Role Title	Head of Finance (Closedown)
Job Family	**Finance**
Competency level	**Senior Manager**
Pay Scale	**PO10**

Purpose

The Head of Finance (Closedown) provides support to the Chief Accountant in the delivery of the organisation's end-to-end closedown process. The post holder will lead:

- the closedown process; and
- the non-capital side of the Statement of Accounts.

The post holder must be a technically capable Accountant, who can take responsibility for the closedown process, including stakeholder management and coordination of the timetable. They must possess the technical skills to produce accurate accounts, produce relevant notes, undertake quality checks for consistency, and make sure that the organisation is compliant with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.

Generic Accountabilities	End Results/ Outcomes
Plan and ensure service delivery within a complex / diverse service area. Control operational activities within the service area and ensure professional standards are delivered.	The service is delivered to the quality, Council, professional and legislative standards required. Integrated service development and delivery is informed by client, partner and stakeholder views, latest thinking, good practice and legislative requirements. Corporate strategies are effectively implemented within area of responsibility. External inspections are managed effectively. Service delivers excellent customer service.
Manage responses to complex professional or politically sensitive issues within the area of responsibility.	Expert opinion, advice, supports and interpretation is provided on all aspects of the area of responsibility, including major decisions. Major issues are managed through to a satisfactory conclusion. Feedback and complaints procedures are developed and managed. Complaints are effectively resolved.

Manage key relationships with delivery partners /providers /suppliers to commission / manage / evaluate / enhance appropriate service delivery / capacity within area of responsibility.	Customer outcomes are clearly understood and specified. Services / goods are delivered on time, to budget and standards agreed. Opportunities to improve delivery / capacity of provision are proactively identified and actioned. Suppliers and supply chains are resilient and adaptable to meet changing needs. Expected operational efficiencies are realised.
Develops service plans to meet strategic business goals. Ensure compliance with all internal and external standards.	Service plan and targets for area of responsibility are developed from Council's overall strategic directives and agreed and communicated within required timeframe. Strategic and operational input is provided to wider business planning and development. Progress against objectives is effectively monitored and delivered.
Ensure the development and delivery of continuous improvements in all aspects of the service.	Improvements are developed and delivered effectively. Stakeholder requirements are met.
Lead, motivate and develop staff to create and maintain a highly competent and participative workforce.	The team is highly competent, effective, motivated and outcomes focussed. Recruitment, induction, development, performance reviews, employee relations and all HR processes and planning is completed to the required standards and timescales. Effective team meetings take place to required timescales.

Identify, secure, deploy and manage the resources necessary for the professional service area to meet/exceed its objectives.	Resources including, equipment, people, and systems are utilised optimally and efficiently. Annual budget is planned, developed and delivered. Value for money is maximised. Financial expenditure and financial integrity are controlled to assure regulatory and Council policy compliance.
Ensure the necessary standards relating to safeguarding best practices/protocols are effectively communicated, monitored and maintained.	Safeguarding standards are monitored and maintained in compliance with Council policy. Appropriate safeguarding training is provided.
Implement a risk management programme and advise on issues affecting Council service areas.	Business threatening situations are recognised, planned for and managed or escalated as appropriate. Systems and governance are in place to and respond promptly to critical events. Continuous service is provided.
Ensure the successful implementation of health and safety legislation, policies and practices.	Risks to staff and others are assessed and managed. Suitable health and safety instruction and training are provided. There is a safe working environment.
Job Specific Accountabilities	**End Results/ Outcomes**
Adaptability Adjust, modify, or change in response to new circumstances, challenges, or changing environments, remaining flexible, open-minded, and capable of evolving in order to thrive and succeed in varying situations.	Uncertainty in the operating environment is navigated successfully. Change is fully embraced and supported. Role is performed to a high standard even in unfamiliar or unexpected conditions.
Judgement Demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills, both individually and collectively, avoiding “group think” and optimism bias.	Sound, evidence-based decisions are made. Timely and appropriate risk-based decisions are made.

