



# **Candidate Information Booklet**

## **Financial Management Accountant**

**(1 year Contract)**

**Closing Time and Date: 5.00pm on Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

Monaghan County Council is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

## **POST OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT**

### **BACKGROUND**

The Local Government sector in Ireland is made up of 31 Local Authorities. Local Authorities are the closest and most accessible form of Government to citizens. They have responsibility for delivery of a wide range of services in their local area with a focus on making cities, towns and countryside attractive places to live, work and invest. These services generally include housing; planning; infrastructure; environmental protection; and the provision of recreation and amenities and community infrastructure. Local Authorities also play a key role in supporting economic development and enterprise at a local level.

Local Government is currently undergoing a very significant reform process in line with the proposals in “Putting People First”. The programme sets out a wide range of actions to deliver reform in order to address weaknesses, enhance effectiveness and accountability and improve performance across the entire system. The Local Government Act 2014 provides the necessary legislative basis to give effect to many of the reform measures set out in the Action Programme.

The Act, together with the Action Programme provide the policy context within which the successful candidate will work and a focussed agenda which he or she will be required to lead and deliver on, as directed by the Chief Executive.

## POST OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT

### QUALIFICATIONS

1. **Character:**

Candidates shall be of good character.

2. **Health:**

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

3. **Education, Training, Experience, Etc.:**

Each candidate must, on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms:

- (i) possess a professional accountancy qualification and be a member of a recognised body of accountants, and
- (ii) have satisfactory experience of accountancy work, including management accounting and/or financial accounting, and
- (iii) be experienced in the management of staff, and
- (iv) possess knowledge of public sector finance.

## **POST OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT**

### **PERSON PROFILE**

This position is a senior position within the Finance Function reporting to the Head of Finance. The successful candidate will be responsible for modernising and managing change in the finance function. They will be responsible for introduction of new initiatives, policies and procedures and working with multidisciplinary teams. The successful candidate will work in a dynamic and progressive Local Authority which provides a multiplicity of services to County Monaghan.

Monaghan has a population of approximately 60,483 and the County Council has responsibility for delivery of a wide range of services to a diverse customer base. The Council has a workforce of over 479 and a revenue budget of €53m for the year 2017. Its Capital Programme 2017-2019 envisages expenditure of €97m. Monaghan County Council works in an integrated manner to deliver the full range of local government services.

Local Government is placing a greater emphasis on Strategic Management, accountability, performance management and customer service. In conjunction with this, local democracy is being enhanced through ensuring that local communities and their representatives have a say in the delivery of the full range of public services through participation in Strategic Policy Committees aimed at charting the County's future.

### **Duties and Responsibilities:**

The Financial Accountant will be responsible for the following:

- Preparation of the statutory accounts for Monaghan County Council;
- Assisting with the compilation and preparation of the statutory Local Authority Budget;
- Liaising with internal and external auditors;
- Ensuring that the entities under the Chief Executive's control adhere to currently accepted accounting standards and relevant codes of practice;
- Management and control of the day-to-day operations of the Finance Department and its sections including the Motor Tax department;
- Monitoring and implementing/improving internal controls and checks to ensure good financial control, safeguarding of assets etc.;
- Costing of individual services provided by Monaghan County Council including Activity Based Costing;
- Ensuring the rapid, timely and accurate preparation of financial and management reports through the use of automated systems;
- Monitoring, interpretation and reporting on monthly management accounts for senior management and their sections;
- Preparation, implementation and on-going review of the Local Authority's finance plans including management of capital budgets;
- Introduction of reporting structures and systems in line with new requirements of value for money reports;
- Providing financial advice and assistance to all departments to support the achievement of the Corporate Objectives and support devolved budgeting structures;
- Promoting and assisting the implementation of good practice in: Risk Management; Procurement; Value for Money; Shared Services; Efficiency and Effectiveness;
- Ensuring the adequacy of financial systems in the Authority, and in particular their support by adequate information systems;
- Implementing changes in existing financial systems as required;
- Managing and developing staff in the finance function to ensure the highest standards of proficiency and work with a variety of non finance teams;
- Other duties and responsibilities as may be assigned from time to time.

## **COMPETENCIES/SKILLS**

### **Essential Skills and Experience**

- Knowledge of accounting methods, procedures, processes and contemporary management accounting techniques and principles;
- Extensive experience in leading, developing and implementing financial and resource allocation strategies that support Strategic Corporate objectives;
- Experience in the identification of critical financial issues and of briefing senior management and/or Board of same;
- Extensive experience of analysis, conceptual thinking and problem solving in Finance and Business Management;
- Experience of staff supervision and performance management;
- Highly developed relationship management and interpersonal skills and a capacity to promote co-operation, trust and openness amongst staff and customers
- Highly developed oral and written communication skills, including negotiation, report writing and presentation skills;
- Excellent working knowledge of integrated Financial Management Systems, Microsoft Excel.
- Experience in risk management and procurement.

