



HEAD OF FINANCE - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS) serves the Unitary Authority areas of Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. It has 21 operational fire stations, together with offices, covering all areas, with its Head Quarters based in Portishead, near Bristol. AF&RS Control Centre, where emergency calls are handled, is situated in Lansdown, near Bath.

With an annual budget of around £65 million, AF&RS delivers a wide range of fire, rescue and community safety services across a geographic area of approximately 514 square miles with a residential population of more than one million people.

AF&RS employs over 850 staff made up of: Service Delivery including whole-time and on-call Firefighters, and staff in its Control Centre, Service Delivery Support, and Corporate Services.

This post is within the Finance Team, and reports to the Statutory Finance Officer.

With effect from July 2023, UK legislation was amended to enable Fire & Rescue Services to undertake standard Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all employees. All AF&RS posts therefore require a standard DBS check, with a few defined roles requiring an enhanced DBS check. This post is subject to a standard DBS check. These DBS checks will be renewed throughout employment.

Safeguarding is the duty of every member of staff at AF&RS: as a public authority we have a responsibility to ensure that the adults and children we interact with are kept safe from harm.



Job Description, Core Values and Person Specification

Job Title	Head of Finance
Post Number	3013
Grade	Hay 2
Duration of Post	Permanent
Hours	37 per week
Directorate	Corporate Services
Unit or Team	Finance
Reports to (give job title)	Statutory Finance Officer
Line management or supervisory responsibilities	Yes
If yes, for which team/s or post/s	As demonstrated in structure chart below
Responsibility for managing a budget	Yes
If yes, approximately how much (to nearest £10,000)	£750k
Date job was evaluated	December 2020 – reviewed May 2026

Purpose of Job:

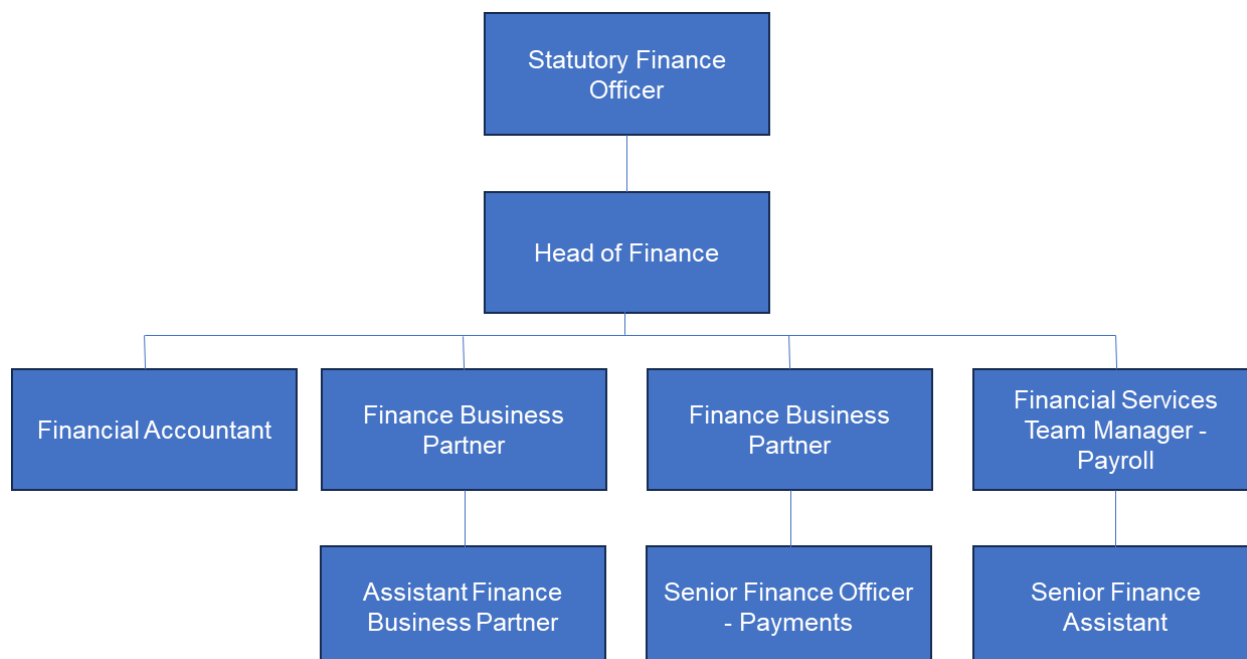
This senior leadership role is responsible for the operational delivery of an effective and efficient finance function which is fully compliant with a wide range of public sector financial regulations and provides the strategic leadership and development of a high performing, effective and modern finance team.

