



JOB DESCRIPTION

POST DETAILS

JOB TITLE:	Executive Director – Finance – Section 151 Officer
GRADE:	Grade B3 – £139,073 as at 1/4/2025
DIRECTORATE:	Finance
LOCATION OF WORK:	1 Time Square, Warrington Town Hall, and across Warrington – Hybrid Working applies
DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TO:	Chief Executive
DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR:	Finance, Revenues and Benefits, Audit and Procurement
HOURS OF DUTY:	37 hours

PRIMARY PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE JOB

Warrington Borough Council is embarking on a critical period of transformation. Following a Best Value Inspection, the Secretary of State has determined that the Council is failing to comply with its Best Value Duty in key areas including governance, strategic finance, and use of resources.

In response, the Council has been directed to deliver an Improvement and Recovery Plan, supported by government-appointed Ministerial Envoys.

As the Section 151 Officer for the council, this post's primary accountability is to ensure the effective financial management and stewardship of public funds in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements, safeguarding the council's financial integrity and ensuring transparency and accountability in financial decision-making.

In addition to carrying out the statutory duties of the Section 151 Officer, and those determined within the Council's constitution, this post will ensure the Council has robust financial, risk management, and audit arrangements in place, and provide assurance that this is the case.

It will also provide outstanding leadership and direction to the services the post is responsible for, driving transformation and ensuring excellent joint working with Members and other stakeholders.

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

- Elected Members
- Senior Leadership Team
- Ministerial Envoys
- LGA, CIPFA and other External Bodies
- Managers and staff across the Council
- Trade Unions
- Appointed External Auditors

KEY TASKS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To be responsible for the administration of the Council's financial affairs in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, acting as the Council's Section 151 officer.
2. Ensure tight budgetary control and prioritise the use of resources and assets to support the delivery of the council's corporate vision and help ensure that the council receives value for money from its expenditure.
3. Lead, develop and ensure the implementation and review of change management programs to deliver continual improvement.
4. Assist the Chief Executive and Executive Directors in developing a single council-wide corporate culture, within a clear member-led council, to engender a strong and shared approach to delivering services, and provide support for managers and staff to deliver savings
5. Providing timely and well-informed strategic advice across finance, revenues and benefits, audit and procurement and report to senior officers and elected members to enable informed decision making and the formulation and review of a robust Medium-Term Financial Strategy and plan.
6. As a member of the Council's Strategic Leadership Team, contribute to the effective leadership of the Council.
7. Oversee the development, recommendation, and implementation of the financial plans aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan, and the Council's financial control framework, including the system of internal controls, which underpin the production of the annual Statement of Accounts.
8. To ensure the financial integrity of the council through sound and effective stewardship of the authority's accounts, debt management and investments, associated information systems, and audit functions.
9. In collaboration with the Chief Executive and Strategic Leadership Team and in response to the Ministerial Directions of July 2025, this post will also have the specific responsibility to:
 - Ensure there is a robust multi-year savings programme to achieve financial sustainability and close any short- and long-term budget gaps in line with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
 - Ensure the Council's capital, investment and treasury management strategies are sustainable, affordable, and fully aligned with Ministerial guidance and the Council's MTFS and Improvement and Recovery Plan.
 - Ensure the development of a comprehensive debt reduction and asset disposal plan, including review of commercial investments, to reduce overall borrowing and capital financing requirements over a defined timescale.
 - Support the development of an expert-led, independent commercial governance function to oversee investment decisions, risk management, compliance, and exit strategies in line with CIPFA and PWLB guidance.
 - Ensure the update of the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision policy and ensure full compliance with PWLB lending rules, CIPFA codes and other relevant statutory financial guidance.

- Ensure sufficient leadership, resource and external audit coordination is in place to fully resolve the backlog of unaudited accounts and restore compliance with statutory audit obligations.
 - Support the review of all Council-owned subsidiary companies, ensuring robust governance frameworks, appropriate director appointments, and alignment with the Council's commercial and financial strategy.
- 10.** Deliver strong leadership to all services within areas of responsibility, including Finance, Audit, Procurement and Revenues and Benefits.

Additional tasks and accountabilities

- 11.** To develop and maintain a positive image and reputation for the Council.
- 12.** To ensure that all employees and activities within the Service always comply with the requirements of relevant legislation, statutory duties and council policies.
- 13.** To promote equality of opportunity and access to the Council's functions and service activities and to fulfil the Council's responsibilities as an employer of choice
- 14.** All other duties as directed and as commensurate with the role.
- 15.** As required by the Chief Executive, to deputise for them as required.

REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

The details contained in this Job Description reflect the content of the job at the date it was prepared. However, it is inevitable that over time, the nature of the jobs may change. Existing duties may no longer be required and other duties may be gained without changing the general nature of the post or the level of responsibility entailed. Consequently, the Council will expect to revise this Job Description from time to time and will consult with the post holder at the appropriate time.

Date Job Description prepared/revised:

20/8/25 – Steve Park, Interim Chief Executive