

Role:	Executive Director Finance and Investment (Section 73 Chief Finance Officer)
Reports to:	Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
Grade / Salary:	Executive Director (SMG) c.£140,000
Date of issue:	30 September 2026

Purpose of Post

The Executive Director Finance and Investment is a key member of the Senior Leadership Team, providing visible, collaborative leadership as Sussex and Brighton Strategic Authority (SBSA) builds its organisation, capability and impact across East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

The postholder will lead financial strategy and management, investment and commercial development, ensuring that the SBSA can translate its ambitions into affordable, deliverable programmes that create lasting public value. They will bring an innovative approach to securing and deploying funding, attracting investment and developing commercial partnerships, supported by rigorous appraisal and proportionate assurance.

As the statutory Section 73 Chief Finance Officer, the postholder is responsible for the proper administration of the SBSA's financial affairs. They will provide independent professional advice and challenge, protect public funds and ensure sound financial governance. They will report to the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, with direct access to the Board and, when in office, the Mayor, to fulfil their statutory responsibilities.

Working closely with the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, fellow Directors and constituent councils, the postholder will build shared understanding and consensus around financial and investment choices. Their approach will enable delivery, resolve competing priorities constructively and maintain the professional independence required of the statutory role.

We expect this role to deliver:

- A sustainable financial strategy that supports the SBSA's priorities and evolving responsibilities.

- An ambitious, evidence-led investment approach that attracts additional funding and creates measurable regional benefits.
- Innovative commercial and financing solutions with clear safeguards, accountability and value for money.
- High-quality financial advice, effective controls and reliable financial information for Members, officers and partners.
- Trusted relationships and shared commitment to financial and investment plans across organisational and political boundaries.
- A capable, inclusive Finance and Investment directorate with an enabling approach to services and delivery.

Key Accountabilities

Statutory financial leadership and assurance

- Discharge the duties of the Section 73 Chief Finance Officer, ensuring proper financial administration, sound stewardship of public funds and compliance with relevant legislation, accounting standards, professional requirements and the Constitution.
- Provide timely, independent financial advice to the Board, Chief Executive, Members, officers and, when in office, the Mayor. Explain the implications of decisions clearly and exercise statutory reporting duties, including under section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 where required.
- Work closely with the Head of Paid Service and Monitoring Officer to maintain effective corporate governance, identify emerging risks and resolve concerns early. Seek consensus while making clear where statutory obligations or professional judgement require challenge or escalation.
- Establish and maintain financial regulations, delegate financial controls and the financial elements of the Local Assurance Framework, working with governance and programme colleagues to make assurance proportionate, transparent and effective.
- Ensure effective arrangements for internal audit, external audit liaison, counter fraud, financial risk management and implementation of audit recommendations, preserving the independence of assurance functions.

Financial strategy and management

- Lead the preparation and delivery of the financial strategy, annual revenue and capital budgets and Medium Term Financial Plan, aligning resources to strategic priorities and maintaining financial resilience. Advise on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves in accordance with applicable requirements.

- Oversee budget monitoring, forecasting, financial reporting, annual accounts, grant claims and returns, ensuring accurate information, timely decisions and effective management of commitments and funding conditions.
- Lead treasury management, cash flow planning, capital financing and borrowing proposals within the Authority's powers and approved strategies. Ensure risks, affordability and long term liabilities are understood and managed.
- Develop effective finance business partnering so that budget holders understand their responsibilities and receive practical support to manage resources, assess options and deliver outcomes.
- Establish reliable financial systems, processes and service arrangements appropriate to a growing Authority, including effective oversight of any hosted, shared or commissioned finance provision.

Investment and commercial development

- Develop the Authority's investment strategy and frameworks with strategy, policy and delivery colleagues, translating regional priorities into an investable pipeline and a coherent approach to funding, appraisal and portfolio management.
- Lead the financial structuring and commercial assessment of investment propositions. Ensure that business cases address affordability, additionality, deliverability, risk, benefits and exit arrangements, with decisions taken through approved governance and delegations.
- Identify and develop innovative approaches to finance and investment, including blended finance, co investment, revolving funds, loans, guarantees and joint ventures where lawful and appropriate. Test options against public value, risk appetite and the Authority's capacity to manage them.
- Work with constituent councils, government, public agencies, institutional investors, businesses and other partners to attract funding and leverage investment. Negotiate robust funding and partnership arrangements that align incentives and protect the public interest.
- Lead the development of the commercial strategy and provide strategic leadership for procurement, commissioning and contract management within the agreed directorate remit, working closely with Legal and Governance and service leads. Secure compliant, competitive and commercially sound arrangements.
- Oversee financial and commercial due diligence, specialist advice and investment performance monitoring, including exposure, recoverability, partner performance and benefits. Ensure that optimism and ambition are supported by credible evidence and risk assessment.

- Provide financial and commercial advice on assets, development partnerships and delivery vehicles where these form part of the Authority's agreed remit, ensuring transparent oversight of liabilities, returns and public value.

