

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

Designation:	Senior Accountant	Grade: PO3
Reports to	Business Partner or Principal	Grade: PO6/PO8
(Designation):	Accountant.	
Directorate:	Corporate Resources	Division: Finance

Main purpose of job:

To provide professional, customer focused, efficient and effective financial services to a range of stakeholders. To work with officers across the council to ensure that appropriate financial controls are in operation (e.g. in monitoring budgets, maintenance of control accounts, authorising high volume and/or high value transactions etc), take action to be address exceptions.

To oversee the operation of sensitive high-volume transactional services, to manage complicated accounting processes to ensure that appropriate information can be provided to a variety of audiences, to be able to advise officers on decisions and proposed decisions and to be able to interpret complex data to determine possible courses of action.

To manage and control sensitive financial information with appropriate levels of confidentiality.

To advise and take financial decisions, within the authority of the role, for example in the management of budgets held at Service Group Manager level (potentially up to tens of millions gross expenditure) or in the application of complex corporate financial controls and reporting requirements.

Duties and responsibilities

- 1 To manage teams with full responsibility for all matters of recruitment, appraisal, development and coaching, discipline and grievance and any associated matters
- 2 To supervise junior officers (e.g. trainees, apprentices, work placement students) on an ad-hoc basis as may from time to time be required, typically up to a maximum of two or three at any one time.
- 3 To manage projects (possibly including partner organisations) in accordance with the council's project management methodology, coordinating the work of officers in other directorates in so doing
- 4 To influence officers across the organisation in order to promote compliance with the council's financial and other standards.
- 5 To promote the council's policies and values in all dealings with staff and other parties, including but not limited to employment policies, equality and diversity policies, data protection, health and safety and others as appropriate.
- 6 To oversee and/or carry out a wide range of tasks as part of financial processes with a high degree of attention to detail, speed and accuracy. In so doing to maintain a good understanding of the overall objectives of those

processes and so able to interpret results, identify issues for concern and so advise senior managers or take action on own initiative as may be required. Examples of processes include but are not limited to:

- a. Preparing corporate or directorate revenue or capital budgets
- b. Monitoring income and expenditure against budgets, ensuring that they are accounted for properly and closing year-end accounts accordingly and in line with agreed timetables
- c. Challenging and supporting budget holders on the management of resources within their allocated budgets;
- d. Supporting the development of proposals for saving or investment ensuring that proposals are robust and supported by data and evidence
- e. Advising on the financial implications of decisions or proposed decisions; providing detailed and technical advice.
- f. Preparing complex financial and statistical returns at corporate or service level, and advising on implications of these, including preparing of highly technical grant claims
- g. Performing complex reconciliations in high risk and high transaction volume areas such as corporate bank accounts and other corporate control accounts as may be required
- h. Carry out tender evaluations in partnership with officers from other expert disciplines
- i. Maintain highly complex financial models, for example to manage the process for corporate recharges or to monitor ongoing PFI or other long-term contract costs
- j. Supporting the financing of capital schemes; advising on financing options at project development stages.
- k. Supporting the end of year processes for financing expenditure including oversight, projection and monitoring of Balance Sheet items relating to capital expenditure
- l. Manage day to day treasury investments (value c£400m) in line with council's agreed strategy for managing risk and optimising returns, and understand complex issues in pension fund management (value c£1bn)
- m. Understand large and complex financial accounting systems and be able to advise on transactions within them, also able to advise on the practical implementation of changes to process within these systems
- n. Able to oversee high volume, high value and sensitive transactional financial services and ensure that appropriate quality control systems are in place and operating effectively
- o. Supporting the maintenance of core accounting and financial feeder systems.
- p. Maintaining coding structures, chart of accounts and other core financial data within systems.
- q. Configuration of financial systems.

- r. Supporting processes to ensure that financial systems are maintained up to date through updates and patches.
 - s. Reviewing and updating of financial procedures and processes.
 - t. Carrying out appraisals of financial options to determine a preferred course of action.
 - u. Resolving complex technical issues, possibly arising from new accounting or other financial requirements e.g. during the closing of accounts, introduction of new legislation etc
 - v. Negotiating and successfully implementing change to core processes and procedures.
 - w. Providing financial briefings/write committee reports to senior officers and possibly Members on technical and statutory developments relevant to a specific work area
- 7 To understand legislative accounting requirements and other related statutory and non-statutory guidance and to be able to interpret and apply this accurately within own work area, and to be able to research legislation etc in other work areas and apply accordingly.
 - 8 To control sensitive financial and/or personal data in accordance with proper professional standards, and to advise on the same.
 - 9 To carry out options appraisals, reviews, investigations, benchmarking exercises and other complex financial techniques of comparable complexity, under direction from line manager but working from day to day with a high degree of discretion.
 - 10 To provide excellent general financial management advice to a range of budget holders and other stakeholders.
 - 11 To provide some expert financial advice within a particular work area (e.g. capital accounting, VAT, pensions administration or other service specific financial issues).
 - 12 To be able to exercise influence through quality of financial advice, normally up to Service Group Manager level, in order to secure desired outcomes.
 - 13 To draft high quality written advice for management review, for example in financial implications to reports to Mayor & Cabinet and other formal Member level groups
 - 14 To draft high quality advice for management review level on general matters of financial processes, control and management and to have a good general understanding of such matters and to be able to relate those to specific areas of the council's business and draft advice accordingly.
 - 15 To work with budget holders and other officers below service group manager level to resolve detailed and sometimes complex issues on any area of finance as may be required.
 - 16 To be able to challenge and influence other officers across the council to secure desired outcomes.
 - 17 To take decisions, within delegated authority, for authorising financial advice and in the management of budgets.

