

Woodford Park



Woodley Town Council

Responsible Financial Officer / Finance Manager Candidate Briefing Pack

January 2025



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The Responsible Financial Officer Role

We are seeking an experienced finance professional to join our active and innovative town council, delivering high quality services to our diverse town.

The responsible Financial Officer is an important role within the Council and a legal requirement. The successful candidate will have sufficient knowledge and experience to work effectively with Officers and Councillors and ensure that all accounts adhere to the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. The role will require the preparation of detailed revenue and capital budgets for submission to the relevant Council committee, along with attendance at relevant Council meetings.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of VAT and public sector finances and have appropriate experience in a finance role at a similar level.

Town Council Staff

Key Roles

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk has overall responsibility for all aspects of the Council's democratic and business responsibilities, ensuring the Council's delivery is both legal and in the best interests of its residents.

Deputy Town Clerk

The Deputy Town Clerk deputises for the Town Clerk in their absence. They are also responsible leading on capital projects, health & safety and personnel matters, managing the council's contracts and supporting other managers in the organisation.

Responsible Financial Officer / Finance Manager

The Finance Manager is the Responsible Financial Officer for the Council. They are responsible for the day-to-day management of the Council's finances, including recording all income and expenditure, managing payments and payroll and producing and presenting reports and data analysis.

Amenities Manager

The Amenities Manager is responsible for the maintenance of the Council's buildings and grounds. They manage a team of Maintenance and Grounds Maintenance staff.

Communications Manager

The Communications Manager is responsible for Council publicity matters, including publicising Council activities and events, and creating of the Council's newsletter 'The Herald'.

Leisure Services Manager

The Leisure Services Manager is responsible for running Woodford Park Leisure Centre and the activities provided at the centre.

Bookings Manager

The Bookings Manager is responsible for overseeing the hire of Council facilities (with the exception of Woodford Park Leisure Centre). They also manage a Venues Team responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Council’s venues.

Admin Officer

The Admin Officer provides administrative support to Council staff, as well as being primarily responsible for managing bookings at Coronation Hall and Chapel Hall

