

Senior Leader Role Profile

Key Information

Post Title:	Executive Director of Finance (Section 73 Officer)
Date:	April 2026
Term:	Permanent
Tier Level:	One
Reports to:	Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
Note:	Appointment to the statutory Section 73 role will be 'in principle' subject to approval by the Cumbria Combined Authority Board.

Purpose of the Post

As a member of the Cumbria Combined Authority's (CA) Senior Leadership Team, you will drive delivery of the Mayor's priorities from May 2027 and lead the Authority's corporate and business objectives.

As Executive Director of Finance, you will provide exceptional strategic and organisational leadership to establish, embed, and sustain the CA. Working collectively with senior leaders, you will shape the new operating model and champion the developing values and behaviours. You will promote diversity and inclusion across the CA and its partnerships.

You will work closely with elected Members, the Mayor, and key partners to ensure the CA's vision is delivered, and you will represent the CA at local, regional, and national level to strengthen its reputation, influence, and partnerships.

As the Executive Director of Finance and statutory Section 73 Officer, you will act as the CA's principal financial advisor, ensuring sound governance and full compliance with all legislative and financial requirements. You will lead the PMO and oversee the internal operations for the CA.

Key Accountabilities

Financial Leadership

- Lead the planning, deployment, and control of the CA's financial resources, ensuring robust governance, high-quality financial management and strategic alignment.
- Lead financial services, including:
 - Financial Management
 - Financial Governance

- Lead the Operations Team to ensure that the SLAs and internal services are coordinated and effective, including accommodation and initial assets.
- Develop financial strategies and plans that deliver cost-effective services, meet organisational priorities, and achieve measurable outcomes.
- Build and lead the CA's investment appraisal function, ensuring decisions comply with national guidance and the Local Assurance Framework, deliver value for money, and maximise community impact.
- Promote strong financial practice and maintain effective financial controls across all services.

Corporate Leadership

- Serve as a member of the CA's Senior Leadership Team, contributing to corporate strategy and organisational planning.
- Deliver the financial elements of the CA Corporate Plan and support delivery of the new CA's operating model.
- Ensure values and behaviours are embedded across services.
- Provide timely, high-quality advice on financial matters, particularly where issues are sensitive, high-risk, or politically significant.
- Drive performance improvement, setting clear targets and ensuring accountability.

Service Leadership and Management

- Lead the Finance Service, including treasury management, investment strategy, procurement, financial systems, pensions administration, risk management, and internal audit.
- Ensure effective budget management and compliance with statutory duties and national standards.
- Ensure efficient implementation of decisions from the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, the Executive and Committees including Overview and Scrutiny and Audit and Governance.
- Lead the development and delivery of robust financial monitoring, reporting, and forecasting arrangements, ensuring timely, accurate and transparent information to the Mayor, Members, Committees, and senior officers.
- Ensure that all budget holders receive high-quality financial insight and analytics, enabling effective decision-making, early identification of risks and strong in-year financial control.
- Oversee performance reporting across financial and programme activities, ensuring alignment with the Local Assurance Framework and corporate reporting standards.
- Lead the preparation, completion, and publication of the Authority's statutory accounts, ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation.
- Oversee the internal audit function, ensuring the audit plan is risk-based, delivers independent assurance and supports continuous improvement.

- Lead engagement with external auditors, ensuring effective resolution of issues, high-quality audit relationships, and timely completion of all annual audit requirements.
- Ensure strong systems of internal control, financial governance, and risk management, embedding a culture of accountability and stewardship across the organisation.
- Embed a coherent, organisation-wide approach to programme and project delivery, aligned to the Local Assurance Framework and corporate priorities.
- Champion organisational change, continuous improvement, and customer-focused service delivery.
- Promote equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of service leadership.

Partnerships

- Build, lead, and sustain strong relationships with local, regional, and national partners to support delivery of shared priorities and enhance the CA's influence.
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Knowledge, Skills, and Experience

Knowledge

- Extensive knowledge of financial legislation, national policy, and the regulatory environment.
- Strong understanding of public sector operations and the financial, legal, and political context of large public-sector organisations.
- Degree-level qualification (or equivalent), management qualification, and relevant professional membership.

Skills

- Strong strategic leadership and planning capability, able to set ambitious goals and secure delivery.
- High-level financial management skills, including interpretation of complex financial information and evaluation of competing priorities.
- Strong commercial acumen with the ability to build confidence with stakeholders, customers and private sector partners.
- Excellent communication, influencing and negotiation skills.
- Ability to think creatively and solve complex strategic problems.
- High political awareness and the ability to operate effectively in a devolved environment.
- Strong corporate working and partnership skills.

Experience

- Significant senior leadership experience in a large, complex organisation.
 - Proven achievement in financial and strategic leadership within or alongside a local authority or combined authority.
 - Experience of managing large, complex budgets and delivering financial savings.
 - Successful track record of leading major organisational and cultural change.
 - Experience working in a political environment and with diverse stakeholders.
 - Evidence of enhancing and protecting organisational reputation.
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Other Requirements

- Ability to work the hours that are reasonable and necessary to fulfil the requirements of the post, including some out of hours working at either evenings or weekends.
- Ability to travel across Westmorland and Furness and Cumberland and attend meetings outside of the region.
- This is a politically restricted post as defined by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.