



## **Finance Manager – Food Stores**

*Organisation: Central England Co-operative / OurCoop*

*Location: Lichfield (multi-site including Support Centres in Lichfield and Warwick) / hybrid*

*Reports to: Head of Commercial Finance – Food*

### **COMPANY BACKGROUND**

OurCoop is the UK's largest independent co-operative Society of £1.6Bn Sales, with more than one million Members and 13,000 colleagues operating in communities nationwide. Its heritage spans over 175 years and was formed by bringing together Central Co-op, The Midcounties Co-operative (Jan 26) and Chelmsford Star Co-op (Autumn 25) to create a stronger, member-owned organisation rooted in shared co-operative values.

The Society trades nationally through its family of businesses while remaining deeply rooted in local communities. Its footprint spans Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Wiltshire and Bedfordshire in the South and West; the Midlands including Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Northamptonshire; the North including Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Yorkshire; and the East of England, including Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk.

OurCoop and its family of businesses are trading names of Central England Co-operative Limited.

OurCoop brings together a family of established co-operative businesses operating across food retail, travel, funeralcare, Early Years and utilities:

- FoodCoop – Over 500 stores at the heart of high streets across the UK and serving communities with quality, responsibly sourced products.
- TravelCoop – More than 70 branches plus online services, helping people explore the world while supporting ethical tourism.
- FuneralCoop – Over 150 funeral homes, providing dignified, compassionate support when families need it most.
- Little Pioneers – More than 40 Early Years nurseries giving children the best possible start, run on co-operative principles.
- EnergyCoop, MobileCoop and BroadbandCoop – The UK's only co-operative utilities provider, demonstrating that essential services don't need to prioritise shareholder dividends over customer needs.

We also have over 1,100 property assets, recently launched a Media Coop and offer members the opportunity to invest from a pound for a single share to a long-term investment. Additionally, we are committed to thoughtful investment bringing

communities to life and giving back to communities via the Community Dividend Fund and are on a journey to deliver green energy self-sufficiency.

We're independent from The Co-operative Group, but we're part of the wider co-operative movement, working together to provide all sorts of benefits for our members and customers. In the true spirit of co-operation, we work with each other so that, as part of a larger unit, we have the buying power of much bigger companies through economies of scale.

Our vision is to be the UK's best consumer co-operative by making a real difference to our members and our communities.

## THE ROLE & KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Finance Manager – Food Stores is a key member of the Commercial Finance team, partnering the Food leadership team to drive sustainable financial performance across the store estate.

The role provides insightful financial analysis, commercial challenge and strategic support to enable effective decision-making, optimise profitability and ensure delivery of business objectives. Working closely with operational and functional leaders, the postholder will help translate strategy into actionable plans, identify opportunities for growth and efficiency, and support the delivery of investment and transformation initiatives.

The role combines strong financial stewardship with a proactive and commercially focused approach to performance management.

## KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

### **Commercial Business Partnering**

- Act as the primary finance partner for food store performance across the food leadership team.
- Provide robust commercial insight and challenge to support strategic and operational decision-making.
- Develop strong relationships across Operations, Trading, Supply Chain and Support Functions.
- Influence decisions through fact-based analysis and clear financial recommendations.
- Support the development and delivery of the Food Stores strategy.

### **Financial Performance Management**

- Lead the financial planning, budgeting and forecasting processes for Food Stores.
- Monitor and analyse trading performance, identifying risks, opportunities and emerging trends.
- Deliver timely and insightful reporting that drives action and accountability.
- Support initiatives to improve sales, margin, productivity and profitability.
- Ensure a clear understanding of key performance drivers across the store estate.

### **Investment and Business Cases**

- Develop and evaluate business cases for capital expenditure, store investment and strategic initiatives.
- Assess financial returns, risks and sensitivities associated with investment decisions.
- Monitor post-investment performance and benefits realisation.
- Support prioritisation of resources and investment across competing opportunities.

### **Data guardianship and Insight**

- Improve accuracy of our data to identify opportunities for growth, efficiency and value creation.
- Provide scenario modelling and strategic analysis to support business planning.
- Translate complex financial information into practical recommendations for non-financial stakeholders.

### **Governance and Control**

- Ensure financial plans, forecasts and reporting are accurate, robust and aligned to corporate requirements.
- Maintain strong financial governance and control frameworks.
- Support compliance with internal policies and financial standards.
- Identify and mitigate financial risks within Food Stores performance.

### **Leadership and Team Development**

- Contribute to the development of a high-performing Commercial Finance team.
- Coach and support analysts and finance colleagues where applicable.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement, collaboration and commercial focus.
- Act as a role model for the organisation's values and leadership behaviours.
- Help foster a culture of openness, accountability, continuous improvement and commercial curiosity.

### **KEY DELIVERABLES**

The successful candidate will be expected to:

- Improve data quality and understanding of trading performance in food stores.
- Enhance commercial decision making through insightful analysis and proactive challenge.
- Drive measurable improvements in quartile site performance.
- Support the delivery of annual budget, strategic plan and synergy commitments.
- Improve forecasting accuracy and strengthen performance management disciplines across the Food Leadership Team.

### **SKILLS & EXPERIENCE**

The ideal candidate will have:

- Qualified accountant (ACA, ACCA, CIMA or equivalent).

- Experience in commercial finance or business partnering roles within retail, FMCG or consumer-facing sectors.
- Strong understanding of food retail economics including sales, margin, pricing, promotions, shrinkage, labour productivity and store performance.
- Proven ability to influence senior stakeholders through high-quality analysis, insight and commercial challenge.
- Excellent finance process, data quality and analytical skills.
- Strong commercial acumen with the ability to translate complex data into clear business actions.
- High levels of personal credibility, resilience and stakeholder management capability.
- Advanced Excel, financial systems and data visualisation skills.
- Experience working with AI-enabled analytics and modern data tools would be advantageous.

The candidate will likely demonstrate leadership characteristics as follows:

- Comfortable operating at pace and through ambiguity
- Passionate about developing people and teams
- Curious, proactive and commercially minded.
- Passionate about retail performance and continuous improvement.
- Collaborative and relationship-focused.
- Driven by outcomes and committed to delivering value for members and customers.

## SALARY AND BENEFITS

Competitive base salary with a flexible benefits package