

Group Accountant, People Job Description

Job Title:	Group Accountant, People
Salary:	Up to £57,000 per annum inclusive of MFS
Department:	Finance
Function:	Service Financial Management
Team:	Operational Finance
Hours/weeks: <i>E.g. 36 hours/52.14 weeks</i>	36
Base location:	Lynton House
Reports to: <i>Job title</i>	Head of Business Partnering
Responsible for: <i>Job titles of direct reports</i>	Managing up to 8 staff



Role purpose and role dimensions:

Overview of the job

The post holder will work within a matrix management style and be responsible for delivering financial management services to a range of Council service areas.

- Provide a professional lead within the Finance Service, maintaining awareness and knowledge of relevant legislation, financial reporting standards, best practice and new developments.
- Providing high quality financial services to senior stakeholders across all Service Areas, in accordance within the Council's vision and values. The Group Accountant will act as the principal point of contact and support a portfolio of service managers, providing effective support and challenge to these senior colleagues.
- Through working closely with senior customers, to provide them with clear and unambiguous monthly and quarterly financial monitoring information, including robust and detailed forecasts of financial outturn.
- Support the delivery of service's transformation and innovation through the provision of expert financial analysis and business case preparation
- Support services in the development and financial evaluation of savings options and monitoring of savings delivery
- In partnership with service managers, devising robust options for managing budget variances and the development of recovery and action plans
- To support the statutory accounts process and the delivery of the Council's statement of accounts and associated financial returns. Supporting the delivery of the requirements of the external audit team and ensuring that all required working papers and evidence are provided in a timely manner.
- Provide effective management of a team in the Finance Service Area, providing excellent supervision and providing clear guidance on team priorities in response to changing circumstances and deadlines.
- Ensuring that team members are adequately trained to meet the requirements of the service and the organisation
- To support the Head of Business Partnering, providing input to the development of business strategy and plans, in the review of performance and in maintaining appropriate relationships with other Service Areas and External Agencies.
- To deputise for the Head of Business Partnering in providing financial advice to the Council through its formal meetings. This will involve occasional committee attendance
- Represent the Council's views on national and regional bodies on a range of complex and challenging matters, promoting the interests of the Council and the Finance Service function and ensure that the Council's priorities are taken into account.
- Promote and develop a culture that supports a Self Service approach to service delivery.
- Any other duties that may reasonably be considered to be within the scope of this post.
-



<p>Key external contacts: <i>Organisations</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Auditors • Relevant Government departments e.g. DfE, DCLG • CIPFA • London Councils • Relevant London wide and National bodies e.g. ADASS • Partner Organisations e.g. CCGs, NELFT, Police, Schools • Voluntary Sector Groups
<p>Key internal contacts: <i>Job titles or groups of staff</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational Directors/ Assistant Directors • Head Teachers • Service Managers • Head of Internal Audit
<p>Financial dimensions: <i>Budgetary responsibility & amount. Equipment, cash, property etc. for which employee is responsible.</i></p>	<p>There is no direct financial responsibility</p> <p>The postholder will be advising customers on financial strategies of up to £100m</p> <p>Group Accountants are expected to work from home and other Council sites as required.</p>
<p>Key areas for decision making:</p>	<p>The postholder will be advising on all aspects of financial management, including support to key strategic initiatives within the relevant service portfolio. This will have far reaching financial and wider implications, covering aspects including: --</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financial forecasting and planning • statutory accounting, including interpretation of relevant statute and regulation. • business planning; • corporate financing and planning; • commercialisation and capital investments/modelling – including options appraisal; • transformation and the financial implications of alternative service delivery models; • service planning, horizon forecasting; • risk management and mitigation; • advice and signposting across the Resources directorate.
<p>Other considerations: <i>E.g. working patterns</i></p>	<p>Normal office hours</p> <p>But working flexibly and in different locations, including working from home. With an expectation to adjust working patterns according to the services supported.</p> <p>Occasional committee attendance and other evening meeting attendance will be required as appropriate</p>