### **In addition candidates must demonstrate:**

- Highly developed oral and written communication skills, including negotiation, report writing and presentation skills;
- A high degree of analytical, conceptual and problem solving skills in Finance and Business Management;
- Highly developed relationship management and interpersonal skills and a capacity to promote co-operation, trust and openness amongst staff and customers;
- An ability to identify critical financial issues and brief senior management and Local Authority members;
- An ability to determine priorities and organise workloads in order to produce quality output within tight time-frames;
- A proven ability to work under pressure and think laterally in dealing with a wide range of issues;
- An ability to effectively manage risk, procurement and resources;
- An ability to effectively manage a team of employees, including undertaking performance management processes;
- Extensive experience in leading, developing and implementing financial and resource allocation strategies that support government and Corporate Plan objectives;
- Knowledge of accounting methods, procedures, processes and contemporary management accounting techniques and principles;

### **Desirable competencies/skills will include:**

- knowledge of the Agresso/Integra FMS or other major financial management system.

### **Candidates must also:**

- have the knowledge and ability to discharge the duties of the post concerned;
- be suitable on the grounds of character;
- be suitable in all other relevant respects for appointment to the post concerned.

### **Candidates, if successful, will not be appointed to the post unless they:**

- agree to undertake the duties attached to the post and accept the conditions under which the duties are, or may be required to be, performed;
- are fully competent and available to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, the duties attached to the position.

### Driver's Licence

The holder of the post shall hold a full driving licence for Class B vehicles free from endorsement/disqualification. When required to do so holders of office shall drive a motor vehicle in the course of their duties and for this purpose provide and maintain a vehicle to the satisfaction of the Local Authority.

### KEY COMPETENCIES

A new Competency model has been developed for the role of Financial Accountant.

<b>Strategic Management and Change</b>	<b>Political Awareness</b> Has a clear understanding of the political reality and context of the organisation. <b>Networking and Representing</b> Develops and maintains positive and mutually beneficial relationships. Builds networks of technical and professional contacts. Promotes and sustains an appropriate, positive, and cohesive image for the organisation it represents.
<b>Delivering Results</b>	<b>Problem Solving and Decision Making</b> Can pinpoint critical information and address issues logically. Understands the context and impact of decisions made. Can act decisively with complex information and multiple stakeholders. <b>Operational Planning</b> Plans projects to determine rationale, objectives and deliverables, resource requirements, timelines and milestones, reporting requirements, and evaluation methods. Establishes high quality service and customer care standards. <b>Managing Resources</b> Manages the allocation, use and evaluation of internal and external resources to ensure they are used efficiently to meet Corporate priorities. Develops and models options for best value and efficiency in service delivery, including assessing the need to contract out for the provision of a service. <b>Delivering Quality Outcomes</b> Promotes the achievement of quality outcomes in delivering services. Organises the delivery of services to meet or exceed the required standard through collaborating with, instructing and motivating employees and by managing resources effectively.
<b>Performance through People</b>	<b>Managing Performance</b> Effectively manages performance. Empowers people to achieve or exceed organisational goals by delegating sufficient authority, responsibility and accountability. <b>Communicating Effectively</b> Has highly effective verbal and written communication skills. Presents ideas effectively to individuals and groups.
<b>Personal Effectiveness</b>	<b>Qualifications and Knowledge</b> Keeps up to date with developments, trends and best practice in area of expertise and responsibility. Ensures knowledge, skills and qualifications are up to date. Participates in management and leadership development opportunities to develop as a leader. Shares information, knowledge, experience and learning with others. <b>Integrity</b> Is honest and trustworthy in all dealings. Adopts an even handed approach and is fair, consistent and open in all matters. Models and promotes appropriate social and ethical standards in all interactions. Demonstrates a strong commitment to delivering an effective Public Service.

## **POST OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT**

### **PRINCIPAL CONDITIONS OF SERVICES**

#### **1. PARTICULARS OF POSITION:**

The office is wholetime, temporary and pensionable. The current vacancy is for a period of 12 months. The minimum age at which pension is payable is currently 66 years of age for new entrants to the Public Service on or after 1st January 2013.

#### **2. SUPERANNUATION CONDITIONS:**

Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority who are liable to pay the Class D rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 5% of their pensionable remuneration. They may also be required in respect of the Local Government (Spouses and Children's Contributory Pension) Scheme to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration in accordance with the terms of the Scheme.

Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority who are liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contributions will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of pensionable remuneration plus 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of social insurance old age contributory pension payable at the maximum rate to a person with no adult dependant or qualified children) for the purposes of schemes made under the Local Government (Superannuation) Act, 1980 (No. 8 of 1980). You are required in respect of spouses' and childrens' pension benefit to contribute at the rate of 1.5% of pensionable remuneration in accordance with the terms of schemes under the Local Government (Superannuation) Act, 1980 (No. 8 of 1980).

New entrants will be admitted to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme with effect from date of appointment. They are liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contribution and will be required in respect of superannuation to contribute at the rate of 3% of pensionable remuneration plus 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of social insurance old age contributory pension payable at the maximum rate to a person with no adult dependant or qualified children) for the purposes of schemes made under the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012.

