

Job Title	Senior Accounting Officer
Grade	PO3
Location	Newham

Accountable to	<p>The post holder will report to an Assistant Finance Manager</p> <p>Other key relationships for the post holder will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Finance • Finance Manager • Budget Holders
Responsibility for	No managerial or budgetary responsibility but is responsible for giving some financial advice to a range of services.
Job Purpose:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a senior accountancy officer you will be responsible for leading on the administration of financial processes and support systems; maintaining accounting and other records and ultimately, ensuring that the service runs smoothly. • In support of finance managers, this role is integral to enabling transparency and efficiency in all transactions. • Through the pursuit of some of your duties you may be required to deal directly with our residents and businesses, rendering you an ambassador not only for the service, but for the Council as a whole. • The post holder's primary activity is to deliver operational administrative and supporting financial services to the Council directly • The post holder is expected to make a contribution towards service transformation and ensuring excellent joint working with senior officers and other stakeholders across the Council.
Specific Responsibilities	<p>Strategic Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute towards the development and implementation of the Council's financial strategy • Work closely with all stakeholders to ensure best use of limited financial resources, providing support where needed • Identify financial risks and opportunities as and when they arise, inform finance managers and collectively consider options to mitigate risks or exploit opportunities. <p>Financial Analysis & Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality and consistent Reconciliation advice, support and process management in a cost effective and efficient way that positively impacts suppliers and customer efficiency and confidence. This includes answering complex queries from staff/customers and suppliers on reconciliation policies, procedures and processes • To develop forecasting and modelling tools in liaison with managers • To provide proactive analysis and advice on complex proposals for spending, savings or other service and corporate initiatives • Produce reports from Oracle and other peripheral systems to support in-year monitoring, year-end and statutory reporting • Lead on the completion of quarterly, annual and ad hoc government and statistical returns, including WGA, RO, QRO and CO

- Support maintenance of corporate registers to support year-end statutory disclosures e.g. Leasing Register and Grant Income.
- Prepare audit working papers for assigned areas and ensure these comply with audit requirements.
- Produce good quality and fully supported corporate reconciliations for assigned area (which may include bank reconciliation, debtors, reserves, Collection Fund, Trial Balance, grant income and recharges).
- Lead on collating information in response to FOI, Public Inspection and ad hoc queries in support of finance managers
- Assist in the preparation of research and reports, under the supervision of a finance manager or assistant finance manager

Finance Operations

- Undertake general finance and administration tasks including maintaining shared folders, intranet pages, filing bank statements, raising POs, manual payments, capital approvals, budget virements, and journal transfers.
- Ensure financial operating procedures and policies are kept up to date and any changes approved by the relevant head of finance
- Ensure the maintenance of key team administrative documents, such as timetables for budget setting and closing, and annual leave documents
- Generate and maintain accurate computerised and manual records which ensure that information is up-to-date, stored securely, is readily retrievable and complies with the Data Protection Act. For example: maintenance of grant schedules, section 106 records, leasing schedules, and fixed asset register
- Support the development of the financial training strategy and deliver training to key stakeholders

Compliance

- Assisting with audits, fact checks, and resolving discrepancies
- Make a contribution towards the closure of accounts, support the external audit opinion and deliver appropriate financial returns
- Support an effective system of financial controls across the organisation with adequate review and coverage within the annual internal audit plan
- Undertake regular compliance monitoring exercises in assigned areas to ensure impact on year-end is minimised, including clearance of orders and goods receipted items awaiting invoice matching, storage of journal supporting documents, code naming conventions, trial balance errors and unallocated income
- Promote correct use of the Chart of Accounts across the Council and liaise with services to take corrective action where necessary
- Report any potential fraud and to provide input on minimising the risk of fraud.
- Champion compliance with financial regulations and other appropriate control frameworks and take action as appropriate to establish and correct breaches.

