for service managers and for which the post holder is responsible for informing the Chief Executive.

### Other contacts

- Frequent contact from members, including out of normal working hours.
- Frequent requests for advice on a range of issues from officers across the Council (including outside normal working hours where necessary).
- Regular contact with CMT colleagues (at least 2 or 3 times a week) to support their service delivery and strategic issues.
- Regular 'ad hoc' meetings with Leader
- Regular meetings with Cabinet portfolio holders, and Shadow Cabinet portfolio holder.
- Attendance at Cabinet Policy Forums and other meetings requested by Cabinet or Cabinet members.
- Responsible to Stakeholders Committee.
- Lead officer at the Audit Committee (a Statutory Committee)
- Attendance at Scrutiny Committee meetings.
- Contacts with Local Government Association and Government Departments on Financial matters.
- Occasional contact with Peterborough's MPs on issues affecting them or their constituents.
- Representing the authority at external local and national events.



**9. Key Relationships Decision Making Authority:**

- Extensive and significant decision making authority at an operational, strategic and financial level.
- Wide ranging delegations within the Constitution, and the ability to make decisions within the Chief Executive’s delegations, in her absence. The constitution particularly recognises the post holder’s statutory role and contains sections on:
  - Functions of the Chief Officer and the Chief Finance Officer in particular
  - Duties to provide resources to the monitoring officer and chief finance officer
  - Functions of the Proper Property Officer
- Full ability to make decisions in relation to teams and service areas, without reference to the Chief Executive but consulting with the Chief Executive as required regarding critical and / or politically sensitive matters.
  - The role of the statutory Finance officer can be traced back in case law to 1906 – Attorney General v De Winton. It was established that the Treasurer is not merely a servant of the Council but holds a fiduciary relationship to the local taxpayers.
  - As s151 officer, the post holder is personally responsible and does not report to anyone in this capacity (the role being a statutory role, and one of the three posts every council is legally required to appoint).
  - As s151 officer the post holder has greater powers than any member of CMT (including the Chief Executive) or any member of the Council or Cabinet (including the Leader), in respect of financial matters section (114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988). The post holder is able to stop the Council taking any action which he considers is likely to incur unlawful expenditure or lead to an unbalanced budget, but in practice this is a last resort. To avoid this draconian measure, the post holder regularly uses a range of skills to find an acceptable solution and encourage an alternative approach to ensure proposed financial actions are both lawful and within budget.
- At budget setting time the Council has to have regard to the post holder’s statutory advice, particularly around the reasonable of estimates and adequacy of reserves and balances 2003 Act) as set out in the Robustness Statement

**10. Additional Information:**

**Political Restriction**

- This post is politically restricted under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and the post holder may not have any active political role either in or outside work.

**SIGNATURES:**

After reviewing the questionnaire sign it to confirm its accuracy

**JOB HOLDER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LINE MANAGER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_