



HILLINGDON

LONDON

Job Profile

March 2023

JOB TITLE	Head of Finance – Place
GRADE	CO1
POST NUMBER	29132
GROUP	Finance
SERVICE	Financial Management
REPORTING STRUCTURE	
Reports to:	Assistant Director of Financial Management
Direct Reports:	up to 5
Indirect Reports:	up to 20
CONTACTS/STAKEHOLDERS	Internal: All level of staff, Directors, Councillors External: Central Government Departments, other Local Authorities, Professional bodies, NHS, External Audit.
SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES	All services within the following Directorates: Place including Planning & regeneration
BUDGET RESPONSIBILITY	Advisory responsibility for Council revenue and capital budgets of approximately £150m Direct responsibility for managing budgets of approx. £0.6m.

Job Description

JOB PURPOSE

1. To lead and manage the Place Finance Teams within Financial Management, supporting, Place, advising on relevant aspects of strategic finance and business partnering, alongside comprehensive financial direction, support and guidance to a range of Council's services and Directorates.
2. To support transformation and business led projects within Place, ensuring that timely and robust financial information is provided to support with decision making and take an active role in shaping outcomes of projects. In addition, ensuring that budgets are realigned to deliver savings targets, reporting timing differences in delivery.
3. To ensure that Senior Management and their budget managers are supported to deliver their accountabilities for budget management and that directorates comply with Financial Standing Orders and all other financial policies and procedures as directed by the Director of Corporate Finance.
4. To provide financial leadership and strategic advice to directorates to enable them to develop robust financial plans and ensure that the future needs of the service are reflected in the Council's medium term financial forecast (MTFF).
5. To ensure the provision of high-quality financial advice and accurate and timely financial information to Corporate Directors, Heads of Service and budget managers across the directorates. To promote and facilitate a culture that supports a self-service approach to budget management with strategic financial management support through a business partnering model.
6. Lead on the financial modelling of demand led budgets, within Place to ensure robust forecasts are established, working in conjunction with relevant senior managers within the Service areas, and to use the trend data to inform MTFF decision making.
7. To support the requirements of the statutory accounting process, external audit process and legislative changes that may have financial impact on directorates
8. To maintain effective working relationships with colleagues within the Finance directorate to proactively support the production of strategic financial information, medium term financial plans and the training and development of the wider Corporate Finance service.
9. To establish effective external working relationships with key stakeholders within the community, government, professional bodies and other appropriate public and private bodies to ensure the service has the knowledge and expertise to continuously improve its performance.

10. To coordinate the Corporate Finance training and development programme including the graduate and non-graduate apprenticeship schemes.

Responsibilities & Accountabilities

Financial Strategy Development

- Support the development of a strategic vision for the service to enable the council to meet its future challenges and objectives;
- Undertake a lead role in the development and implementation of the Council's financial strategy, including the development of complex financial models as required;
- Work closely with senior stakeholders to ensure best use of limited financial resources, providing the strategic financial advice, insight, intelligence and support needed;
- Ensure tight budgetary control and prioritise use of resources and assets to support the delivery of the council's objectives and help ensure that the council receives value for money from its expenditure;
 - Oversee the development of financial business cases for business improvement initiatives within the Council's transformation programme, working with other council services or in a cross-cutting capacity as necessary;
- Support the Council's risk management process through continuous review of financial risks and opportunities, across the relevant services and directorate(s), advising how the risks can be mitigated and the opportunities exploited;
- Proactively identify trends and changes in the operating environment (e.g. legislation, technology, policy, etc.) that could financially impact service delivery; provide advice and collaborate on potential solutions;
- Ensure the financial implications for Cabinet and all other reports fully inform service and corporate decision-making;

Financial Management and Reporting

- Draw on an in-depth knowledge of Council services and the related financial complexities, to ensure the provision of systems and procedures that enable effective budgetary control;
- Ensure that variations and emerging financial pressures are drawn to the attention of budget managers, and work with Directors and the management team on options and plans for their resolution at both a directorate and corporate level
- Promote a culture which empowers budget holders and supports the delivery of value for money services and knowledge of key cost drivers
- Provide in-depth support for the medium-term financial planning process. (MTFF) ensuring that the Council's transformation plans are fully reflected;
- Apply technical accounting knowledge and principles to a range of projects across the council within the wider remit of the council's transformation programme.
- Develop appropriate financial models and analytics to determine financial impact of future service demands, changes in legislation and other factors affecting resource requirements

