

An aerial photograph of the Folkestone & Hythe coastline. The image shows a mix of urban buildings, green spaces, and a pebble beach along the sea. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The text 'Director of Finance (s151) Candidate Pack' is overlaid in large white font on the left side of the image.

# Director of Finance (s151) Candidate Pack

Folkestone  
& Hythe



District Council

# Færfield



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## Welcome to Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in Folkestone and Hythe District Council and in joining a team that recognises that our people are our most powerful assets. Our 'one team' culture delivers great services for our residents, most recently acknowledged nationally by the IRRV as the 2024 Benefits & Welfare Reform Team of the Year, and for Excellence in Social Inclusion, and this senior-level role offers an opportunity to shape how we continue delivering excellent public services.

We are recruiting this senior finance role to be part of the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) who will be at the forefront of robust financial governance working with departments delivering our ambitious plan, and a broad set of partners delivering our council-owned Garden Town at Otterpool Park. If you can consider financial matters from both strategic and operational perspectives, then we'd like to hear from you.

We are a strong team and have some exciting work ahead with ambitious projects such as the relocation of the council to Folkestone Town Centre, a new coastal beach hut destination project and, as a housing stock-holding authority providing 3,500 homes, we are also delivering a new-build HRA programme. This is a unique opportunity to lead the team considering the financial and commercial implications for the council. We need you to have a positive, proactive attitude and be able to deliver success in partnership with colleagues & elected members.

I hope that the unique range and scale of this opportunity will encourage you to make an application to lead our finance team, to further your career in a beautiful district, and to gain unique experience being part of delivering Otterpool Park.

If you have the vision, energy, creativity and enthusiasm required, combined with technical financial excellence and a passion for the public sector then please make an application to join us.

For more information on this opportunity, please contact our recruitment partners at Faerfield in the first instance.

Kind regards,

**Susan Priest**  
**Chief Executive**



## Are you an exceptional **Director of Finance (s151)**? up to £120k (plus additional £6k car allowance)

Folkestone was recently crowned by the Sunday Times as the best place to live in the South East. This reflects the Council's continuing drive to deliver culture-led regeneration and its commitment to creating a quality place where communities feel safe and are proud to both live and work.

This is a fantastic opportunity to join an ambitious leadership team and to play a significant role shaping the future of the district. Reporting into the Chief Executive, you will have a pivotal role in delivering the corporate plan and playing an instrumental part in the success of the council-owned Garden Town at Otterpool Park. If you are an experienced senior finance professional, with a keen interest in property development who shares our passion for creating new places and delivering excellence for our communities, then we want to hear from you.

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact Helen Sawbridge or Ben Cox on 0121 592 2165. For further information, and to apply, please visit [www.færfield.co.uk/folkestoneandhythe](http://www.færfield.co.uk/folkestoneandhythe)

Closing date: 15 November 2024





## About Folkestone & Hythe

Folkestone and Hythe is an extraordinary place to live, work and visit.

Twenty-six miles of stunning coastline extend from the creative buzz of Folkestone and the elegance of Hythe to the big sky country of Romney Marsh and the UK's only desert at Dungeness. Unique landscapes, art, heritage, culture and foodie experiences combine to create an extraordinary place which also happens to be one of the sunniest places in the UK.

The district regularly enjoys national coverage – particularly Folkestone with the recently restored Harbour Arm becoming a popular destination for events, music, eating and discovering the history of the area. Internationally renowned is the Folkestone Triennial, an arts festival held every three years, where site-specific artworks are commissioned around the town. Select pieces are retained after each event creating a cultural legacy that draws in thousands to an ever-growing collection of public art - from pieces by Anthony Gormley to Yoko Ono.

Folkestone & Hythe is also well connected with the M20 running through the district and providing easy access to local towns and villages, the national motorway network, Eurotunnel and the Port of Dover. The district also has excellent connectivity to central London too via high speed rail services, with trains between Folkestone Central and London St Pancras taking as little as 54 minutes.

To find out more about Folkestone & Hythe please visit [www.folkestoneandhythe.co.uk](http://www.folkestoneandhythe.co.uk)



## About Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Folkestone & Hythe District Council serves more than 53,000 households and 5,000 businesses in one of the most diverse, vibrant and well-connected parts of Kent's south coast.

Under an hour away from London via High Speed rail, Folkestone is the civic heart of the district and the base for the council headquarters. The residents of Folkestone & Hythe are represented by 30 councillors covering the districts' 13 wards.

The current political composition of the council is:

Green Party – 11

Labour Party – 8

Conservatives – 5

Labour & Co-operative Party – 2

Liberal Democrats – 3

Independents – 1

Reform Party – 1

The council's corporate plan outlines our bold ambitions and our focus on fostering a vibrant economy and a thriving environment whilst demonstrating positive community leadership and ensuring our residents, tenants and leaseholders benefit from quality homes and infrastructure.