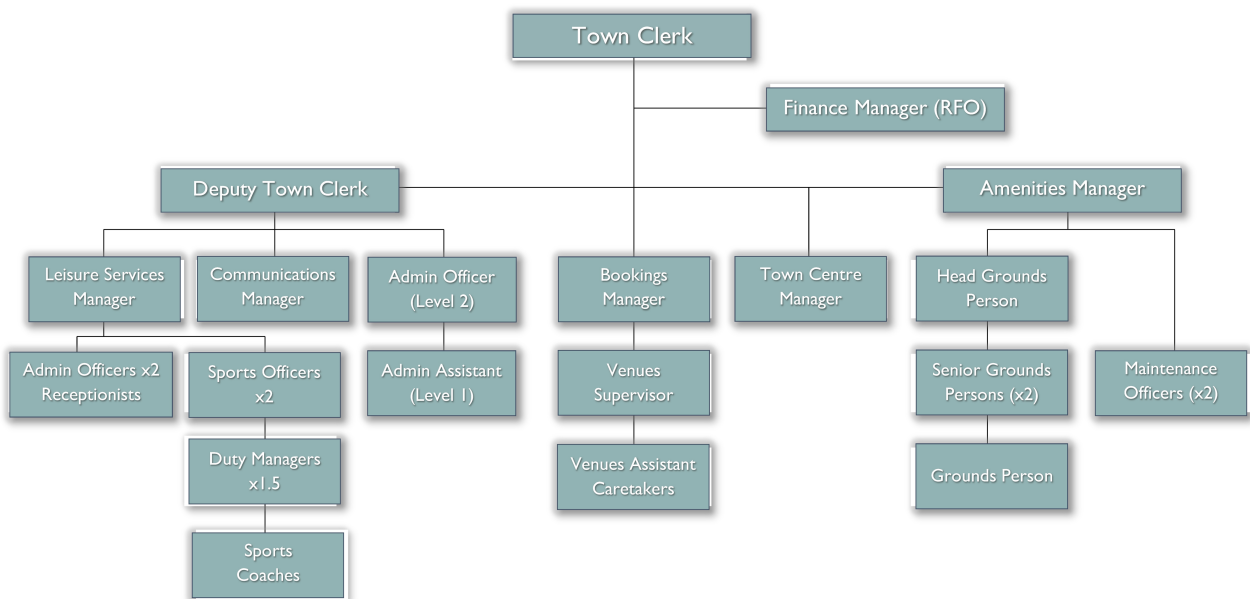
Admin Assistant

The Admin Assistant provides administrative support to Council staff, as well as being primarily responsible for manning the Council reception and taking in-coming calls. They also take responsibility for managing the letting of allotment plots.

Town Centre Manager

The Town Centre Manager oversees the operations of the town centre, including markets and events and engagement with town centre businesses.

STAFF STRUCTURE CHART



Woodley Town Council – Overview

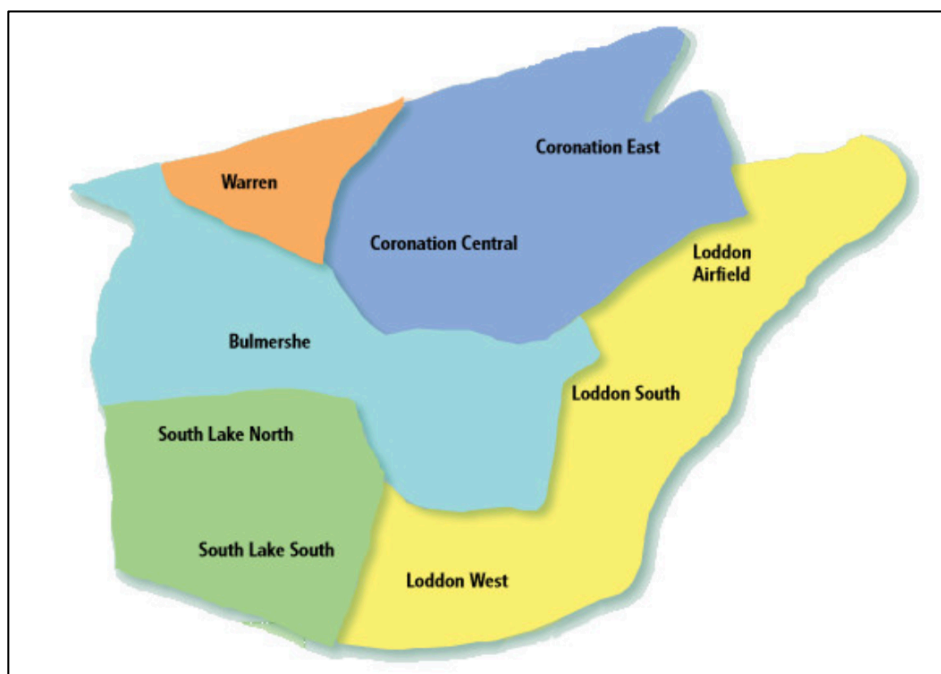
A local council has been in existence in the area for over 100 years in some form, and the old minute books, which are stored at the Berkshire Records Office in Reading, make interesting reading.

Woodley Town Council, in its current form, came into being in 1974, gaining town status as part of the wholesale local government changes of that year. Before then, the local council was Woodley and Sandford Parish Council and covered a much larger area than it does now.

In 1986, the area of the parish was again reduced when the local government boundary review transferred the Little Hungerford Ward, south of the Wokingham Road, between Loddon Bridge and Earley Station, to Earley Town Council.

