# **Accountant Job Description**

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| **Department**  | Finance and Commercial Services |
| **Service**  | Budgeting and Accounting |
| **Grade** | L |
| **Reports to** | Senior Accountant |
| **Responsible for**  | Finance Officer, Senior Finance Assistant, Finance Assistant |
| **Job reference** | GR1483 |

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| **Job Purpose** |
| * To manage and co-ordinate development and preparation of the revenue budget so that the council can produce a legal budget.
* To lead in the supervision and co-ordination of the departmental accounting functions relevant to budget preparation, monitoring, and accounts closure in order that the Council can demonstrate proper financial administration.
* To co-ordinate the completion of government and other returns to the required standards and timescales to ensure the Council meets its statutory reporting requirements.
* To promote and monitor adherence to professional financial standards to ensure a high standard of stewardship of public monies can be demonstrated.
* To provide financial advice, training, and guidance to all stakeholders on financial issues and processes as required to enable effective senior management decision making and to ensure a high standard of stewardship of public monies can be demonstrated.
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| **Overview/Context** |
| * The finance department operates as a shared service, within which the Budgeting and Accounting department is a centre of expertise.
* In order to focus on a high level of delivery and support to the service departments, the Budgeting and Accounting department is organised in line with the service departments. Each area is headed by an Accountant and the role requires detailed knowledge and understanding of their part of the service, on top of a high standard of technical accounting.
* The Accountant works closely with both Responsible Budget Officers and Assistant Directors to provide advice and direction. The role also requires the Accountant to provide a ‘policing’ element to ensure that the financial regulations are being followed and has the authority to disagree and stop decisions on financial grounds.
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| **Principal Accountabilities** |
| 1. To plan, direct, control, and monitor the work of the specialism’s finance team.
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| 1. To manage the budget monitoring process and to provide quality assurance of all forecasts of income and expenditure within the specialism to ensure timely and accurate information is produced for inclusion within monthly management reporting.
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| 1. To produce a full revenue budget for the specialism, in consultation with Responsible Budget Officers, to agreed standards and timescales which can be consolidated into the full departmental budget.
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| 1. To complete and close the accounts for the specialism, in accordance with Council financial regulations, providing a full variance analysis prior to production of the final outturn report.
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| 1. Ensure timely and accurate completion of all returns, questionnaires, Freedom of Information requests, and grant claims to funding bodies within the specialism, and to provide advice and guidance to Responsible Budget Officers to ensure that funding opportunities are maximised.
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| 1. To provide relevant training and advice to support Responsible Budget Officers to enable them to fulfil their financial management duties to ensure accuracy and consistency of data.
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| 1. Provide timely and accurate financial information and advice, and ad hoc written reports as required, to ensure all financial implications are fully considered to facilitate effective decision making.
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| 1. Ensure that the financial systems are maintained and provide financial and accounting data in accordance with accounting standards and codes of practice. Provide management information to demonstrate the integrity of the financial management system.
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| 1. Ensure that team members are properly qualified to undertake their duties and receive appropriate ongoing development, and to recruit and develop employees to carry out duties efficiently and effectively in order to meet service and Departmental objectives.
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| 1. To participate and contribute to project or working groups as required to ensure relevant representation is made and full consideration is given regarding financial implications.
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| 1. To work with Responsible Budget Officers to ensure that Value For Money is always delivered and that services are provided in accordance with Council and departmental standards and objectives of quality assurance.
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| 1. To develop and maintain procedural notes of current practices to ensure full audit trails are available.
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| 1. Perform other duties as may be required by the line manager.
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| **Person specification** |
| **Qualifications:** | **Essential (✓)** | **Desirable (✓)** |
| Qualified accountant to CCAB level | ✓ |  |
| **Knowledge/Experience** | **Essential (✓)** | **Desirable (✓)** |
| * At least three years post qualification experience working in a financial environment, working with senior financial managers.
* Experience of budget planning, preparation, monitoring, and accounting in a large and complex organisation in order to have a detailed understanding of corporate and departmental processes and issues.
* Experience of working in a local government environment.
* Excellent oral and written skills, able to communicate at all levels within the Council to shape policy, decisions, and new ways of working required to meet the requirements of the job.
* The ability to use knowledge and skills to provide solutions or assist in solving problems relating to the data held or posted into systems, so that integrity of the systems is maintained.
* A detailed knowledge and use of advanced level spreadsheets (Microsoft Excel), in order to analyse and reconcile complex financial information, and to provide high level supporting papers for the year end accounts process for presentation to external auditors.
* An extensive and detailed understanding of local government finance, including a good understanding of the working of central government departments in relation to local government issues.
* A detailed knowledge and understanding of professional and local government accounting codes and practices, with the ability to interpret and disseminate detailed information to officers at all levels of the Council.
* An in-depth understanding and a sound operating knowledge of the Council’s financial systems in order to ensure the input to and output from those systems comply with statutory and local accounting policies and requirements.
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| **Aptitudes/Behaviours** | **Essential (✓)** | **Desirable (✓)** |
| * The ability to develop the use of IT applications to improve and enhance the quality and standard of the reports provided for Members, officers, and external auditors.
* The ability to plan and prioritise effectively, ensuring that both corporate and service requirements and all statutory deadlines are met at the highest possible standard.
* The ability to demonstrate sound financial judgement, knowing when important financial matters and issues need to be referred to management.
* The ability to analyse complex financial information and reports, and explain the results of that analysis in an understandable format to Members, senior officers, external auditors, and financial and non-financial staff throughout the authority.
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| **The Council’s values and strengths*** Take accountability (Do what we say we will)
* Make strategy happen (Take action which makes Norfolk a better place)
* Be evidence based (Target our work to make the biggest difference)
* Be business-like (Think smarter to ensure value for money)
* Be collaborative (Work together to find a better way)
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| **Other Job Information** |
| * Works with external partner organisations as well as with NCC services.
* At peak times there may be a requirement to work at the weekend.
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| **General Information*** The job description details the main outcomes of the job and will be updated if these outcomes change.
* All work performed/duties undertaken must be carried out in accordance with relevant County Council and Departmental policies and procedures, within legislation, and with regard to the needs of our customers and the diverse community we serve.
* Job holders will be expected to understand what is meant by safeguarding vulnerable groups (children, young people and adults) and how to raise concerns.

Job holders will be expected to be flexible in their duties and carry out any other duties commensurate with the grade and falling within the general scope of the job, as requested by management. |
| The information in this job description is accurate and reflects the requirement of the role. |
| Line Manager:  | Senior Accountant |
| Date: | 30th June 2021 |