



WINDERMERE & BOWNESS TOWN COUNCIL

Representing the interests of the communities of Windermere, Bowness and Troutbeck Bridge

Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) Job Description - October 2024

Job Title: Responsible Financial Officer

Role: Financial bookkeeping, accounting and associated clerical work, helping to contribute to the smooth running of services that the Town Council provides direct to the communities of Windermere & Bowness.

Responsible to: Full Council

Responsible for: To fulfil functions required by law as the Council's responsible financial officer

Employment Status: 30 hours per month on a flexible basis including some evening work.

Salary Scale: LC2 SCP 24-29: £34,314 - £38,626 pro rata (currently £17.79 to £20.02 per hour) subject to Local Government Services pay agreements.

Reporting to: The Town Clerk and Councillors

Job Purpose: To implement financial policy, strategy and operations across the Council's services by working with Councillors, the Town Clerk and external bodies. To carry out functions required by law as the Council's responsible financial officer. To seek opportunities to develop the Council's financial position and maintain an efficient and affective budget.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. The area of service responsibility will be administering the Finances of the Town Council.

Duties will include:

- Manage and administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with the Accounts and Audit regulations.
- To implement financial policy, strategy, and operations across the Council's services by working with Councillors, external bodies, and staff.
- To seek opportunities to develop the Council's financial position and maintain an efficient and affective budget.
- Dealing with orders for work, invoices and preparing payment lists for approval of the Town Council.
- Making payments via the on-line banking system or via cheque within an agreed timetable.
- Preparing and issuing invoices for income due to the Council and monitoring the collection of debts.
- Paying in any cheques received to the bank.
- Maintaining an up-to-date cash book.
- Reconciling the cash book to the bank account on a monthly basis.

- Administering the payroll (via on line HMRC system) on a monthly basis.
- Providing the Council with a budget monitoring report on a monthly basis
- To manage the staff payroll and the Nest Pension Scheme and ensure members are paid by the allotted time according to their contracts.
- To complete all statutory and financial returns including PAYE, NI, VAT, Pension Scheme and Charity returns.
- Verifying budget report accuracy in relation to financial decisions recorded in Council minutes.
- Promptly alerting the Clerk to any anomalies or discrepancies in accounts or budget reports.
- Managing Councillor expenses claims.
- Identifying opportunities for cost savings and, on approval, implementing cost saving measures.
- Preparing and presenting detailed reports for council consideration.
- To manage insurance risk, process claims as necessary and maintain the property and asset register and report annually to the Policy & Finance Committee on insurance risk covered.
- To effectively manage and monitor the Councils finances and to advise the Council on its financial strategy and policies, to include investment, cash flow and bank transfers.
- Ensure the Town council is receiving good value-for-money on all expenditure.
- Prepared to work varied hours to meet the needs of the post.
- Dealing with correspondence concerned with financial transactions.
- Assist the Town Clerk in the re-tendering of contracts and obtaining quotations.
- To review and ensure compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations and recommend any necessary amendments to the Policy & Finance Committee and full council.
- To attend such committees or other as may prove necessary.
- Taking on other duties that may arise that are commensurate with the grade and employment conditions.
- Willingness to undergo training to acquire relevant new skills or knowledge relevant to the job.

2. On an annual basis, the Responsible Financial Officer will be expected to:

- Balance the year end Accounts and submit them to Council for approval.
- Update the asset register and Town Council insurance.
- In conjunction with the Clerk, prepare and advise on the annual estimates of income and expenditure for preparation of the annual budget.
- Make the arrangements for the internal audit of the Accounts.

- Produce and publish the annual “Statement of Accounts” in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- Review and ensure compliance with the Council’s Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and recommend any necessary amendments to the Policy and Finance Committee and full council.
- Prepare the VAT return for re-imbusement.

3. The Responsible Financial Officer will attend Policy and Finance meetings (every 2 months in the evening) and be prepared to answer specific questions on expenditure via the accounts report generator on their laptop. The Responsible Financial Officer may be required to take the minutes of the meeting if asked to do so.

4. Accounting Tools: The Council uses a computerised in-house spreadsheet accounting system which is based on Microsoft Excel. Therefore, a very good knowledge and experience of using Excel is required. On average the Council currently handles around 50 payments and receipts a month, many of which are handled by direct debit.

5. Working Arrangements:

- The Responsible Financial Officer flexible weekly hours and working pattern will be determined and organised in consultation with the Town Clerk.
- The Responsible Financial Officer will be employed directly by the Council. The Council will pay the appropriate employer National Insurance and the Responsible Financial Officer will be eligible to join the Council pension scheme.
- Training will be provided where necessary, but a very good working knowledge of Microsoft Excel is expected.
- There will be a probationary period of six months after which a review is carried out to assess progress. Thereafter a review will be formally carried out on an annual basis.
- A laptop computer will be provided running Excel and already set up with the appropriate spreadsheets to carry on operation of the monthly accounts. The basic PAYE Tools app will also be loaded on the laptop to run the payroll on.
- This post can either operate from a home office or the Town Council meeting room in the centre of Windermere. A suitable printer will be provided if needed.
- Travel expenses within the parish boundary will not normally be payable, but travel to meetings or training outside the area will be re-imbursed.

END

PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR THE ROLE OF RFO

Essential requirements

Educated to at least A level or the equivalent.

Good computing skills generally but especially a very good working knowledge of Microsoft Excel and a good knowledge of Microsoft Word.

The ability to handle accounts and financial matters efficiently and in an organised and professional manner, with proven relevant clerical or administrative skills and experience.

Good communication and interpersonal relationship skills including tact, diplomacy and the ability to handle confidential information appropriately.

Self-reliant and self-motivated with the drive, determination and initiative to achieve results with minimal supervision-

The ability to cope with pressure situations staying calm throughout.

Community focussed with a commitment to the delivery of quality service.

Attending meetings, taking minutes and acting in all respects as an Officer of the Council both internally and externally when representing the post of Responsible Financial Officer.

Other requirements that would be an advantage

Education in maths and English to an adequate level for computational and communication skills or having had relevant experience where such skills are important and demonstrated.

Lives locally and has a knowledge of the Town and area.

Supportive - demonstrating loyalty and commitment to the organisation and staff in past employment.

A known ability to handle bookkeeping and/or other associated administrative accounting or financial duties.

An ability to program within Visual Basic in Excel, or a willingness to learn Excel VB programming with appropriate training would be useful.