There are currently 25 councillors representing the following parish wards within Woodley:

- Bulmershe – 4 Town Councillors
- Coronation Central – 2 Town Councillors
- Coronation East – 3 Town Councillors
- Loddon Airfield – 3 Town Councillors
- Loddon South – 3 Town Councillors
- Loddon West – 2 Town Councillors
- Southlake North – 3 Town Councillors
- Southlake South – 3 Town Councillors
- Warren – 2 Town Councillors



Property, Facilities and Services

Woodford Park

Within the boundary of the park are several buildings, including The Oakwood Centre, Coronation Hall, Woodford Park Leisure Centre, and a maintenance depot, as well as a private day nursery and Woodley Bowling Club. There is also a lake, a community orchard, the town's War Memorial, and a Garden of Remembrance.

The park also provides areas for different kinds of leisure use, including a 3G pitch, one full and six mini size grass football pitches, a cricket pitch and artificial wicket, as well as two children's play areas – including a new £250k 'Destination' play area in 2022, a skate spot, lake, Garden of Remembrance and a paddling pool. The park is also visited by several funfairs and hosts other outdoor entertainment during the year.



Memorial Ground

The Memorial Ground has been held in trust by the Town Council since 1939. In 2014 a new public war memorial was installed and set into a landscaped 'civic area'. Remembrance is commemorated at the memorial each year with an Armistice Day event organised by the Town Council and the Royal British Legion, and a community led event on Remembrance Sunday.



Green Flag Status

In July 2018 the park was awarded Green Flag status for the first time, a status it has maintained ever since. To date, it is the only park within Wokingham Borough to achieve this international award, a sign to the public that the park boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent visitor facilities.



Friends of Woodford Park

The Friends of Woodford Park (FoWP), a local voluntary group, have assisted the Town Council to maintain and tidy up several areas of the park have been tidied up, which has included the installation of new flowerbeds.

Open Spaces & Play Areas

Other than Woodford Park, the Council also owns or leases other open spaces around Woodley.

Wheble Park
Malone Park
Bulmershe Park
Loddon Mead Open Space
Rivermead Open Space

Reading Road Allotments

This large site is leased from Reading Borough Council and has around 360 tenanted plots. An active allotment tenants committee liaises with officers on the day-to-day management of the site.

The Oakwood Centre

The Oakwood Centre opened in February 2004 and is home to the Town Council Offices. The £2.5m building provides three meeting rooms, two halls, a 100-seat auditorium theatre, a function room, Council offices, and a café.

The Neighbourhood Police Office is based at the centre, Woodley Theatre is the resident theatre company, and Brown Bag operates the cafe.



Woodford Park Leisure Centre

Woodford Park Leisure Centre (WPLC) houses a 5 court badminton hall, games/function room, meeting rooms, 3G artificial pitch, grass pitches, cricket wicket, paddling pool, tennis court and the Gym on the Park.

The centre is a major source of income and a much loved and well used facility, with an in-house staff team providing a wide range of indoor and outdoor sporting and leisure activities.



Woodley Bowling Club

The Council maintains the county standard bowling green and has a licence agreement with the Woodley Bowling Club for their use of the green and ground rent for the bowls pavilion, which is owned by the club. The agreement ensures that rinks are always available for public use, except in exceptional circumstances, such as a county bowls match.

Community Halls

Coronation Hall and Chapel Hall are both very well used by a wide range of community groups and private hirers.

Street Furniture

The Council owns and maintains a number of items of street furniture around the town, including around: 48 street lights, 11 bus shelters, 9 noticeboards and 60 benches.

Town Centre Partnership

The Partnership runs regular events and manages projects and issues relating to the town centre, under the management of the Town Centre Manager.

Standing Committees

The Council currently operates three Standing Committees; these are the Strategy & Resources Committee, the Leisure Services Committee, and the Planning & Community Committee.