- Instigate, develop and support the attainment of alternative sources of funding that contribute towards identified funding gaps. Advise on funding, financial management and accounting requirements within the relevant service and directorate portfolios.
- Prepare and present informative, high quality reports to members and other senior stakeholders that aid in informed service and corporate decision making
- Advise on investment and funding strategies including investment risk and performance as appropriate
- Effectively manage performance indicators and relationships within service contracts towards continued service improvement, value for money and social value;

Value for money and compliance

- Drive the delivery of productivity and efficiency improvement and cost reduction plans across the Council aligned to the transformation strategy;
- Together with the senior finance leadership, team take ownership of the Council's financial control environment including the proactive assessment, monitoring and implementation of effective financial controls;
- To advise on business processes and financial compliance issues within the Council's transformation projects, identifying proposals for improvement and ensuring the purpose of the process, key controls and operational steps prioritise the needs of residents and customers and maximise value for money;
- Manage the annual statutory accounts process for your team(s), support the external audit opinion and deliver appropriate financial returns
- Provide a lead on relevant internal and external audit processes and ensure recommendations are implemented as appropriate
- Ensure that all activities within the service areas comply with the council's constitution, Standing Orders, financial regulations, health and safety and safeguarding responsibilities and that effective systems operate within the service to manage performance and risk.
- Support the Service Area in the assessment of key suppliers or prospective suppliers to monitor supplier resilience and mitigate the impact of any potential supplier failure on council services
- Ensure that all financial systems within the Directorate(s) are fit for purpose, link with Corporate financial systems, meet statutory requirements and financial regulations.

Customer Focus & Stakeholder Engagement

- Act as a key financial advisor and service delivery partner for internal and external stakeholders, providing strategic support and constructive challenge through exercising negotiation and influencing skills
- Contribute to the delivery of a high performing, customer focused finance service that is proactive and creative, looking for ways to shape and influence service decisions and taking joint responsibility for the outcomes achieved.
- Ensure members of the team, directors and budget holders receive the financial management training required to be effective in their roles, including awareness

of Financial Regulations and financial approval requirements prior to taking decisions;

- Work with service managers at all levels to develop the financial business cases for the Council's Business Improvement projects;
- Develop and maintain relationships with the relevant professional bodies (e.g. CIPFA) to support the service's training offer.

Corporate Leadership & Accountabilities

Leadership and Management

- Provide leadership that encourages staff to recognise their contribution to the strategic objectives the council has set
- Foster a high-performance culture including carrying out internal service reviews to improve value for money and efficiency
- To develop and promote positive people management that ensures appropriate performance management, quality standards, monitoring and review are used to optimise employee motivation and satisfaction
- Build a credible and responsive team who are respected for their depth of knowledge, expertise and customer focus
- Enable and encourage a flexible working environment in accordance with the Council's flexible working policy
- Contribute to corporate areas of activity, organisational development and council-wide, cross departmental strategies, projects or policies, as required from time to time.
- Support and develop the business continuity process for Corporate Finance and participate in the Council's wider business continuity processes as required.

Continuous Improvement

- Support the implementation and review of change management programmes to deliver continual improvement
- Proactively seek and take responsibility for implementing internal process improvements, demonstrating the business case for change and benefits achieved
- Support opportunities for council-wide transformation and alternative service delivery models
- Contribute to the development of a digital culture within the service by embracing technology in every-day activities and seeking digital improvement opportunities in support of a service-wide digital strategy
- Drive the development of commercial opportunities that are aligned with the Council's vision of 'Residents First'

Person Specification

Head of Finance

This person specification will be used for recruitment to this post. It will form the basis of the application form, and candidates will be also assessed against aspects of this person specification at interview.

