

# Kent County Council

## Job Description: Principal Accountant (Adults & Public Health)

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<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executive's Department</b>
<b>Unit/Section:</b>	<b>Finance Division / Revenue Finance</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Maidstone</b>
<b>Grade:</b>	<b>KR12</b>
<b>Responsible to:</b>	<b>Revenue Finance Manager</b>

### **Purpose of the Job:**

This post involves working closely with external partners in the NHS and other Local Authorities, in particular as Finance Lead for the Better Care Fund. You will also work on the co-ordination and production of the annual revenue budget and monthly revenue budget monitoring statements, in accordance with all relevant legislation, KCC strategies, policies, procedures and timescales.

You will lead on the year-end process for the services within your control, ensuring compliance to accounting standards and accounting deadlines.

You will work collaboratively with other Principal Accountants, the Chief Accountant's Team, and the Capital Finance team to ensure a consistency in approach to achieve best practice, plus the Council's key stakeholders including Heads of Service, Business Partners, and the Strategy team.

### **Main duties and responsibilities:**

1. Continually improve systems and processes to make efficiencies in monitoring and budget book production using latest technology and integrating systems wherever possible, to streamline and automate processes.
2. Work with internal and external stakeholders on schemes including the Better Care Fund. Oversee and monitor payments made via these schemes.
3. Lead on the production of the Directorate Medium Term Financial Plan and budget statements, and the annual revenue budget book.
4. Maintain control throughout the year of revenue cash limits ensuring all technical adjustments and approved virements are reflected in the Authority's accounting system.
5. Produce the monthly budget monitoring report by extracting all necessary information from the relevant systems. Ensure that robust challenge is provided through collaborative working with colleagues to ensure forecasts are accurate and transparent.
6. Complete various revenue budget related government returns (e.g. Better Care Fund, Disabled Facilities Grant), and respond to Freedom of Information (FOI) and Media requests as directed.
7. Lead on the year-end process for services within your control, ensuring accounting requirements and deadlines are met.

8. Lead on and manage directorate specific project work as directed by the revenue finance manager, ensuring quality, accuracy and timeliness throughout, including supporting any remodelling or transformation programmes as they arise.

### **Organisational responsibilities:**

All corporate directors, directors and senior managers have an explicit responsibility to deliver the collective agenda of the Council. These are fundamental elements of their role not an addition and are summarised as follows:

#### **Whole Council**

- Seek to improve the lives of all residents in Kent and economy of Kent.
- Act as corporate parent to the Council's looked after children.
- Take an active role in promoting and ensuring the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding are met.
- Understand, communicate and contribute to the delivery of KCC's strategic aims.
- Meet statutory obligations and promote and ensure compliance with policies and procedures and the Council's Code of Conduct (Kent Code).
- Advise elected members and support the democratic process.
- Promote the Council brand and enhance the overall reputation of the Council.
- Understand and monitor the measures of performance, including customer insight, which define successful outcomes for KCC services.
- Maintain and ensure a relentless focus on the customer.
- Act to support the Council-wide need to deliver services within budget, thereby avoiding an overspend that could damage the financial viability of the Council.
- Overcome professional and service silos to achieve the County Council's objectives.

#### **Integration of Services**

- Focus resources where they have the biggest impact.
- Deliver services that are flexible and adaptable.
- Integrate services within KCC and work with partner agencies to ensure a seamless customer experience.
- Fully and inclusively engage all staff in the delivery of services, demonstrating the Council's leadership values and competencies.

#### **Embedding Commissioning and Engaging relevant markets**

- Establish an outcome focused organisation.
- Meet the financial regulations and standing orders of KCC.
- Challenge the status quo and engage with the market to constantly improve.
- Ensure all services are delivered effectively and efficiently.
- Proactively and continuously seek to improve service delivery.
- Proactively manage risk to avoid inertia whilst not exposing the Council to needless and avoidable challenge or loss.

## **Managing Change**

- Understand and support the Authority's overall change agenda.
- Deliver required outcomes of service specific change on time and to budget.
- Understand the quality of staff, support their development, nurture those with talent.
- Identify the skills for the future and the level of staff through robust workforce planning.
- Identify and deal with underperformance.

Footnote: This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what their main duties are. It may be amended from time to time without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of post.

## Kent County Council

### Person Specification: Principal Accountant

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The following outlines the Minimum criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the minimum criteria will be short-listed. Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

	<b>CRITERIA</b>
<b>QUALIFICATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualified Accountant (CCAB) and/or proven ability to do the job.</li> </ul>
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant experience within a senior management finance role.</li> <li>• Proven ability to think and act at a strategic level taking full account of operational needs.</li> <li>• Experience of working effectively with Service Directorates, Senior Officers and Members.</li> </ul>
<b>SKILLS AND ABILITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of interpersonal and communication skills, both orally and in writing, including excellent report-writing skills.</li> <li>• The necessary tact, sensitivity and political awareness to negotiate/work with Senior Officers.</li> <li>• High Level of valid technical accounting skills.</li> <li>• Ability to meet fixed, non-negotiable deadlines and still maintain high quality standards.</li> <li>• Commitment to equalities and the promotion of diversity in all aspects of working.</li> <li>• Ability to maintain confidentiality.</li> </ul>
<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of proficiency in operating KCC financial systems.</li> <li>• Thorough understanding of budgeting, budget monitoring and year end closure of account processes.</li> <li>• Comprehensive understanding of financial controls.</li> <li>• Awareness of data protection and confidentiality issues.</li> </ul>

<p><b>KENT VALUES AND CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES</b></p>	<p><b>Kent Values:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are <b>brave</b>. We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge.</li> <li>• We are <b>curious</b> to innovate and improve.</li> <li>• We are <b>compassionate</b>, understanding and respectful to all.</li> <li>• We are <b>strong together</b> by sharing knowledge.</li> <li>• We are all <b>responsible</b> for the difference we make.</li> </ul> <p>Our values enable us to build a culture that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flexible/agile</b> - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile.</li> <li>• <b>Curious</b> - constantly learning and evolving.</li> <li>• <b>Compassionate and Inclusive</b> - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all.</li> <li>• <b>Working Together</b> - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent.</li> <li>• <b>Empowering</b> - Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions.</li> <li>• <b>Externally Focused</b> - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making.</li> </ul>
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