Strategy and Resources Committee (S&R)

This committee oversees and manages the Council's resources and is scheduled to meet 5 times a year. It is responsible for:

- Considering the budgets of all standing committees and recommending the final budget to Full Council for approval
- Determining all matters of general council policy
- Overseeing the Council's accounts, including reserves and investments
- Authorising additional expenditure during the financial year; for example, to fund individual projects
- Overseeing staffing matters
- Overseeing the management and development of the Oakwood Centre
- Approving appointments to certain management posts
- Awarding community and individual grants

Leisure Services Committee (LS)

This committee oversees all the Council's leisure and recreation facilities, youth matters, and Coronation and Chapel Halls. It is scheduled to meet 5 times a year. It is responsible for:

- Overseeing the management of Woodford Park Leisure Centre and other leisure activities
- Managing Council owned footpath lighting, street seating, bus shelters, notice boards, public toilet and allotments
- Providing facilities and services for young people in Woodley
- To recommend fees and charges for the use of the Council's leisure facilities to the Strategy & Resources Committee

Planning and Community Committee (P&C)

This committee is responsible for considering and providing representation on behalf of the people of Woodley in relation to planning matters. Unlike other committees, this committee is scheduled to meet 13 times a year (approximately every 4 weeks) as it is required as a statutory consultee to consider and provide comments to Wokingham Borough Council (the Planning Authority) on planning applications relating to properties and land within the area.

The committee is also responsible for:

- Informing residents of nearby planning applications, and inviting them to give their views at meetings of the committee
- Providing representation at planning appeals
- Dealing with external service matters affecting the life of people in Woodley, including highways, water, police and other agencies
- Noting applications for tree works and new tree protections orders
- Noting planning enforcement issues
- Considering and providing comments regarding licensing applications affecting the area
- Awarding Community Heroes Awards and annual grants annually

Sub Committees, Task & Finish Working Groups, and Partnerships

Full Council and Standing Committees can set up Sub Committees and Task & Finish Working Groups to consider and provide advice on particular issues. Unless specified in the Terms of Reference, most Sub Committees and Working Groups are not responsible for decision making; instead, providing feedback for their parent committee to make the final decision.

The main difference between Sub Committees and Task & Finish Working Groups is that Task and Finish Working Groups consider a particular issue with a foreseeable conclusion. Once the matter has been considered, the Working Group will cease to operate. Sub Committees, on the other hand, consider matters which are likely to be on going, with no foreseeable end.

Partnerships can also be set up between the committees and various external organisations or agencies, where matters of common interest can be discussed.

Currently, the following Sub Committees, Task and Finish Working Groups, and Partnerships are operated by the Council:

- 3G Pitch Steering Group Sub Committee (LS)
- Allotments Task & Finish Working Group (LS)
- Bulmershe SULV Joint Sub Committee
- Community Youth Partnership (LS)
- Investments Sub Committee (S&R)
- Personnel Sub Committee (S&R)
- PR & Marketing Sub Committee (S&R)
- Risk Management Sub Committee (S&R)
- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations Sub Committee (S&R)
- Town Electors Task & Finish Working Group (S&R)
- Woodley Town Centre Partnership (S&R)