Key Accountabilities & Result Areas:	Key Elements:
Provision of strategic financial advice	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of some aspects of strategic financial advice• Financial modelling• Enabling enhanced commercialisation and awareness, developing opportunities• Pre-empting risks, devising and implementing mitigations and solutions• Ensuring the financial implications for formal reports are robust and fully inform service and corporate decision making• Preparing and supporting the presentation of reports to Members and other senior stakeholders• Through techniques such as modelling and option appraisal, to provide strategic support to senior colleagues as they consider emerging pressures and alternative methods of service delivery



Management Accounting

Group Accountants will be responsible for ensuring that the support received by service areas meets their needs and that advice / guidance provided is clear and robust. They will be specifically required to:

- Promote a culture which empowers budget holders and supports the delivery of value for money services, including reporting on benchmark information and key cost drivers.
- Take an active lead in the design and development of the reports that service managers are able to access for the purpose of financial management - with an emphasis on constantly improving the quality and customer focus of this information.
- Drawing on an in-depth knowledge of the services and the financial complexities under the remit of the post, to design systems and procedures that enable effective budgetary control, ensuring that variations and emerging financial pressures are drawn to the attention of managers, with options for their resolution, and incorporated into corporate reports.
- Determine and evaluate the ongoing implications of forecasts as part of the medium term financial strategy preparation.
- Write the departmental monitoring reports for consideration by managers and senior decision makers.
- Represent the Finance Service Area at meetings with Members, Chief Officers, senior officers of external organisations and Government Departments / Agencies, providing advice on the financial implications of policy and service delivery issues.
- On behalf of the Corporate Director of Finance, to monitor the financial implications of matters under consideration by the Council, providing advice on the financial and resource implications of proposals for inclusion in reports to Committees.
- Advise on developments in the financing and operation of individual services within the remit of the Team, including national, regional and local policy initiatives, ensuring that these are reflected in financial plans and work programmes.
- Assist in identifying, evaluating and securing mainstream and alternative sources of funding.

Financial Advice

This will involve:

- Support in the development of service transformation and business innovation initiatives
- Robust review and support in the development of business cases and options appraisals
- Complex financial modelling and sensitivity analysis
- Adhoc advice to budget managers on all aspects of financial management

Customer Focus

This will involve:

- Key finance contact and advisor for senior internal and external stakeholders
- Escalation and customer liaison point for finance service
- Ensure that key stakeholders are trained in matters of financial management, compliance and processes, so that they are able to understand and fully contribute to the production of financial information as well as transparent financial management.
- Determining customer needs and shaping the service as appropriate within resource constraints
- Promoting a culture which empowers budget holders and supports the delivery of value for money services and knowledge of key cost drivers
- Contribute to meeting the training needs of all service managers and their staff in the use of financial systems and reports.
- Involvement in wider service decision making outside of core financial management.



Other

This will involve:

- Representing the LB of Redbridge at major external forums and acting as the Finance lead in relevant strategic partnerships
- To develop and propose the implementation of complex strategic financial policies and procedures
- Assisting in relevant internal audit processes and ensuring that recommendations are implemented as appropriate
- Ensure the proper use and quality of underlying financial records by ensuring they are robustly structured to meet customer needs
- Maintain accounting records within the Team's remit to a high standard and to complete financial statements, grant claims, returns etc., accurately and within the required deadlines.

General Accountabilities & Responsibilities

Key Elements

Green Statement

This will involve:

- Seeking opportunities for contributing to sustainable development of the borough, in accordance with the Council's commitment to making Redbridge a cleaner, greener place to live. In particular, demonstrating good environmental practice (such as energy efficiency, use of sustainable materials, sustainable transport, recycling and waste reduction) in your job.

Data Protection/Confidentiality

This will involve:

- Complying with the Data Protection Act 1998 – treating all information acquired through your employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence and in accordance with Caldicott principles.
- Complying with the Code of Conduct, other practice guidelines and the rules and protocols defining employees' access to and use of the Council's databases and systems. Any breaches could result in disciplinary measures.
- Maintaining client records and archive systems in accordance with departmental procedure, policy and statutory requirements.