Collaboration and regional leadership

- Build trusted relationships with constituent council Chief Finance Officers and other partners, recognising their responsibilities and pressures and identifying opportunities for shared capability, coordinated investment and regional added value.
- Convene constructive discussions on funding, investment and resource allocation. Listen to different perspectives, make trade offs explicit and develop options that build consensus around shared outcomes.
- Support the Board and senior colleagues to make informed choices through clear, accessible advice and balanced recommendations. Handle disagreement respectfully and maintain confidence across political and organisational boundaries.
- Represent the Authority in funding and investment discussions, articulating its ambitions credibly and developing productive relationships with government, funders and commercial partners.

Corporate and people leadership

- Contribute collectively to the leadership of the SBSA and delivery of its corporate plan, taking responsibility for organisation wide outcomes as well as the performance of the directorate.
- Shape the Finance and Investment operating model, workforce and service arrangements as functions and funding develop, securing the right balance of internal capability, partnership working and specialist support.
- Lead, develop and motivate inclusive, high performing teams. Set clear expectations, delegate effectively and create an environment where colleagues can challenge, learn, innovate and take responsibility.
- Use digital tools, data and continuous improvement to strengthen financial insight, reduce unnecessary administration and improve the experience of colleagues and partners.
- Embed equality, diversity and inclusion in leadership, investment advice and service delivery, giving due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty and the distribution of benefits across people and places.
- Undertake other duties commensurate with the role and discharge functions delegated through the Constitution.

Directorate Structure

The structure of the Directorate is evolving to ensure it can deliver on emerging and developing requirements around our core areas of competence and devolution ambitions. You will play the key role in determining resource requirements within the Directorate moving forward.

Qualifications knowledge and experience

- A qualified accountant with current membership of a recognised professional accountancy body satisfying the statutory qualification requirements for the Chief Finance Officer role, and evidence of continuing professional development.
- Substantial senior financial leadership experience in local government or a comparable complex public sector organisation, with the knowledge and capability to discharge Section 73 responsibilities.
- Thorough understanding of local government finance, statutory financial duties, public accountability, financial governance, treasury management and relevant accounting and assurance requirements.
- A successful record of developing sustainable financial strategies, managing complex revenue and capital budgets and providing authoritative advice on financial risk and difficult resource decisions.
- Strong knowledge of public and private funding sources and investment structures, with experience of securing funding, appraising propositions and shaping financing or commercial arrangements.
- Evidence of delivering innovative financial or commercial solutions that improved outcomes, unlocked investment or increased value for money, with appropriate controls and demonstrable understanding of risk.
- Experience of building consensus across organisations with different priorities, including negotiation of shared financial, funding or investment arrangements and constructive resolution of disagreement.
- Experience of advising senior officers and elected Members or equivalent boards in a politically sensitive environment, presenting complex issues clearly and retaining professional credibility under challenge.
- Proven experience of leading and developing professional teams, managing change and establishing effective systems, controls and service arrangements.
- Understanding of devolution, strategic authorities and the contribution of finance and investment to regional growth, infrastructure, inclusion and long term public value.

Skills abilities and behaviours

- Builds trusted relationships across professional, political and organisational boundaries; shares information and expertise and takes collective responsibility for delivery.
- Listens actively, welcomes different perspectives and identifies common interests. Makes competing priorities and trade offs explicit, develops workable options and secures commitment without relying solely on formal authority.
- Combines an enabling approach with the confidence to give candid advice, challenge unsound proposals and discharge statutory duties where agreement cannot be achieved.
- Questions established approaches, identifies emerging opportunities and develops practical financing and commercial solutions. Distinguishes responsible experimentation from unacceptable exposure of public funds.
- Understands investment economics, risk allocation, negotiation and contractual incentives; can assess complex propositions and secure terms that create enduring public value.
- Connects financial choices to regional priorities, organisational capacity and long term outcomes, using evidence, scenarios and sound judgement to advise on uncertainty.
- Makes complex financial and commercial matters understandable to different audiences. Produces clear reports and recommendations and negotiates constructively while maintaining trust.
- Works impartially and sensitively with Members and partners, respecting democratic accountability and understanding the different contexts in which they operate.
- Creates clarity, confidence and accountability; develops talent, encourages constructive challenge and supports colleagues to perform and grow.
- Works effectively in a developing organisation, responds to changing priorities and combines strategic leadership with practical action.
- Acts transparently and consistently, recognises conflicts of interest and values diverse contributions. Promotes fairness and considers how decisions affect different communities and places.

Values in practice

- **Setting People First** We put the best interests of residents / communities and business at the heart of every decision.

- **Being Open and Accountable** We act with transparency, integrity and fairness in everything we do.
- **Stronger Together** We collaborate across Sussex and Brighton to deliver better outcomes.
- **Always Improving** We use evidence, learning and innovation to improve what we do and deliver results.

Working Conditions

Emotional demands: Leading under pressure, exercising independent statutory judgement and managing competing priorities and sensitive discussions.

Physical demands and working arrangements: Agile working with office presence as required and travel across East Sussex, West Sussex, Brighton and Hove and beyond the region. Attendance at occasional meetings outside normal working hours will be required.

Political Restriction

This is a politically restricted post as designated under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and applicable legislation.