

# Essex Wildlife Trust

## Job Description

**Job title:** Finance Director

**Location:** Abbots Hall

**Reports to:** CEO

**Responsible for:** Head of Finance; Facilities Officer; Health and Safety Manager



**Essex**  
Wildlife Trust

### Job Purpose

As the Trust's senior expert in charity finance, the Finance Director has overall responsibility for ensuring robust financial practises at the Trust, driving the development and implementation of long-term financial strategies, and ensuring the delivery of all relevant objectives and targets as set out in the Trust's strategic planning processes.

This role is responsible for leading the development of key functions within the Finance & Systems directorate, including: Finance; Risk and Compliance, including Health and Safety; IT and Data; Systems; Procurement; Governance; Business Continuity; and Facilities Management.

Taking ownership of the Trust's financial performance and the overall financial literacy of the organisation, the postholder helps ensure ongoing financial sustainability, recommending remedial action if this falls below agreed budgets, and driving the delivery of the Finance Strategy for the Trust, ensuring proper controls are in place.

As a member of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), the Finance Director contributes to the strategic direction of the organisation, working closely with the Board of Trustees, and acting as a trusted advisor to the CEO, senior colleagues, and Trustees, providing specialist expertise.

A key aspect of the role is to scrutinise and evaluate the financial performance of the Trust, reporting progress against strategic objectives and ensuring that the organisation is delivering against its charitable objectives and fulfilling requirements of the Charity Commission.

The postholder models the Trust's four core values – Impactful, Collaborative, United and Proactive – and ensures that our people understand our culture and adhere to it at all times, working collaboratively to embed it in our ways of working.

### Key Tasks

#### Finance

- Lead on the development and delivery of the Trust's financial strategies and ensure that appropriate and effective financial controls are in place.
- Review and ensure that the best possible financial management systems and processes are in place and being used effectively throughout the organisation.
- Take responsibility for the Trust's financial performance, ensuring its ongoing financial viability and recommending remedial action when required.
- Take responsibility for the overall financial literacy of the organisation and promote a culture of continuous development and improvement of financial knowledge, putting in place training and development where appropriate.
- Ensure that the Trust is operating in an efficient manner and working to fully costed business plans, whilst monitoring its commercial performance and advising the CEO and Trustees of any corrective actions that might be required.
- Apply a strong commercial approach to strengthening the financial elements of the Trust's strategies, working with the CEO, SLT and Board.

- Oversee the financial planning process and providing high-quality organisational development to support the delivery of the Trust's mission and strategic objectives.
- Ensure that budgets and resources are managed effectively across the Trust.
- Effectively horizon scan to identify future constraints and external issues that could impact the Trust's strategies, recommending creative and cost-effective solutions.
- Lead the development and implementation of cost recovery policies and practices for covering core work and facilities.
- Ensure the charity complies with all regulatory and tax requirements.
- Ensure the appropriateness of key assumptions included in the charity's annual budget proposals and its forecasting, providing advice to the CEO, senior colleagues and the Board as required.

## **IT, Data and Systems**

- Provide leadership and drive the development, implementation, and evaluation of IT, data and systems projects in line with organisational objectives.
- Manage the high-level relationship with the Trust's external IT provider, TechWyse.
- Ensure the continuous development of IT, data and systems strategies that respond to the existing known challenges and also identify future opportunities to deploy solutions that add value to the business and its stakeholders.
- Liaise with other departments, determining their IT needs and data and systems requirements through a business partnering approach, supporting teams across the Trust to collaborate and use systems, processes, and technological solutions in an effective way.
- Develop relevant metrics and indicators to provide insights that enable the Trust to drive high performance in teams.
- Identify vulnerabilities, the need for upgrades, and opportunities for improvement.
- Propose strategic solutions, either utilising existing tools or recommending new systems and software.
- Build and maintain relationships with external advisors and suppliers, overseeing contractual commitments and ensuring they are aligned with organisation needs.
- Develop the Trust's risk management framework and ensure that the organisational risk register is regularly reviewed and reported on to relevant internal and external stakeholders.
- Act as the Trust's Data Protection Officer.
- Access expert advice on data protection as required and lead the internal management of any complex cases/risk areas.
- Develop systems and processes to effectively manage contracting arrangements and ensure that any associated risks to the charity are appropriately mitigated.

