

Finance Director

Blackpool Entertainment Company Ltd

Information Pack



www.wintergardensblackpool.co.uk

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Welcome

The Winter Gardens Blackpool is one of the UK's largest and most iconic entertainment and conference centres.

Situated in the heart of the country's most popular seaside resort, it comprises multiple venues including ballroom, theatre, conference facilities and an extraordinary collection of function and exhibition spaces.

With an extensive programme of refurbishment underway and the recent opening of a new £30m state-of-the-art conference and exhibition centre, its operating company, Blackpool Entertainment Company Ltd, is looking to make a Finance Director appointment to help take the Winter Gardens into the next phase of its development and secure its place as a key driver of Blackpool's economy.

Blackpool Entertainment Company is a wholly owned company of Blackpool Council within a larger company group.

The Finance Director is a pivotal person within the Executive Teams to form part of the Council's leisure assets portfolio.

The ultimate goal of this role is to provide strategic financial oversight to the company at a key time during its expansion and beyond.

The role holder will have a leading role in ensuring shareholder and board confidence in the long-term financial robustness of the business, analysing investment options, optimising profitability and driving financial efficiency.



Job Description

Job Title: Finance Director

Main Role: The postholder will provide strategic direction and management of Blackpool Entertainment Company Ltd. They will lead the team on identifying, evaluating, delivering and monitoring opportunities for efficiencies and profits across the business, as well as overseeing financial planning, forecasting and operational delivery.

Key Areas of Responsibility:

Responsibilities to the Board and Shareholder:

Report to the company Board and ensure that Board directors are kept up to date with strategic developments, financial performance and key updates.

Support the Managing Director and the Board in making effective decisions and applying corporate governance, promoting and ensuring compliance with corporate and government standards and controls including preparation and oversight of annual external audit'.

Prepare and present updates and reports on financial activities and new initiatives for the Executive Teams, Boards and committees.

Have a professional link to the shareholder's (Blackpool Council) Chief Finance Officer and ensure that the shareholder is regularly updated on financial performance, including attending quarterly financial planning meetings of the company group.

Business Development:

Develop and agree a financial strategy including a long-term financial plan that supports the shareholder vision for the company in bringing sustainable and increasing business tourism to Blackpool.

Understand commercial business performance, identify any negative variances and proactively recommend solutions.

Analyse sales activities to inform business decisions.

Strategic and Tactical Planning:

Develop and oversee long-term strategic financial planning alongside ensuring delivery of annual budget commitments.

Review and revise plans quarterly to ensure they are up to date and achieving objectives.

Pro-actively manage the cash flow, investment and funding requirements of the business identifying risks and opportunities to the BECL board and Shareholder Committee.

Support the development of the IT and data strategy to drive efficiency improvements across the business.

Develop and implement appropriate cost allocation and reporting to support more accurate analysis of the profitability of events and activities.

Develop, direct and monitor the implementation of policies, procedures and work standards to ensure standards are achieved.

Risk management and internal audit:

In conjunction with the Managing Director, liaise with Internal Audit in the drawing up of the Annual Internal Audit Plan.

Ensure that finance relevant findings and recommendations from audit reports are acted on in a timely manner.

Ensure that any financial risk is appropriately assessed and added to the Risk Register with the necessary mitigations to reduce the risk.

Attend and contribute as required to the company Audit Committee, and annual shareholder report.

Performance management:

Develop and maintain a performance management framework in conjunction with the Managing Director and Company Board to ensure that the financial function and the team operate to the highest level.

Assist in the setting of challenging and measurable KPIs and monitor business against these.

Report regularly to the Managing Director and company Board on KPI achievement.

Day to Day Management:

Lead the financial teams of the company, supporting them to achieve objectives and targets, ensuring effective collaboration across the organisation to achieve the aims and objectives of the business and to maximise profitability.

