

Job description

Post title: Senior Accountant
Service area: Resources
Grade: PO3/PO4
Reports to: Principal Accountant
Your team: Core Team
Number of supervisees: N/A

Our ambition

We're determined to make Islington fairer. To create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life.

We also have an ambitious goal – to be the best council in the country – with every employee clear about the part they play and inspired, focused and supported to give their very best.

We want to build an organisation where employees feel valued, inspired and empowered to help us achieve our goals and provide the best services possible to our residents.

Our values and behaviours

'Be Islington' is about setting a clear challenge about what it means to be an Islington employee and sets the standard for every new recruit.

We ask our employees to 'Be Islington' – playing their part in working together for a fairer borough and to always be collaborative, be ambitious, be resourceful, and be empowering ('CARE').

Our commitment to challenging inequality

We are committed to tackling inequality, racism and injustice and creating a fairer borough for all. In order to do this, we need to set the example by being a fair employer and creating a workplace environment, which is free from discrimination, racism and inequality. Our approach needs to be proactive, consistently learning to create a fairer workplace and foster a culture, which empowers all staff to challenge inequality.

Fairness is at the heart of what we do. We want to celebrate and embrace our differences by:

- Ensuring our workforce is representative of the people we work on behalf of, our residents
- Creating equitable working environments and diverse teams
- Understanding our residents in order to design and deliver services that help tackle inequality and improve life chances for our residents
- Getting to know people and their differences
- Interpreting issues and concerns from a cultural perspective and address situations or problems from the points-of-view of multiple cultures

- Supporting people with long-term health conditions and/or disabilities
- Recognising the value of flexible working to support staff where possible

Key responsibilities

Leadership

As a member of the council's management team, to contribute proactively to the collective leadership for the council, working collaboratively with Members, services across the council, partners and stakeholders to deliver the council's objectives and priorities.

To drive positive cultural change, embodying and promoting the values and behaviours of the council and empowering staff to reach their full potential. Ensure that the performance and development framework is effective for all staff.

To lead on and ensure the effective implementation of corporate initiatives and transformation programmes that cut across the whole or part of the council's activities.

Resources and Financial management

Ensure effective Financial Management, cost controls and income maximisation in an ever changing environment, fluctuating demands and priorities. Ensure resources are well managed and effectively deployed to the best possible effects assuring value for money in all activities.

Compliance

Ensure legal, regulatory and policy compliance under GDPR, Health and Safety and in area of your specialism identifying opportunities and risks and escalating where appropriate.

Work style

Flexible/Office-Based

Primary Job Function

1. To support the efficient and effective provision of a comprehensive finance function, including all aspects of the annual estimates process, budget maintenance, monitoring, control and reporting and the year-end closing of accounts, in accordance with statutory requirements and the Council's policies and procedures, statutory returns, ad hoc requests and project work. To be responsible for supporting the prompt, efficient and accurate provision of financial information.

2. The post will be part of the Council's Core Finance Team which is organised flexibly around key themes in order to support and compliment the Strategic Finance teams (Service Finance, Corporate Accountancy and Financial Planning) in the delivery of a comprehensive finance service to the Council.

3. The post holder will be expected to work flexibly across any of the Core Team themes as directed by senior staff within the Core Team and could have different reporting lines for completion of tasks including direction by a Strategic Finance Manager. For day to day management reporting purposes the post has been aligned with a specific theme lead structure within the Core Team; however, this alignment may change over time in accordance with the needs of the organisation.
4. The post holder will be expected to adhere consistently to the Core Team's standardised financial processes. Standard processes will be developed and managed by the Core Team, in consultation with Strategic Finance Managers, for all key areas including budget monitoring, budget build and closure of accounts.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To be responsible for supporting the Principal Accountant with the induction, training and motivation of the Finance Team staff, who have responsibility for covering the core team functions, in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.
2. Actively support the development and training of the junior staff in the core team
3. To be responsible for supporting the efficient and complete preparation of detailed revenue and capital expenditure and income budgets in conjunction with operational managers and Strategic Finance Managers, in line with the Council's policies and procedures.
4. To be responsible for supporting the continued development, maintenance and review of budget monitoring, control, reconciliation and reporting in conjunction with operational managers and to contribute to the continuous improvement of departmental systems in line with financial best practice as required by the Senior Finance Manager/Finance Manager.
5. To be responsible for reviewing and improving the development of local commitment monitoring financial and activity systems used by operational managers to ensure consistency, effective reconciliation and financial best practice.
6. To be responsible for effective joint working with the council's external partners and other external organisations, to ensure appropriate procedures and processes for setting, monitoring and reviewing the financial arrangements.
7. To be responsible for the efficient and timely completion of specific tasks within the annual closing of accounts process, including the preparation and submission of grant claims and the on-going maintenance, reconciliation and review of the accounts for specific areas of responsibility.
8. To be responsible for the preparation, analysis and provision of accurate financial and management information to be included in statutory returns and reports, in line with statutory requirements and the Council's policies and procedures.