Exciting changes are happening in the district, including rapid expansion in the number of homes and jobs – our new Garden Town at Otterpool Park will deliver up to 10,000 new homes and land for business use over the next 30 years.

Several other high profile proactive development projects are also being led by the council including the regeneration of key council-owned town centre sites and the delivery of HRA new-build homes.

Our council is transforming and modernising with digital first principles and an inclusive attitude to agile and remote working. This coupled with our regeneration ambitions, long-term vision and sound financial management means we are in a strong position to positively shape our future for the benefit of all residents.

To find out more about our council please [visit folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

## Role Profile

<b>Job Title:</b>	Director - Finance (s151 Officer)
<b>Behavioural Framework Level:</b>	4
<b>Grade:</b>	Director
<b>Reports To:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Politically Restricted Post:</b>	Yes
<b>DBS Requirement:</b>	Basic

### Purpose of the job

- Member of the Corporate Leadership Team providing senior level leadership and supporting the corporate governance of the Council.
- Overseeing the strategic and operational development and delivery of a number of service areas, ensuring all services are people-focused, customer-focused and facilitate the delivery of the Council's corporate objectives.
- This is a generic Directors job description and as such the responsibility for service areas and projects are interchangeable to meet the best interests of the council at the direction of the Chief Executive.

### Main Areas of Responsibility

- To work closely with elected members and members of the Corporate Leadership Team to lead, shape and deliver corporate and directorate related strategies, policies and priorities in accordance with the overall policy framework for the Council.
- To lead, motivate and manage staff to deliver high performing and customer-focused services within the Directorate, ensuring a robust approach to governance while encouraging innovation and continuous improvement, addressing performance where necessary.
- To champion, lead and manage major and complex change at pace to increase efficiency and improve outcomes, ensuring involvement and engagement with key stakeholders.
- To role model and visibly lead organisational culture, values and behaviours across the Council including with employees, citizens, partners, statutory and official bodies.
- To take a 'One Team' approach to deliver more effective outcomes and at all times avoid a siloed or single service area approach.
- To coach and mentor staff appropriately to achieve a positive outcome for service and project delivery.

- To oversee and give strategic direction to monitor work programmes, budgets, performance indicators and quality targets to ensure that the services in the directorate meet agreed objectives, key performance indicators and income targets (as appropriate).
- To take collective and strategic responsibility for ensuring that the Council's decisions and policies are implemented.
- To ensure that service areas reporting within the directorate are robust, efficient, effective and delivered within budget.
- To ensure that the customer experience reflects the council's operating model and that mechanisms are in place for effective customer feedback and insight to be gathered, interpreted and acted upon where appropriate.

## **Role Specific Responsibilities**

### **Finance (s151 Officer)**

- To act, upon appointment of the statutory responsibility by full council, as the designated s151 Officer ensuring the Council's financial obligations are met or exceeded.
- To be responsible for the effective management of the capital and revenue budgets and other resources available in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, and to ensure that appropriate and robust arrangements are in place to assess and manage risk.
- To bring fresh thinking and creativity to the Council's large-scale investments with innovative approaches to delivering the council's agenda, particularly focusing on the council-owned Garden Town at Otterpool Park, deployment of the Levelling Up Funds for Folkestone Town Centre, and other major housing and coastal development schemes.
- To provide strategic direction and visible leadership for corporate change projects, championing and developing innovative corporate improvements that support the delivery of modern customer-focused solutions.
- To ensure the effective delivery of the following services:
  - Finance,
  - Corporate Debt & Business Rates
  - Council Tax, Welfare & Benefits,
  - Procurement & Contract Management



- To positively lead the next stage of the council's organisation development, with a particular focus on embedding robust governance, maximising the effective use of IT systems, and ensuring efficient processes are followed to provide the necessary budget savings to address the MTF5 gap.
- To ensure that the requirements of legislation, relevant statutory obligations & guidance and the constitution are identified and implemented, including appropriate staff training for budget managers and other staff across the council on financial controls and governance.

### **Corporate Expectations**

- Adhere to the council's safeguarding policies and procedures and undertake relevant training to help protect children and vulnerable adults within the district.
- To comply with legislation, council policies and procedures including GDPR, Freedom of Information Act, Information Security Policy, the Code of Conduct for Officers and to participate in any Emergency Planning activities as required.
- To actively demonstrate the values and behaviours of the council.
- To ensure our customers are valued by taking into account their views and needs in all that we do.
- To contribute to the development and achievement of relevant corporate and service objectives by suggesting ideas for service improvements.
- To communicate openly and honestly with colleagues, members and customers.
- To undergo any training necessary to be able to fulfil the requirements of the job.
- To carry out other duties commensurate with the grade, skills, experience and qualifications of the post holder as directed and as may be required from time to time.