1. QUALIFICATIONS	ESSENTIAL ✓	DESIRABLE ✓
Fully qualified Accountant - CIPFA, ACCA, CIMA	✓	
Educated to degree level or equivalent	✓	
A minimum of 3 years post qualification experience in relevant service areas	✓	
Evidence of post qualification continuing professional development	✓	
2. STATUTORY or ROLE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS	ESSENTIAL ✓	DESIRABLE ✓
Attendance at evening Committee and Schools forum meetings as required.	✓	
3. EXPERIENCE	ESSENTIAL ✓	DESIRABLE ✓
Significant experience of preparation of annual budgets and final accounts for local authority.	✓	
Significant experience in a senior management role with direct management experience of leading professional and managerial groups in areas of service responsibility.	✓	
Evidence of successful participation at senior management level in developing and delivering strategies, policies and programmes within relevant statutory and policy requirements.	✓	
Evidence of formulating, leading and implementing successful strategies and programmes which cross service or professional boundaries.	✓	
Evidence of leading and managing change in a large multi-disciplined organisation and taking a lead role in the financial aspects of service improvement and transformation programmes.	✓	
Evidence of successful management and development of staff in a large multi-disciplined organisation, harnessing the strengths and talents of employees at all levels, including establishing effective performance objectives and appraisal to achieve corporate and service objectives.	✓	
Strategic budget management in a comparable public sector organisation, managing significant financial resources and evaluating competing budget priorities within tight financial limits.	✓	
A successful track record of building and developing partnerships and working effectively in co-operation with a wide range of internal and external bodies including both statutory and non statutory organisations and community groups.	✓	
Effective working within a political environment, providing clear, balanced advice and guidance on issues that achieve the corporate and service objectives of the organisation.	✓	
Evidence of a clear understanding of the legal, financial and political context of management within a Local Authority.	✓	

4. KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS	ESSENTIAL ✓	DESIRABLE ✓
An understanding of accounting principles and practices necessary to provide the financial control and direction necessary to support the Chief Finance Officer's statutory responsibilities.	✓	
Ability to use professional judgement effectively in the management of the financial affairs of the Group with the minimum level of recourse to more senior staff.	✓	
Ability to analyse and clearly present financial information in a manner appropriate to the recipients of the information.	✓	
Knowledge and understanding of the Council's core objectives.	✓	
Knowledge and a significant understanding of the legislative frameworks and key issues relevant to local government financial management generally and the Financial Services area in particular.	✓	
Ability to think and act strategically, operate efficiently within a corporate structure, provide leadership on cross-boundary, multi-disciplinary issues and demonstrate a clear vision which can be translated into effective action.	✓	
Ability to provide empower and motivate employees, encourage the effective use of delegated responsibilities and gain ownership for a clear division and direction in Corporate Finance.	✓	
Ability to understand financial information, to set, monitor and review budgetary targets and to develop innovative strategies to maximise service provision within tight financial limits.	✓	
Ability to promote and maintain high standards of professionalism, integrity and probity through personal conduct, use of appropriate procedures and compliance with standards.	✓	
Ability to consult and communicate clearly and effectively, orally and in writing, and develop positive relationships which generate collaborative working, confidence and respect internally and externally.	✓	
Ability to reconcile the balance between client needs and cost effective service delivery, develop practical and creative solutions to the strategic management of financial services and ensure that services are provided in accordance with political priorities.	✓	
Ability to build effective teams and relationships which are not limited by service area boundaries or hierarchies.	✓	
Financial knowledge of one or more specific service area finance within a Local Authority. E.g. Social Care, Education, Housing.	✓	
Knowledge and awareness of the current training requirements within the Corporate Finance service including up to date knowledge of professional qualification requirements for bodies such as CIPFA and AAT.	✓	
Highly developed ICT skills across MS Office (or similar), financial systems and data visualisation tools (e.g. Power BI).	✓	
5. COMPETENCES		
Passion to make a difference Acts as a role model to others demonstrating a commitment to improving outcomes for customers, working with partners to continually improve and develop services.	✓	
"Can do" positive attitude Demonstrates commitment to working collaboratively at a senior level, remaining positive and motivated and overcoming obstacles and barriers to change.	✓	
Leads and inspires others	✓	

Identifies and nurtures talent, providing individuals with the scope and support necessary to reach their full potential – understanding and respecting diversity within teams and encouraging innovation.		
Credibility Takes corporate responsibility and remains accountable for all aspects of service delivery. Guides and coaches others towards sound decision making, whilst demonstrating the ability to make quick and measured decisions when necessary.	✓	
Drives improvement Acts as a role model to others, listening to and respecting input from others and creating a culture of continuous improvement - identifying and positively overcoming barriers to change.	✓	
Strategic thinker Understands and examines the wider public sector and business environment, contributing to new business strategies and acting as a source of expertise.	✓	
Decision maker Makes sound decisions based on the advice and guidance of subject experts whilst taking ultimate accountability for that decision.	✓	
Team Player & networker Encourages and enables collaborative ways of working across different teams and functions, ensuring that wider organisational business needs and priorities are met.	✓	
Management Motivates a team to deliver their business objectives by delegating effectively and directing when necessary, communicating business needs clearly and meaningfully, and leading by example.	✓	
Communication Credibly promotes the needs of the business to a wider audience, acting as champion for those needs using tact and negotiation to achieve business objectives.	✓	