The post holder will manage and organise the day to day running of the Finance Team and its work ensuring the high quality, timely provision of all aspects of accountancy services and financial management.

This role will also provide professional support to the Statutory Finance Officer of Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS/the Service) when required, to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities under section 112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. When necessary, the post holder will also act as a Deputy Section 112 Officer in the absence of the Statutory Finance Officer which would include high level reporting to the Fire Authority and to the Service Leadership Board.

The post holder will play a pivotal role in ensuring strategic and operational finance is at the centre of organisational strategy to achieve departmental, directorate and organisational objectives. The post holder must be an active core member of the Service Leadership Team as well as the Corporate Services Management Team, proactively contributing to the management of the organisation as a whole, our values and culture.

Structure Chart:



Responsibilities and Duties:

1.	Leading the annual Budget Setting process, highlighting key financial risks for the organisation.
2.	Providing high quality reports, analysis and assurance, including monthly revenue and capital budget monitoring reports, to the Service Leadership Board & Senior Leadership Team, Fire Authority and its Committees.
3.	Leading the production of the Annual Statement of Accounts, to the required national deadlines, for the approval of the Statutory Finance Officer and Fire Authority, managing both internal and external sources of information and ensuring presentation of accounts remains compliant with the latest statutory and regulatory requirements.
4.	Providing financial analysis and financial modelling to financially appraise Business Cases to support investment and planning initiatives.
5.	Manage, motivate, support, develop and evaluate the Finance Team ensuring individuals' learning and progression needs are identified and met; supporting and enabling succession planning and talent management and conducting regular 1:1s and Personal Development Reviews, supporting a culture of learning and ensuring the team perform effectively and provide high quality financial information, meeting statutory and regulatory requirements.
6.	Liaising with internal and external bodies as part of continuous improvement of Finance in Service, including leading on all external and finance focussed internal audits, agreeing and actioning all relevant resultant recommendations.
7.	Monitoring and advising on Treasury Management activities, ensuring activities are compliant with the approved Treasury Management Strategy and the Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services.
8.	Ensuring that capital planning and monitoring are compliant with the requirements of the Prudential code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

9.	Developing an annual plan for the Finance Team which supports the delivery of the objectives in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and statutory deadlines and responsibility for effectively managing and monitoring implementation.
10.	Managing, developing and implementing finance policies and procedural guidance and ensuring continued adherence to the Fire Authority's Constitution, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, so as to maintain a sound system of financial control across the Service.
11.	Effective financial management and monitoring of assets, through the effective management of the Capital Asset System, including quarterly updates of capital additions and disposals and reconciliations of information across all departments and systems. This includes keeping financial fraud prevention plans and monitoring up to date, ensuring assets and interests are safeguarded from fraud and inefficient administration.
12.	Exercising budgetary control, identifying variations and trends, and analysing these to forecast likely outcomes based on current performance, and ensuring accurate forecasting to support sound decisions. To include ensuring ongoing financial management training is delivered to budget holders to maximise benefits of available financial information and ensure value for money.
13.	Leading the identification, reporting and mitigation of the financial risk areas set out in the Corporate Risk Register and ensure there are robust and well-practiced business continuity plans for the Finance Team taking account of the outsourced functions and systems.
14.	Work proactively and effectively with pension providers and the scheme manager to ensure the required financial information (and any technical financial advice) is provided on time to aide decision making by the relevant managers and Committees (including the Local Pension Board). This does not include legal advice in respect pensions or personal pension's advice to individuals
15.	Carry out any additional responsibilities as reasonable and appropriate, as agreed with line manager.

Special Notes or Conditions:

1.	<p>AF&RS requires all staff and leaders to promote equality and diversity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that, both in your dealings with other employees and with members of the public, you comply with all aspects of the Service's Equality Policy and legislation that outlaws discrimination; • treating members of the public and other AF&RS staff with respect, dignity and in line with the expectations determined by our Service values at all times; and taking action when witnessing an act that could be considered discrimination or harassment, challenging it and/or raising with managers.
2.	This role is based at Police & Fire HQ in Portishead. Although you are based at a specific location, for efficiency or other business reasons we may require you to travel to and/or work from any base within AF&RS service area or work from home, for which we will pay allowances where appropriate.
3.	If based at Police and Fire Headquarters, this is a secure site and therefore appointment to this post may be subject to passing the required vetting process.
4.	Many posts in AF&RS are hybrid-working with the facility to work from home and from an AF&RS work-base. Your manager will confirm if this applies to this post.
5.	Your job may involve working out of normal office hours, for which mutually agreed compensatory time-off will be given.
6.	Your job may involve you dealing with highly confidential and sensitive information. It is essential that you ensure this information is held and processed securely and that you act with tact and discretion at all times and comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Confidentiality must be maintained, even after leaving this post or AF&RS employment.