<p>Conduct and Whistleblowing</p>	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complying with the requirements of the Code of Conduct and maintaining high standards of personal conduct, honesty and integrity. You have a duty to raise any impropriety or breach of procedure to the appropriate level of management. Employees making such disclosures (whistleblowing) are protected and may make them without fear of recrimination.
<p>Safer Working</p>	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Where you work in such a post the Council will require a DBS Disclosure check and references will be taken up prior to interview.
<p>Equalities</p>	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complying with the Council's strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity and outcomes in its services to the community and in the employment of people. You are expected to understand, comply with and promote Council policies in your work, to undertake any appropriate training and to challenge any prejudice and discrimination.
<p>Customer Care</p>	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complying with corporate and service area customer service standards and promoting the development of high quality, individualised and customer-led services.
<p>Health and Safety</p>	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being responsible for your own Health & Safety, as well as that of colleagues, service users and the public. Employees should co-operate with management, follow established systems of work, use protective equipment where necessary and report defectives and hazards to management.



<p>To contribute as an effective and collaborative member of the team</p>	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Taking responsibility for continuing self-development and participating in training and development activities. ▪ Participating in the ongoing development, implementation and monitoring of the service plans. ▪ Supporting and contributing to value for money, service efficiencies and improvements.
<p>Flexibility</p>	<p>This will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The above-mentioned duties are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. From time to time you may be required to undertake responsibilities outside the normal remit of your Job Description as required by the line manager, and are broadly within your the grading level and competence.

Group Accountant, People Person Specification

Job Title: Group Accountant, People

*Method of candidate assessment: A = Application form I = Interview T = Test.
Weighting (W): 3 = most important, 1 = least important*

		A/ I/ T	W
Minimum education/ qualifications:	CCAB / CIMA qualified or significant experience of working at a senior level in a finance team within a large and complex organisation.	A	3
	Ongoing evidence of continuing Professional Development	A/I	3



Minimum experience/ knowledge/ skills:	Extensive experience of financial management in a large and complex organisation	A/I	3
	Extensive experience of financial modelling	A/I/T	3
	Experience of project management and delivery across multifunctional teams	A/I	2
	Experience of process review and improvement	A/I	3
	Proven experience of influencing and negotiating with senior stakeholders	A/I	3
	Understanding of the local authority legislative framework – specifically in relation to financial reporting and accounting	A/I/T	3
	Experience and knowledge of the local authority closure of accounts process including the compliance framework relating to the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting	A/I	3
	Understanding of the financial risks and implications of commercialisation in the public sector	A/I	2

Minimum behaviours:			
Customer service	Ability to deliver a customer focussed service	A/I	3
	Responsive to customer need, implementing feedback mechanisms	A/I	3
	Experience of implementing and managing customer focused financial systems and interfaces.	A/I	3
	Ability to manage conflicting deadlines and customer expectations	A/I/T	3
	Ability to maintain excellent professional relationships, but challenge when appropriate	A/I	3



Communicating and influencing others	Ability to influence and negotiate with senior stakeholders Ability to communicate effectively and appropriately through all mediums Ability to present complex information effectively to all audiences	A/I A/I/T A/I	2 3 3
Working together	To work in partnership with service managers To work seamlessly with other members of the finance team and wider resources directorate To lead and participate in cross functional project teams, within the Council and with wider partners	A/I A/I A/I	3 3 2
Analysis and judgement	Ability to analyse and interpret complex financial information Ability to use a wide range of financial and non-financial information in decision making Ability to be proactive and pre-emptive in decision making	A/I I I	3 3 2
Driving improvement	Ability to ensure continuous process, service and customer focus improvement Ability to work with wider teams to maximise synergy and deliver wider corporate improvement Ability to lead, sell, promote and embed change	A/I A/I A/I	3 3 3
Adaptability	Able to respond to changing customer requirements Ability to manage and adapt to constantly changing priorities	A/I A/I	2 2



Leadership and managing people	Ability to manage, influence and inspire wider teams through matrix management	A/I	2
	Extensive experience of team management and staff development	A/I	3
	Experience of Managing, developing and motivating professional teams	A/I	2
Special conditions:			
Signature of Employee:	Name:	Date:	