Encourage and lead on a positive change culture of the businesses, ensuring motivated and customer focused teams with low staff turnover and low absence levels.

Encourage and support team members to take an active part in their own development including providing appropriate training to address skills gaps within the team.

Proactively look for new/smarter ways to improve processes and procedures to deliver a faster, more efficient service to customers.

Ensure good relationships are maintained across the organisation and Executive teams.

Work closely with the Executive Team and Department Heads to maximise revenue and subsequent net Profit.

Manage contracts on behalf of the company for relevant areas of responsibility.

Work with commercial team to review event contracts to ensure appropriate pricing, reconciliation and profitability.

Further information and the full list of day to day management objectives can be located in the full Job Description/Person Specification document.

Company History

Company history – Winter Gardens

On the 11 July 1878, the Winter Gardens is formally opened by the Lord Mayor of London. The Winter Gardens boasted an exotic, glass roofed Floral Hall for promenading, indoor and outdoor skating rinks and the Pavilion Hall for special events.

In 1888, plans for the first Opera House were being prepared by Frank Matcham, the famous theatre architect. The contract was let on 19th October 1888 and the 2,500 seat “Her Majesty’s Opera House”, costing £9,098, opened with Gilbert & Sullivan’s new opera “Yeomen of the Guard” on 10 June 1889.

In August 1896, The Empress Ballroom, built by architects Mangnall & Littlewood, with plasterwork by J. M. Boekbinder, with a floor area of 12,500 sq. ft., made it one of the largest ballrooms in the world.

The first Blackpool Dance Festival was held during Easter week in 1920 in the magnificent Empress Ballroom in the Winter Gardens.

Following a significant refit in 1911, in October 1938 the old Opera House was demolished and the third and current Opera House replaced its predecessor in 1939, with a classic Art Deco design. The theatre erected in its place boasted 3,000 seats, possessed the biggest stage in the country, it was designed in a modernist style with a sweepingly curved proscenium, with the intention of doubling as a super cinema. The Opera House was opened on 14th July 1939 by Jessie Matthews and her husband Sonnie Hale, being followed by the revue Turned out Nice Again with George Formby.

On 13th April 1955 a Royal Variety Performance, the first outside London, was given for the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. A period-style Royal box was constructed for the occasion. It remained for many years, detracting from the modernist lines of the auditorium.

During its glorious 140-year history, it has hosted some of the biggest names in show business as well as staging major party political conferences, West End shows and international events. It is the home of the world’s biggest ballroom dance competition.

Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited (BECL) is a wholly owned company of Blackpool Council and was formed in June 2014 to manage and operate the Winter Gardens on behalf of the Council.