WOODLEY TOWN COUNCIL - BUDGET SUMMARY 2023/24

	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Budget	2023/24 Revised Est	2024/25 Proposed
EXPENDITURE				
REVENUE BUDGET EXPENDITURE				
S & R Committee	1241980	1144730	1149907	1179649
Leisure Services Committee	1003202	761651	781356	819921
Planning & Community	34800	38525	38525	30000
Sub Total	2308122	1944906	1969788	2029570
TRANSFERS TO EARMARKED RESERVES				
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Section 106			11208	0
			0	0
			0	0
VAT Claim re sports activities			133690	0
Allotments toilet/security			170	170
Capital Programme Allocation	45000	45000	45000	20000
Additional Capital Programme Allocation in year			140000	0
3G Pitch Noise Assessment			2000	0
Capital & Projects (loans)	184982	180977	184977	184978
Oakwood Centre Capital Fund			0	30000
WPLC Capital Fund			0	30000
Sub Total	229982	225977	517045	265148
TOTAL EXP	2538104	2170883	2486833	2294718
INCOME				
REVENUE BUDGET INCOME				
S & R Committee	214691	294330	227777	235057
Leisure Services Committee	515949	485236	570767	587400
Sub Total	730640	779566	798544	822457
OTHER INCOME				
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Section 106	25649	0	11208	
	200000	0	0	0
CCLA Activities Income (Interest re-invested)	62144	80000	135000	141750
VAT Claim re sports activities			133690	
Allotments toilet/security			170	170
Unspent EMR funds released to General Reserve			38377	
Sub Total	287793	80000	318445	141920
TOTAL INCOME	1018433	859566	1116989	964377
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	-64060.54	1311317	1369844	1330341
Financed as follows				
<i>Tax base multiplied by band D = precept</i>				
<i>Tax Base</i>	10858	10894.3	10894.3	10914.8
<i>Band D</i>	112.88	109.75	109.75	106.69
PRECEPT	1225628	1195649	1195649	1164500
Impact on General Reserve	124492	-115668	-174195	-165841
Unallocated General Reserve				
01-Apr	733294	857786	857786	683591
31-Mar	857786	742118	683591	517750

How to Apply

We hope that the information in this pack has encouraged you to make an application and we look forward to hearing from you.

Please visit www.woodley.gov.uk/vacancies where you will find the job description, person specification and application form.

Applications are to be submitted electronically to **jobs@woodley.gov.uk** on the application form provided. CV's will not be accepted. You will receive an automated acknowledgement of your application.

If you have any technical queries please contact: kevin.murray@woodley.gov.uk

Recruitment Schedule:

All applications will be considered by the Council's Personnel Sub Committee. Shortlisted candidates will be required to attend a panel interview which will last around 1.5 hours.

Closing Date	Midday on Friday 31 January
Interviews	Date to be confirmed



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title	Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) / Finance Manager
Location	The Oakwood Centre Headley Road Woodley RG5 4JZ / Plus home working
Reports to	Town Clerk
Grade	NJC SPC 33-41 (increments subject to satisfactory performance established through annual appraisal)
Type of position	Permanent, Full Time
Hours of work	37 per week

This job description details the general nature and level of work performed by the employee in this post. It is not an inventory of all duties, responsibilities and outputs required of employees assigned to the role.

COUNCIL PURPOSE

Woodley Town Council is an active, professional, competent, and progressive town council. Staff are provided with job security and fulfilment, as well as the opportunity to develop and grow within their role.

As the town has grown so have the services provided by the Town Council. The Town Council is responsible for a number of parks and open spaces, play areas, allotments, community halls, street lighting and bus shelters, planning consultation, The Oakwood Centre and Woodford Park Leisure Centre. The Council also gives grants to local community organisations and individuals and represents residents on wider issues.

25 Town Councillors represent the 9 parish wards within Woodley. Latest figures put Woodley's population at around 28,000 plus, with an estimated 11,000 households.

JOB SCOPE

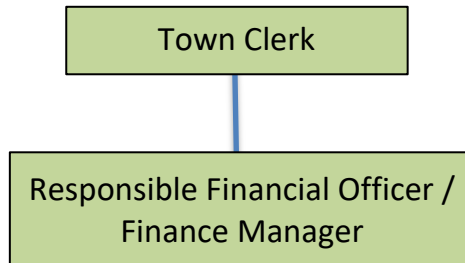
This role involves

Financial Responsibility

Staffing Responsibility

N/A

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE CHART



MAIN DUTIES

Main Purpose

Ensuring the effective financial control and management of the Town Council precept and budgets, in line with the Council's Financial Regulations

Effective execution of Administration Functions

Managing all changes to financial procedures or requirements across all areas of the Council's finances, including changes in legislation and good practice.

To manage all financial aspects and requirements of the Council's income and expenditure, including the Oakwood Centre, venues and Woodford Park Leisure Centre business activities.