18 To identify opportunities for improvements within own areas of responsibility by applying own professional and technical expertise, and to contribute to ensuring that such opportunities are implemented.

19 Individually or as part of corporate working groups to make decisions concerning the practical application and development of corporate financial controls and to develop and provide appropriate training as required.

All employees are required to:

20 Participate in the appraisal and objective setting process and to undertake appropriate training and development identified to enhance their work.

21 Carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council's Dignity at Work Policy and core values.

22 All employees are required to comply with the Council's Health & Safety policies and procedures at all times, taking due care for themselves, colleagues and members of the public.

23 Assist in carrying out the Council's environmental policy within the day to day activities of the post.

24 Undertake other duties, commensurate with the grade, as may reasonably be required.

25 Treat all information acquired through employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence.

Internal Contacts: These include directorate based budget holders, HR business partners, other core finance staff, and procurement and contract management staff,

External Contacts:

Consideration will be given to restructuring the duties of this post for a disabled postholder

**THIS JOB DESCRIPTION MAY NEED TO BE AMENDED BY THE
DIRECTORATE TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE SERVICE.**

Number of fully managed staff:

Title:	Grade	No of posts
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Number of partially managed staff:

Title:	Grade	No of posts
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PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Senior Accountant

POST NO:

DEPARTMENT: Finance

GRADE: PO3

Note to Candidates

The Person Specification is a picture of the skills, knowledge and experience needed to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the shortlisting and interview process for this post.

Those categories marked 'S' will be used especially for the purpose of shortlisting.

Please ensure that Equality and Diversity issues are addressed specifically in relation to the role for which you are applying when addressing the requirements of this person specification where appropriate.

If you are a disabled person, but are unable to meet some of the job requirements specifically because of your disability, please address this in your application. If you meet all the other criteria you will be shortlisted and we will explore jointly with you if there are ways in which the job can be changed to enable you to meet the requirements.

Equality & Diversity

1. Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community **S**
2. Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post **S**
3. Ability to demonstrate commitment to the principles of equality in employment and service delivery.

Knowledge

1. Understanding of local government policy and finance **S**
2. Knowledge of management accounting techniques over income and expenditure items. **S**
3. Knowledge of costing, benchmarking and modelling techniques to support proposals for change. **S**
4. Understanding of current challenges and opportunities in local government **S**
5. Experience of working in a management accounting environment within a large public or private sector organisation. **S**

Aptitude

1. Numerical reasoning
2. Oral presentation
3. Able to prioritise workload.

Skills

(Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested)

(To Be Tested – S)

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|----|---|----------|
| 1. | Able to draft reports and briefings | S |
| 2. | Assertive communication and listening skills | S |
| 3. | Persuasive and analytical skills | S |
| 4. | Understanding of corporate and strategic objectives | S |
| 5. | Able to produce management information reports, dashboards and other information. | S |

Experience

- | | | |
|----|--|----------|
| 1. | AAT qualified or CCAB part qualified accountant or able to demonstrate significant relevant financial experience in a large and complex organisation | S |
| 2. | Experience in finance roles | S |
| 3. | Demonstrable experience of successfully providing relevant financial services in a large and complex organisation | S |
| 4. | Evidence of understanding effective performance measures and performance improvement programme in the delivery of services | S |

General Education

1. Educated to O level/GSCE/A level or equivalent

Personal Qualities

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1. | Must be able to adapt to competing demands |
| 2. | Must be financially fluent, cost and contribution conscious with a focus on value for money |
| 3. | Energetic, determined, robust and resilient enough to cope with the demands of the role. |
| 4. | Able to establish positive working relationships with partners and colleagues across different disciplines. |
| 5. | High standards of integrity |
| 6. | Commitment to learn – desire to acquire new knowledge, skills and approaches. |

Circumstances

DBS Disclosure Required? **No** ☒ **Basic** ☐ **Enhanced** ☐

(Tick as appropriate – guidance available from your HR Advisor)

Physical

Generally candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post.