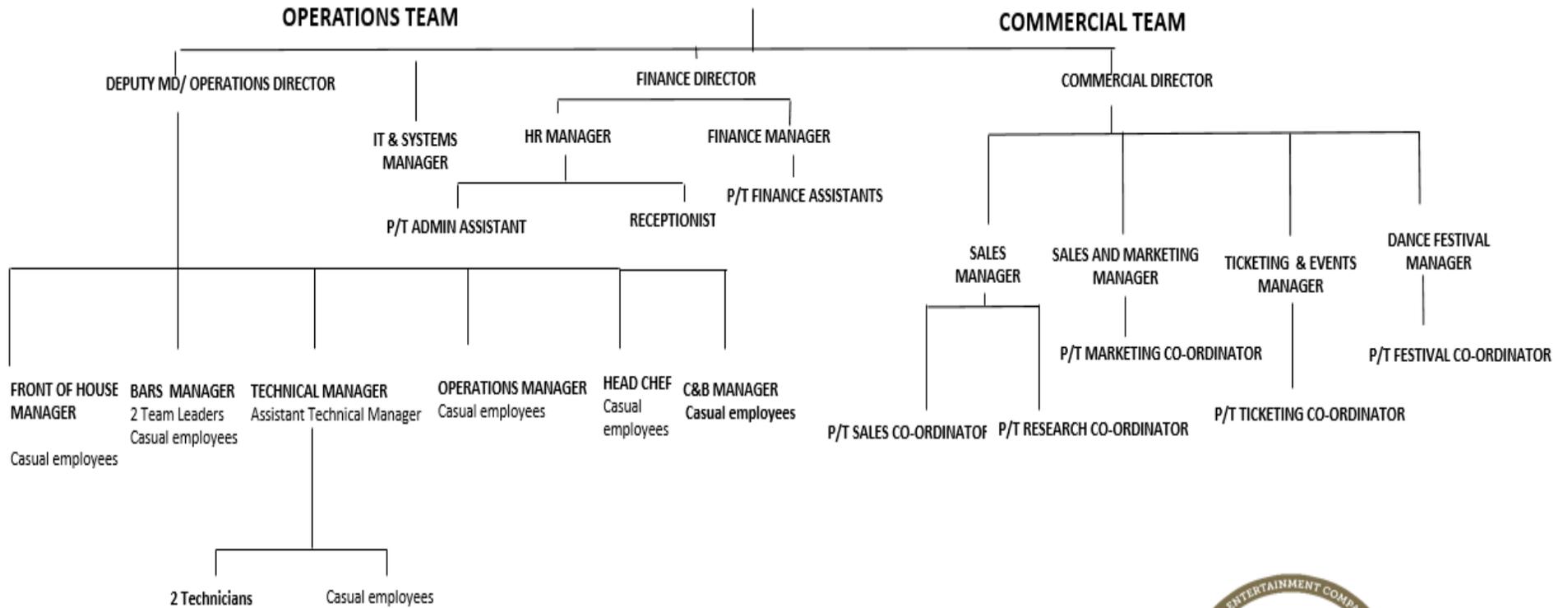
The Blackpool Conference and Exhibition Centre (BCEC) has recently opened and is a purpose-built centre with state-of-the-art facilities for the 21st Century located adjacent to Leopold Grove within the Winter Gardens complex. The addition of this facility marks a step change in the development of the Winter Gardens and Blackpool as a whole.



Company Structure

Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited

MANAGING DIRECTOR



Person Specification and Experience

Necessary Requirements	Essential / Desirable
CCAB / CIMA qualified	Essential
Substantial leadership experience at a senior level	Essential
Substantial experience in financial management at a strategic level	Essential
Experience of business planning, performance management, managing budgets and can demonstrate adherence to relevant regulations (e.g. public sector procurement regulations)	Essential
Strong collaboration and leadership skills	Essential
Excellent customer management skills in building relationships and presentations to senior and strategic leaders/customers	Essential
Experienced senior manager skilled in managing and motivating financial teams	Essential
Excellent communication, reasoning, negotiation and influencing skills, both oral and written	Essential
Ability to analyse and solve complex problems creatively and pragmatically and the ability to use initiative	Essential
Exceptional project direction and management skills, ability to manage multiple timelines, deadlines and actions in a collaborative fast paced environment	Essential
IT skills including use of digital and social media, Word, excel, PowerPoint	Essential
Knowledge of Microsoft Dynamics GP with eRequest or SAGE and Nolan Business Solutions is desirable.	Desirable

Other Requirements

No formal affiliation with any political party.

Job Specifics

Job Location

Blackpool

Reporting to

Managing Director

Salary Package

Salary

The salary for this post commences from £64,583 per annum.

Pension

BECL operates a contributory pension scheme called 'The Peoples Pension'.

Recruitment Timeline*



*recruitment timeline is approximate and subject to change where required

Working relationships

Internal and External*

- The Chair, non-executive and executive directors of BECL Management Team
- The Chief Executive and senior council officers
- The company secretary
- Business leaders
- Strategic partners
- Shareholder
- Stakeholders
- Trade union and workforce representatives

*list is not exhaustive

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