7.	You should maintain an awareness of environmental regulations in relation to the remit of your role. All employees have a responsibility to carry out their duties in an environmentally-conscious way and to actively support AF&RS's Environmental Strategy, Policy and objectives.
8.	You must ensure you maintain an awareness of Health and Safety Regulations relevant to the duties and tasks you carry out and report any situations or incidents which could be considered hazardous. You have a responsibility for your own safety and must not endanger that of colleagues/visitors in the workplace or the public.
9.	There may be times when you are required to wear specific clothing suitable to the type of work you are undertaking. This may include AF&RS branded corporate clothing (for example when representing AF&RS externally), or protective clothing for the work being carried out, as deemed appropriate by your line manager.
10.	All AF&RS posts require a standard DBS check, with a few defined roles requiring an enhanced DBS check. This post is subject to a standard DBS check. These DBS checks will be renewed throughout employment.
11.	Safeguarding is the duty of every member of staff at AF&RS: as a public authority we have a responsibility to ensure that the adults and children we interact with are kept safe from harm.

Avon Fire & Rescue Service Values

We are in the process of embedding the principles of the [Core Code of Ethics](#), on joining the service you will be involved in co-creating what these principles mean to us.

- Putting our communities first
- Integrity
- Dignity and Respect
- Leadership
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)

Signed confirmation that this Job Description accurately reflects the requirements of the job:

Job Holder's Manager		Date	
-----------------------------	--	-------------	--

Signed agreement to carry out the responsibilities of this Job Description, and of acceptance of Avon Fire & Rescue Values:

Job Holder		Date	
-------------------	--	-------------	--

See following page for Person Specification

Person Specification

Job Title	Head of Finance			
Post Number	3013			
Grade	HAY 2			
Qualifications, knowledge, experience, skills and personal attributes required for the job:				
	E=Essential D=Desirable	Measured by: A = Application T = Test I = Interview		
		A	T	I
Qualifications/Knowledge				
CCAB qualified with at least 5 years post qualification accountancy experience, in a large organisation with turnover in excess of £30m. (includes ICAEW ACA, ACCA, CIPFA, ICAS and Chartered Accountants Ireland)	E	X		X
Knowledge of financial issues directly relevant to the Fire Sector.	D	X		X
Good knowledge and experience of Local Government financial regulations.	D	X		X
Experience				
Proven experience of Strategic Financial Planning, providing high level information to Directors and Senior Leaders	E	X		X
Significant experience in overseeing a finance team to develop revenue and capital annual budgets, to financially manage and monitor budgets and to provide high level financial reports to directors and senior leaders.	E	X		X
Strong experience of leading finance teams within a Devolved Budgetary Framework, ensuring strong financial business partnering.	E	X		X
Significant experience of leading the production of Final Annual Accounts, in a large organisation, to the required standard and associated deadlines	E	X		X
Experience of implementing successful development, change and innovation	E	X		X
Significant experience in writing and presenting high quality written reports and financial data to directors and senior managers.	E	X		X
Proven understanding of the pressures, constraints and regulations which apply in a public sector organisation.	E	X		X
Experience of working with, and advising, elected Members.	D	X		X
Skills				
Well-developed analytical and problem-solving skills	E	X		X

Strong communication skills, to influence effectively with a wide range of audiences, both orally and in writing	E	X		X
Proven organisational skills and the ability to work at pace in a challenging environment with a small finance team with the ability to prioritise, work to deadlines and manage time effectively with minimal supervision.	E	X		X
Excellent IT skills and experience of using computer applications including: Word, Excel, PowerPoint	E	X		X
Able to drive with a full current valid driving licence, or ability to arrange suitable alternative transport to travel to various work locations.	E	X		
Personal Attributes				
Willingness to accept and work to the NFCC Core Code of Ethics during the course of employment.	E	X		X
Adaptable with a flexible approach to work, to meet business needs.	E	X		X
Able to work effectively both individually and as part of a team.	E	X		X
Professional in conduct.	E	X		X
Strong stakeholder ethic with customer orientated approach.	E	X		X
Committed to undertake relevant training and continuous professional development opportunities.	E	X		X