

Job Description

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| Job title: | Accountant / Senior Finance Officer |
| Work level - Finance 3: | Professional Delivery |
| Grade: | PO4 |
| Division: | Financial Planning & Management / Finance Transaction Services |
| Reports to: | Group Manager/ Operations Manager |
| Responsible for: | Up to 16 staff |

Main purpose of the post:

Work collaboratively with managers within the respective service areas (up to and including Director level), providing technical financial advice and support using professional knowledge and skills pro-actively to identify, investigate, analyse and evaluate issues/options within an agreed financial management framework

Accountancy responsibilities:

1. To work routinely with managers across the organisation, typically advising and influencing up to and including Assistant Director / Head of Service level.
2. To take direct personal responsibility for the provision of financial support to discrete areas of the business, including providing specialist, technical advice and reports to senior colleagues and members to support effective decision making under s151 of Local Government Act 1972.
3. To take responsibility for the delivery of effective financial systems and processes across the council including timely reconciliations, so that any necessary adjustments are designed and implemented promptly.
4. To work with external financial advisers and contractors (including be part of selection and appointment processes in accordance with procurement regulation and managing the contractual relationships to ensure expected performance or compliance) as appropriate to the role.
5. To liaise directly with internal/external auditors on all matters relating to the preparation and audit of defined work area(s).
6. To ensure that the financial governance requirements are understood and accepted by the business and that the implications of non-compliance are made clear. As part of this, to identify, monitor and manage risks.

Generic responsibilities:

7. Write and present management board and committee reports, provide specialist, technical advice to support effective decision making including drafting appropriate financial implications under s151 of Local Government Act 1972 for formal reports
8. To report and monitor Business Unit performance targets as defined in the Operating Level Agreement.
9. Develop and maintain specialist knowledge and understanding of financial legislation and accounting standards, and take responsibility for implementing changes arising from new or amended legislation or financial policy, ensuring that the council's processes are compliant.

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10. Responsible for improving financial systems and processes to capture and analyse financial information
11. Contribute financial expertise to projects with significant financial impact including cross-council transformative projects such as major systems developments and business process redesign. Take a lead role in ensuring they meet all their financial and budgetary responsibilities through effective monitoring and control.
12. Authority to make most day-to-day operational management decisions and to amend the work priorities of own service area in order to respond effectively to emerging issues and changing corporate priorities, referring only those with high impact or political sensitivity.
13. Develop strong links with officers in other organisations locally and nationally to facilitate benchmarking, information sharing and analysis.
14. Lead on work with internal/external auditors coordinating all matters relating to the preparation and audit of defined work area(s).
15. Design and deliver training as appropriate to enhance knowledge and promote a culture of compliance with defined financial processes and controls.
16. Represent the council's interests at appropriate local, regional and national working groups as required.
17. Actively contributes to the shaping on policy and the financial direction within the respective service area and the council as a whole through research and recommendations.
18. Ensure that the financial governance requirements are understood and accepted within the respective service area and that the implications of non-compliance are made clear.
19. Co-ordinate responses to queries on financial matters from Councillors, Media and other stakeholders in accordance with council procedures.
20. Oversee regular satisfaction surveys to verify that the expectations of customers are being met through service delivery.
21. Deputise for the Accountant Group Manager / Operations Manager

Management responsibilities

22. Make most day-to-day operational management decisions and to amend the work priorities of own service area in order to respond effectively to emerging issues and changing corporate priorities, referring only those with high impact or political sensitivity.
23. Manage recruitment processes (including probationary period), setting of objectives and work plans, performance monitoring and management (including appraisals) and staff development (including training needs analysis) for team(s) of direct reports in accordance with council policies and liP standards.
24. To maintain a risk management strategy and approach.
25. To take personal responsibility for the good use of the council's resources appropriate to the job level and work area.
26. To ensure that all actions comply with the Council's policies on diversity and equal opportunities and health and safety.
27. To undertake other duties which might be reasonably requested from time to time.

Person Specification

Accountant PO4

It is essential that in your written supporting statement you give evidence or examples of your proven experience in each of the short-listing criteria marked Application (A)

You should expect that all areas listed below will be assessed as part of the interview and assessment process should you be shortlisted.

If you are applying under the Disability Confident scheme, you will need to give evidence or examples of your proven experience in the areas marked with a "Tick" (✓) on the person specification when you complete the application form.

| Criteria | Description | Short list criteria |
|---------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Qualification (Q1) | There is an expectation that the postholder will be CCAB qualified, or hold an appropriate equivalent qualification. For current employees with significant work experience, there is an expectation that they will hold or be working towards a relevant qualification. | ✓A |
| Knowledge (K1) | Proven knowledge of at least two of the following: operating in a complex multidisciplinary organisation; programmes and projects; financial management; people management. | ✓A |
| Experience (E1) | Experience at a senior level of local government budget preparation both revenue and capital Experience of providing financial advice to senior officers and members including partners and formal committees Experience in the use of integrated financial systems. | ✓A |

Key Behaviours

Focuses on People

- Ensuring anyone who calls me receives the best response that can be given even if it is not my area of work
- Being approachable and positive for my area of work and other services
- Ensuring I treat people equally and take time to listen to their needs
- Being open, flexible and available
- Respecting team goals and supporting new members
- Providing support, advice and guidance
- Thinking about what you would like if you were the customer
- Being consistent and focussing on team building to achieve excellence

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| <p>Takes Ownership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking ownership of my task, breaking it down, engaging with persons involved, and reflecting if there is a more efficient way of achieving it • Going the extra mile, valuing success, being proactive and knowledgeable and taking the initiative • Actively engaging in one-to-ones, appraisal process and team meetings • Take opportunities to learn new skills and develop ourselves • Identify and owning opportunities for service development • Being courageous even when you don't know the answer • Working with teams and service areas to achieve positive outcomes and develop personal capabilities | ✓A |
| <p>Works Collaboratively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding out what other colleagues do and working closely with them • Networking with other teams to seek out mutually beneficial ways of working • Being a good team player and stepping in to assist manager or colleagues during absences • Sharing information, best practice and ideas with relevant networks and groups • Being approachable, listening and building constructive honest relationships • Regularly sharing success stories that lead to good outcomes • Ensuring all work with colleagues from across the council to reduce silo working and get things done in the most informed and best way • Developing team morale and cohesiveness to help each member feel valued and productive and to help the team to build good working relationships | ✓A |
| <p>Communicates Effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking down our ideas to create a better understanding and communication between divisions and end users – simple is best to communicate well • Targeting the message to the audience, ensuring that everyone can access the information. • Listening for information from my manager and the council that can impact on your work • Sharing and passing vital and new information and reflecting back understanding • Escalating issues and opportunities straight away, ensuring risks are managed • Thinking carefully about avoiding jargon both internally and externally | |

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| <p>Focuses on Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getting my work done to the best of my ability with the resources and finances we have• Thinking in relation to the 'Borough Plan', working well with colleagues to get good results• Making sure I understand my objectives and what I need to do• Delivering projects on time and within budget• Thinking about partnerships and the resources needed for them• Being ambitious, knowing the bigger picture of borough improvement• Ensuring teams are clear about the outcomes and objectives of the Council and show a clear link between what they do and how it makes an impact on the customer• Setting clear objectives and targets, ensuring they are SMART and measurable and linked to business plans• Helping staff stay motivated by finding learning opportunities for development and making them feel valued• Looking at any barriers or obstacles to work, review what is slowing down our progress• Exploring ways to improve the way things are currently done ensuring we maximise our resources | <p>✓A</p> |
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