Human Resources and Payroll

1. Ensure timesheets are received and correctly authorised
2. Collate timesheet information
3. Liaise with external payroll provider to ensure payroll is completed.
4. Keep records of TOIL, holidays, sick days and ensure correct authorisation for each
5. Analyse payroll across cost centres and post to Omega accounts software
6. Keep payroll records for audit purposes, with reconciliations of payments made to staff and HMRC
7. Set up monthly payments to HMRC for PAYE & NI
8. Set up monthly Pension payments
9. Annual Pension return
10. Ensure proper documentation for starters and leavers including contracts of employment issued before the start date.
11. Keep staff and Councillor mileage & expense records
12. Resolve any pay issues and queries
13. Ensure payroll documentation is prepared and provided to the Clerk/Deputy for authorisation

Governance / Risk Management
1. Ensure effective Governance and Risk Management at all times.
VAT
1. Process quarterly VAT online for all areas of the organisation
Petty Cash
1. Ensure accurate Petty Cash records are maintained 2. Ensure Cash is checked and reconciled regularly 3. Ensure petty cash records are entered correctly onto Omega 4. Raise cheques to top up Petty Cash & all other floats as required
Bank Accounts
1. To ensure cash and cheques are banked weekly. 2. Ensure all bank accounts are reconciled frequently. 3. To manage cashflow between accounts.
Investments
1. Manage cash flow. 2. Ensure effective investment at all times.
Council / Committee Meetings
1. Attend Council / Committee meetings as requested by the Town Clerk 2. Provide financial information for agendas – to include Budgetary Control, Direct Debit, investments and bank account information.
Accounts Month End
1. Ensure all sales invoices are raised 2. Check Bank Reconciliation 3. Check VAT records for month 4. Check spending against budget, to ensure correct cost centres have been charged 5. Check Debtors and Creditors 6. Check Catering Commission and raise monthly invoices 7. Check all tenant invoices for rental and utilities have been raised 8. Spot check Creditor statements 9. Credit control 10. Prepare month end ensuring all accounts/sales ledger/purchase ledger are reconciled 11. Print off all cash books from the Omega system 12. Ensure reconciliation reports are signed off by the Leader of the Council in accordance with audit requirements
Accounts Year End
1. Ensure all Accruals/Prepayments are recorded 2. Check annual expenditure against budget 3. Produce spreadsheets regarding payroll, petty cash 4. Liaise with internal auditor for interim and year end audit 5. Liaise with external auditor regarding annual audit and time frames 6. Create audit file, containing information for Auditors 7. Prepare Year End accounts for presentation to Council, ensuring all data is accurate and entered onto Omega.

8. Preparation of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return AGAR for the external audit inspection 9. Prepare reports as required for submission to Council to meet specified audit deadlines.
Budgeting
1. Assist with budget setting process 2. Send Precept Request to Wokingham Borough Council once agreed
Third Parties
1. Maintain relationships with the Council's bank, auditors and other relevant third parties

PERSON SPECIFICATION		
Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Educated to at least A level or equivalent including professional qualifications where appropriate.	Yes	
Commitment to further professional development where required.		
Accountancy qualifications AAT ACCA		Yes
Skills	Essential	Desirable
Excellent verbal and written communication skills.	Yes	
Excellent written English.	Yes	
Able to work independently and collaboratively.	Yes	
Advanced IT skills.	Yes	
Ability to work accurately and to deadlines.	Yes	
Ability to present information verbally and in writing, in a clear & concise manner with excellent attention to detail.	Yes	
Knowledge & Experience	Essential	Desirable
Experience of working in a financial environment, including production of financial reports, budget management and report writing.	Yes	
Ability to interpret financial reports.	Yes	
Experience of working in an administrative environment.	Yes	
An ability to work under pressure with changing priorities and timescales.	Yes	
Previous experience in local government.		Yes

	Spinal Column Point	Annual Gross
Finance Manager (RFO) Scale Range	33	£42,708
	34	£43,693
	35	£44,711
	36	£45,718
	37	£46,731
	38	£47,754
	39	£48,710
	40	£49,764
	41	£50,788