## **Health and Safety**

- Ensure all Trust processes and practices adhere to Health & Safety Law and best practice, representing the Trust as the designated H&S Lead.
- Chair any relevant high-level H&S management groups and oversee all H&S reporting to the Board of Trustees and Subsidiary Boards.
- Lead on embedding a positive culture of Health & Safety across the whole organisation.

## **Facilities**

- Have strategic oversight of the Trust's buildings and facilities, ensuring safe and high-quality environments that are operationally appropriate for staff, volunteers, visitors, and users.
- Ensure professional facilities management services are delivered in line with the Trust's core values, policies and procedures.

## **Procurement**

- Oversee the Trust's procurement strategy and processes to maximise efficiencies with suppliers, ensuring compliance with the Trust's sustainability agenda and achieving value for money for the Trust

## **Business Continuity**

- Ensure robust planning and processes are developed and implemented to manage the emergency closure of various aspects of the Trust through the development of appropriate business continuity plans and strategies

## **Other**

- Perform such duties as reasonably correspond to the general character of the post and are commensurate with its level of responsibility.
- As a member of the Strategic Leadership Team, promote and support equality, diversity, and inclusion across the organisation.
- Lead and manage people in accordance with the Trust's policies and procedures for people management.
- Acknowledge and embrace the personal responsibilities of professional development which accompany the role.

## **Person Specification**

### **Knowledge and Skills**

- A professionally qualified accountant, with substantial senior financial management experience, with experience of charity accounting and financial regulation.
- Management qualification or equivalent experience.
- Experience of successfully running a financial function in a complex organisation.
- A high level of understanding regarding compliance and governance within charitable organisations.
- An understanding of the risks and challenges of working within the conservation sector.
- Demonstrable experience within or working with an IT, data and systems transformation function.
- Experience of leading and developing a high-performing, multi-disciplinary team.
- Experience of leading business transformations, planning and executing programmes to harmonise processes and converge IT systems, which are outward facing as well as internal.
- Experience ensuring that operational work aligns to strategic aims and organisational outcomes.
- Experience having reviewed and revised internal processes to ensure maximum organisational efficiency including high level involvement in organisational restructure and change processes.
- Advanced knowledge of Health & Safety.

### **Additional Information**

- The role involves occasional weekend or evening work, for example Board Meetings, new member meetings, AGM and special events.
- The role requires an interest in working for a charity that is determined to protect wildlife for the future and for the people of Essex.
- The role requires the ability to drive, including a full driving licence and use of a vehicle, though pool vehicles may sometimes be available.
- The role is based at Great Wigborough, Essex, but requires regular travel across the county and beyond, with mileage paid for additional travel.

As a Disability Confident employer, we are committed to offering an interview to anyone with a disability that meets all the essential criteria for the post. Please let us know if you require any adjustments to make our recruitment process more accessible.

### **Essex Wildlife Trust Rewards**

- Pension of 3% from you and 5% from EWT for qualifying staff
- Enhanced annual leave allowance starting at 26 days, rising by one day a year to a maximum of 29 days plus bank holidays (pro-rata for part-time staff)
- Enhanced sick pay increasing with length of service
- Staff days and staff social
- Peer nominated Merit scheme

- Up to 20% discount on retail and food and beverage within EWS Nature Discovery Centres
- Employee Assistance Programme providing advice on many areas for you and your family, plus a counselling service you can access
- Free Life Assurance worth three times basic salary (T&C's apply)