## Person Specification

### Important Information for Applicants:

The criteria listed in this person specification are the requirements for the post. Where the method of assessment is stated to be the application form, your application needs to demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria, even if other methods of assessment are also shown. **If you do not address these criteria fully, you may not be shortlisted. Please give specific examples wherever possible.**

### Qualifications

#### Essential

- Educated to degree level (ideally with a relevant professional qualification and professional membership) or equivalent level of work experience at a senior level relevant to the field
- Evidence of continuing professional and/or management development
- *Director of Finance must possess an appropriate accountancy qualification to undertake the s151 role*

#### Desirable

- Project management qualification
- Management qualification

### Experience and Knowledge

#### Essential

- Demonstrable understanding and appreciation of the local and national political context and environment including current challenges and opportunities
- Extensive knowledge of local government finance and experience of managing budget setting, financial monitoring and governance
- Demonstrable knowledge of value for money, best value and transformation principles to ensure the most cost effective outcomes are achieved
- Demonstrable senior management experience of successful change management along with a track record of delivery
- Appreciation of major reforms and best practice relating to the relevant directorate
- Comprehensive knowledge of issues / challenges for the directorate nationally, regionally and locally
- Demonstrable track record of successfully delivering complex programmes / projects relating not only to the directorate but also cross-cutting programmes to

deliver corporate objectives and priorities

- Demonstrable knowledge of current issues and statutory & regulatory requirements for the directorate
- Demonstrable experience of providing strategic leadership to a range of functions, maximising efficiency, different delivery models and improving performance
- Demonstrable experience of leading, managing and delivering transformational change at senior level
- Demonstrable experience of managing complex budgets, financial information and the budget setting process at senior level
- Strong understanding of, and commitment to, robust governance as it applies to the directorate and to the wider council
- Strong financial and commercial awareness with the ability to deliver robust business cases

Desirable

- Experience as the corporate lead for finance within a local authority and being a statutory s151 officer

## **Skills and Abilities**

Essential

- Ability to articulate the council's operating model and help people see their role within it, motivating and inspiring them to deliver it
- Successful track record of influencing, giving professional advice to and building effective & productive working relationships with senior managers, Councillors, external audit, regulators and other relevant stakeholders
- Ability to move at pace and motivate others whilst anticipating and balancing risk
- Enthusiastic and effective ambassador for the Council with a strong commitment to improving its performance and its ability to meet the needs of the communities it serves
- Ability to lead the Council in embedding a culture of strong, supportive leadership that realises the full capacity of the organisation, fostering its talents and a positive and creative organisational culture



- Track record of effective leadership and delivery at senior level which demonstrates the following qualities:
  - Taking corporate responsibility
  - Delivering results
  - Flexing style and responsive approach
  - Showing resilience and positivity
  - Motivating and empowering
  - Collaboration
  - Openness and honesty
- High level of political awareness and diplomacy, with an ability to operate with sensitivity in a political environment, providing professional advice confidently and tactfully with clear viewpoints and policy direction
- Ability to plan and work towards a long term strategic vision and translate that vision into reality
- Ability to develop, implement and monitor appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure the performance of service areas within the directorate
- Ability to analyse and interpret management information and statistical data to identify trends, judge performance and to devise & implement service improvement strategies
- Ability to demonstrate political sensitivity and secure the confidence of elected members
- Excellent interpersonal skills to build a high degree of credibility and presence to negotiate, influence, inspire confidence and respect with reason and tact enabling the development of networks within and outside of the council
- Excellent written, verbal presentational and communication skills with a wide range of audiences from senior leaders to employees across the council to elected members
- Commitment to own continuous professional development.
- Ability to use feedback and experiences as learning points and to initiate or implement positive change.
- Ability to carry out duties outside normal working hours as may be necessary including attending relevant council / cabinet / committee meetings and responding to emergency situations as part of the out of hours response service.

## How to Apply

### Contact

For a private and confidential discussion, please contact:

#### **Helen Sawbridge**

Email: [hsawbridge@faerfield.co.uk](mailto:hsawbridge@faerfield.co.uk)

Tel: 0121 592 2165

#### **Ben Cox**

Email: [bcox@faerfield.co.uk](mailto:bcox@faerfield.co.uk)

Tel: 0121 592 2165

### **Indicative Timetable:**

Closing date for applications: Midnight Friday 15 November 2024

Preliminary Interviews (via Teams): Thursday 28 November 2024

Final Interviews: Wednesday 11 December 2024

*(these dates may be subject to slight change)*

### **Apply**

To apply for this role please visit [www.faerfield.co.uk/folkestoneandhythe](http://www.faerfield.co.uk/folkestoneandhythe) and find the Apply button at the bottom of the page. When prompted, please submit your CV and a Supporting Statement of no more than 4 sides of A4 each.

Your supporting statement should express why you are interested in this role and what relevant experience you can bring to the Folkestone & Hythe.