#### **3. PROBATION:**

Where persons who are not already permanent employees of a local authority are appointed, the following provisions shall apply;

- (a) there shall be a period after such appointments take effect during which such persons shall hold such position on probation,
- (b) such period shall be six months but the Chief Executive may at his or her discretion extend such period,
- (c) such persons shall cease to hold such position at the end of the period of probation unless during such period the Chief Executive has certified that the service of such persons is satisfactory.

**4. SALARY:**

The salary scale for the position of Financial Accountant in a Local Authority is:

**Salary Scale Salary effective from 1st April, 2017 (EL 04/17)**

€65,426, €65,506, €66,748, €69,031, €71,454, €73,850, €76,262, €78,982, (1st LSI)  
€81,675, (2nd LSI).

Starting pay for new entrants will be at the minimum of the scale.

Rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government Policy.

**4. DUTIES:**

The duties of the office are to give the local authority and

- (a) such other local authorities or bodies for which the Chief Executive for the purposes of the City and County Management Acts, is Chief Executive, and
- (b) to any other local authority or body with which an agreement has been made by the local authority or by any of the authorities or bodies mentioned in sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph,

under the direction and supervision of the appropriate officer, such technical and ancillary services of an advisory, supervisory or executive nature as may be required by any local authority or body hereinbefore mentioned in the exercise and performance of any of its powers, functions and duties including the duty of assisting the appropriate officer in the supervision of such services of any of the foregoing local authorities or bodies and, when required to do so, to perform the duty of acting for a higher rank during the absence of such officer of higher rank. Holder of the office may be assigned to work in all appropriate areas in the course of their employment.

**5. GARDA VETTING/CHILD PROTECTION**

Successful candidates may be subject to the Garda Vetting Procedures and will be required to complete Appendix V of the County Council's Child Protection Policy.

**6. HEALTH**

For the purpose of satisfying the requirement as to health it will be necessary for each successful candidate, before he/she is appointed, to undergo a medical examination by a qualified medical practitioner to be nominated by the local authority.

**7. RESIDENCE**

Holders of the post shall reside in the district in which their duties are to be performed or within a reasonable distance thereof.

**8. ANNUAL LEAVE**

Granting of annual leave, payment for annual leave and arrangement from public holidays will be governed by the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.



**9. WORKING HOURS**

The successful candidate's normal hours of work will be 37 hours per week. The Council reserves the right to alter the hours of work from time to time.

**10. RETIREMENT AGE**

New Entrants to the Public Service on or after 1st January 2013 have a compulsory retirement age of 70 years under the provisions of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme & Other Provisions Act 2012)

New entrants to the public service as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 do not have a mandatory retirement age.

Any candidate who is not a new entrant to the public service, as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2004, is subject to a compulsory retirement age of 65 years.

**11. RECRUITMENT**

(i) Selection of candidates for appointment shall be by means of a competition based on an interview conducted by or on behalf of Monaghan County Council.

(ii) A panel may be formed on the basis of such interviews. Candidates whose names are on a panel and who satisfy the local authority that they possess the qualifications declared for the post and that they are otherwise suitable for appointment may be appointed to this post. The panel will cease to exist when the post(s) which are the subject of this competition are filled.

(iii) Applicants may be short-listed on the basis of information supplied on the Application Form and supporting documentation submitted, and only candidates short-listed will be called for interview.

**12. ACCEPTANCE OF OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT**

Monaghan County Council shall require persons to whom appointments are offered to take up such appointments within a period of not more than one month and if they fail to take up the appointments within such period or such longer period as the local authority in its absolute discretion may determine, Monaghan County Council shall not appoint them.

**13. RECEIPT OF APPLICATION FORMS**

Any claim in relation to the late receipt of application forms will not be entertained unless such claim is supported by a certificate of evidence of postage from the appropriate postal authority.

**14. RESTRICTIONS ON ELIGIBILITY**

Candidates should note that anyone who has taken part in the public service early retirement schemes set out below is not eligible to take part in this competition.

**Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER):**

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment of the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

**Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010):**

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider public service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public funds. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years, after which time any re-employment will require the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. People who availed of either of these schemes are not eligible to compete in this competition.

**Declaration:**

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of a public service scheme of incentivised early retirement. Applicants will also be required to declare any entitlements to a Public Service pension benefit (in payment or preserved) from any other Public Service employment and/or where they have received a payment-in-lieu in respect of service in any Public Service employment.

**15. SHORTLISTING**

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, Monaghan County Council may decide that a number only will be called to interview. In this respect, Monaghan County Council may provide for the employment of a short listing process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position. An expert board will examine the application forms against a pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. **It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/experience on the application form.**

**16. CANVASSING**

Any attempt by a candidate, or by any person(s) acting at the candidate's instigation, directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise influence in the candidate's favour, any member of the staff of the County Council or person nominated by the County Council to interview or examine applicants, will automatically disqualify the candidate for the position being sought.

**17. Monaghan County Council is an equal opportunities employer.**