9. To be responsible for contributing to the wide range of service plans and reviews, including reviewing the cost effectiveness of services and supporting the Council's lead finance officer role in line with the Council's policies and procedures, in order to achieve value for money.
10. A significant contribution towards improvements in service delivery, systems, processes and/or working methods that enhance service delivery and/or generate savings and supporting early identification of potential problems and devise and implement solutions to them.
11. To be responsible for assisting with the review and update of all documentation, policies and procedures and compliance with statutory requirements, in line with professional standards and the Council's policies and procedures.
12. To be responsible for assisting Strategic Finance Managers with information for the preparation of Corporate Management Board, Joint Board and Executive reports, in particular their financial implications and responses to Members' enquiries in relation to all aspects of the finance function, as required by the Principal Accountant.
13. To be responsible for supporting effective liaison with the Strategic Finance teams and budget holders in relation to timely and accurate budget monitoring, control, reconciliation and reporting.
14. To be responsible for supporting effective liaison with Government departments and statutory agencies, particularly in relation to matters including statutory returns and government grants, to maximise income due to the Council.
15. To be responsible for acting on behalf of the Council ensuring the provision of advice and guidance to all levels of staff, which is appropriate, accurate, timely, verbal and written, in relation to all aspects of the Core Team functions in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures and to promote awareness of good financial practice and control.
16. To be responsible for supporting effective liaison with external and internal audit, including the efficient filing and retention of documentation, maintaining appropriate audit trails for subsequent retrieval as and when required.
17. To be responsible for the efficient preparation and production of timely and accurate routine and ad-hoc management information, in relation to all aspects of the finance function, as required by the Principal Accountant.
18. To be responsible for supporting effective liaison with other teams and to promote joint working arrangements and the sharing of information.
19. To be responsible for assisting with the preparation and completion of complaint responses relating to the finance function, as required by the Senior Finance Manager, in accordance with the Council and Departmental complaints' procedures.
20. To contribute to the ongoing review of corporate and departmental systems and procedures and implement decisions, as required by the Principal Accountant.

21. To be responsible for keeping up to date with accounting and other relevant legislation, regulations, standards, service developments and initiatives and the Council's policies and procedures.

22. To undertake other duties commensurate to the grade of the post.

ADDITIONAL:

- To use and assist others in the use of information technology systems to carry out duties in the most efficient and effective manner.
- To achieve agreed service outcomes and outputs, and personal appraisal targets, as agreed by the line manager.
- To undertake training and constructively take part in meetings, supervision, seminars and other events designed to improve communication and assist with the effective development of the post and post holder.
- To carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with the council's commitment to customer service excellence and ensure compliance with the customer care standards.
- To be committed to the Council's core values of public service, quality, equality and empowerment and to demonstrate this commitment in the way duties are carried out.
- To ensure that duties are undertaken with due regard and compliance with the Data Protection Act and other legislation.
- To carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and relevant Health and Safety legislation.
- At all times to carry out responsibilities/duties within the framework of the Council's Dignity for all Policy. (Equal Opportunities Policy).

Linked Grade

To achieve grade PO4, the post holder must demonstrate:

1. Providing support for a specialist area without close supervision.
2. Experience in leading a task or project at a relevant level to successful completion.

Person specification

You should demonstrate on your application form how you meet the essential criteria. Please ensure that you address each of the criteria as this will be assessed to determine your suitability for the post.

Essential criteria

Qualifications

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
1	Qualified CCAB or actively studying CCAB finalist (preferably CIPFA) and relevant experience working at this level	Application
2	Substantial experience in a financial management environment at a relevant level	Application
3	Relevant experience of budget planning, monitoring and closing of accounts	Application
4	Experience of providing relevant management information to non-finance managers	Application
5	Significant experience in using PC based systems especially spreadsheets and word processing (MS Word, Excel and Outlook)	Application/ Interview

Experience

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
6	Ability to work on one's own initiative but also to accept instruction. Excellent self-management skills, prioritising conflicting demands and deadlines, taking responsibility for work. Ability to work without close supervision.	Interview
7	Good written and oral communication skills and an ability to deal effectively with queries and provide advice	Interview
8	Ability to work flexibly and effectively	Application
9	Show high attention to detail and accuracy, checking output for accuracy, appropriateness and completeness	Interview
10	Ability to demonstrate effective decision making	Application

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
11	Experience assisting with the development of systems or processes	Interview
12	Experience with joint working and liaising with partners	Interview
13	Ability to produce high quality working papers to the requisite standard	Interview
14	Ability to demonstrate effective supervision and training of junior staff	Interview
15	Apply principles of excellent customer focus	Interview
16	Experience of taking responsibility for work required with minimal supervision ensuring quality, effective and quality	Interview

Skills

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
17	Excellent knowledge and understanding of accountancy concepts and principles	Interview
18	Ability to work flexibly and effectively	Interview
19	Ability to demonstrate a hands-on approach to work. Ability to investigate a problem or a situation beyond routine questioning, create solutions trying innovative ways and willingness to learn and adapt to new tasks and challenges	Interview
20	Ability to work on one's own or as part of a team, building effective working relationships within and across departments	Interview
21	Knowledge and understanding of Health and Safety legislation	Interview
22	Understanding of and commitment to Data Protection	Application

Grade PO4 Additional Requirements

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
23	Qualified CCAB and evidence of continuing professional development or relevant experience working at this level	Application
24	Knowledge of the code of practice	Interview
25	Ability to lead on a task or project at an appropriate level	Interview
26	Ability to lead a team and effectively plan/monitor their work including quality and performance	Interview

Special requirements of the post

(Insert any special requirements of the post. Delete if this does not apply.)

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
27	This role will require you to obtain a Standard level satisfactory clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)	Application

Our accreditations

Our accreditations include: the Healthy Workplace award, Timewise, London Living Wage Employer, Disability Confident Committed, The Mayor's Good Work Standard, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and Time to Change.