Leadership and Management

- Provide quality assurance over the work of accounting officers
- Enable and encourage a flexible working environment
- Actively promote seamless integrated working across all aspects of finance
- Deliver on projects within the department and follow appropriate governance processes in order to achieve their intended benefits and goals

Change and Improvement:

- Assist in the development, implementation and review of change management programmes to deliver continuous improvement
- Proactively seek and identify commercial opportunities that generate income and provide innovative solutions to service delivery challenges
- Proactively seek and contribute towards implementing internal process improvements

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support opportunities for council-wide transformation and alternative service delivery models • Contribute to the creation of a digital culture within the service by embracing technology in every-day activities and actively seeking digital improvement opportunities in support of a service-wide digital strategy <p>Example outcomes or objectives that this role will deliver:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Financial reports that include timely and accurate financial information 2) Statutory reports and FOIs delivered within legislative timeframes 3) Identification of financial control breaches across the organisation 4) A contribution towards the development of a prioritised team Business Plan showing how both business-as-usual and specific projects, programmes and transformations will be delivered for the Council along with the identification of any associated risks and contingency plans 5) Development and maintenance of departmental policies and procedures 6) Minimal backlog in financial administration activities
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment to and champion for equality and diversity in all aspects of employment and service provision. All employees are expected to understand and promote this approach in their work. • Adherence to Health and Safety requirements and proper risk management is required from all employees in so far as is relevant to their role. All employees are expected to understand and promote good health and safety practices and manage risks appropriately • Deal with any Safeguarding issues that might arise, in line with the Council's policies and procedures. • Comply with Health and Safety Regulations associated with your employment. • Be aware of the council's responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1984 for the security, accuracy and relevance of all personal data held on such systems and ensure that all processes comply with this. • To treat all information acquired through your employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence.
Critical Success Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of and delivery of quality services – ensuring a high level of service that is reflective of all customer needs and value for money • Anticipates different customer needs – delivering a customer focused shared service which is a cultural 'fit', is flexible and proactive in approach • Delivers a resilient business, which continuously improves and innovates with healthy revenue streams • Operates an ethos of and champions a unified public service approach and actively engages stakeholders both within and outside the council • Delivers capacity and capability to operate business as usual with the capacity and capability to innovate and project manage to support this • Delivers a flexible and scalable platform to innovate, enhance market knowledge and continuously improve • Invests in people and skills to deliver a sustainable business

Person Specification

The criteria listed in this Person Specification are all essential to the job. Where the Method of Assessment is stated to be the Application Form, your application needs to demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria, even if other methods of assessment are also shown. If you do not address these criteria fully, or if we do not consider that you meet them, you will not be shortlisted. Please give specific examples wherever possible.

Criteria		Method of assessment Application Form (AF) Test (T) Interview (I)
Professional qualifications/memberships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCAB foundation stage, AAT 4 or equivalent– Essential 	AF
Able to demonstrate and evidence a highly developed competence in:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical Thinking Financial Analysis Delivering Excellent Customer Service Communicating Driving innovation, creativity and continuous improvement Working Together Delivering at Pace 	AF AF/T AF AF/I AF AF AF
Able to demonstrate and evidence knowledge and experience in:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of the major issues facing local government, understanding of the national policy context, requirements and future direction for relevant service areas Reasonable interpersonal and communication and presentation skills Provides data for report in a clear, understandable and appropriate format for use Able to apply intermediate accounting principles and work in accordance with relevant rules and procedures Is aware of and complies with standards of financial control Is able to explain financial control issues and related responsibilities to other members of staff Can identify issues and resolve queries Able to manipulate data to demonstrate trends and correlations Experience of working effectively in an area with competing demands and tight time-scales. Ability to think critically, apply innovative and creative thinking to address service challenges 	AF AF/I AF/I/T AF/I/T AF/I AF/I AF T AF/I AF/I

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-developed IT skills (MS Office suite, financial systems, data visualisation tools (e.g., Power BI, Tableau)) 	AF/I/T
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate the ability to communicate, both written and oral, financial issues 	AF/I/T
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to clearly communicate with and influence staff members 	AF/I/T
Behaviours and personal qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resilience, not easily deterred in the face of challenges 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to challenge, support and engage stakeholders 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies opportunities for co-operation and interdependency across groups and delivery units 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed to corporate and collegiate working across the service 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eager to learn and do the best job they can 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses information objectively, considering the facts and differing perspectives to reach a sound, logical conclusion 	AF/I/T
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to analyse data, identify current and future trends to produce meaningful reports 	AF/I/T
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes responsibility for delivering timely and quality results with focus and drive 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies good practice and solutions, and integrates them into service provision 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is aware and challenges with the assistance of senior colleagues, if necessary, organisational cultures that may lead to poor practice 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses intuition as well as complex analysis to create a new concept or approach 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates sensitivity in understanding the impact of change on others 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates integrity and consistency in decision making 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upholds a high standard of fairness and ethics in words and actions 	AF/I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage different views and perspectives 	AF/I