Communication and the ability to influence Deliver competent written and verbal communications, including presentations.	All messages are communicated clearly and 'jargon' free.
Strategic thinking Think critically, see the bigger picture, and align actions with long-term goals and objectives. 'Horizon scan' risks, issues and opportunities over the short, medium and long term.	Potential challenges and opportunities for the long term are consistently identified. Decisions affecting services are aligned with "big picture".
Challenge Provide balanced and objective feedback and analysis/advice.	Appropriate and constructive challenge/feedback is provided to the organisation in a professional manner.
Business insight Recognise the impact of knowledge to add value and create or improve something.	Processes, products, outputs and approaches are optimised to deliver best results.
Time management Demonstrate good time management skills.	High quality work is delivered within agreed timelines.
Business writing Structure reports effectively, including building a convincing executive summary with compelling arguments and good conclusions and summary.	Meaningful information is delivered in a clear, concise and effective manner. Reports contain effective organisation of ideas and clear expression of thoughts in writing.
Financial accounting and reporting Analyse and report financial transactions and clearly and accurately.	Accurate accounting records are maintained.
Sustainable accounting Consider non-financial information about the organisation's performance to reflect the organisation's activities on environmental, social and governance (ESG).	Financial statements are created, taking into account ESG matters.
Financial management Consider profitability, expenses, cash and credit in the context of an organisation fulfilling its objectives.	Profitability, expenses, cash and credit factored into organisational decision-making.
Risk management Ensure the organisation's risk management framework and risks are managed effectively.	Uncertainty is controlled. Better decision-making is supported and better outcomes are secured.
Performance measurement, management and improvement	Organisation is supported to evaluate performance, set strategic goals and enhance operations.

Performance is measured and managed effectively, and areas for improvement are identified to ensure that organisational performance is optimised.	
Financial systems Deliver, develop and exploit relevant resource management systems and processes to support the organisation's financial policy, regulations, information requirement and end-user population.	Financial systems are resilient and fit for purpose. Financial systems support the organisation to achieve its objectives.
Internal financial controls Implement a control framework for the organisation.	Integrity of operations, and financial and accounting practice is ensured.
Professional qualifications and awareness of public sector finance standards Have appropriate professional qualifications and awareness of public sector finance standards for the role, which may be different and (amongst other factors) dependent on length of service and training history.	Finance team is appropriately qualified.
Building relationships Build trusted and reliable relationships with individuals, teams and organisations, both within LBWF and externally.	Effective relationships with others are built and maintained.
Stakeholder relationship management Identify the value between different stakeholders and influence them through productive engagement, questioning and challenging in a constructive way.	Stakeholders are challenged constructively leading to better decision making and outcomes.

Key Activities

Key activities for the Head of Finance (Closedown) include:

- Acting as lead for the organisation's closedown process, including setting the timetable, engaging with stakeholders across the organisation, implementing soft close, and coordinating working papers.
- Overseeing closedown activities, including completion of accrual forms, reserve drawdowns and provisions.
- Leading on and taking ownership of the non-capital side of the Statement of Accounts and working with the Head of Finance (Capital) to produce the Statement of Accounts.
- Coordinating the grants register.
- Ensuring integrity of financial information and compliance with audit requirements.
- Leading on engagement with the organisation's external auditors, and coordinating the progress of audit, including responses to audit queries.
- Feeding into financial reports to Committees, for example, in relation to external audit progress and the Statement of Accounts.
- Coordinating ledger control and ensuring that an effective process for cyclical review is in place.

- Coordinating balance sheet reconciliations.
- Assisting with the production and presentation of complex and diverse financial information to members and other senior stakeholders, that informs service and corporate decision-making.
- Undertaking specialist project work of a complex nature, preparing reports, representing accountancy services on working groups, including some external groups, and providing financial management and related expertise as and when required.
- Providing support to other areas of Finance, as directed by the Chief Accountant.
- Acting as deputy for the Chief Accountant as and when required.

Nature of Contacts

The post holder will be required to:

- liaise with Directors, Assistant Directors, senior managers and elected members;
- liaise with managers and Directors across the council on operational and strategic issues, and take a lead on individual assignments that may need to involve more than one team;
- be the organisation's main contact with External Auditors;
- represent Finance at inter-departmental working groups and Audit and Governance Committee;
- represent Finance at external groups and organisations;
- communicate with officers, elected members, partner organisations, members of the public, service users and other relevant stakeholders; and
- work closely and in partnership with colleagues across the organisation, the external auditors, internal auditors and the organisation's external partners.

Procedural Context

Reports to Chief Accountant.

Manage highly complex / high risk issues within a framework of policy and regulatory guidelines. Objectives and targets are developed and agreed in line with service plan. High level of discretion and use of initiative in deciding what course of action to take. Exercise expert judgement in assessing complex stakeholder requirements, potential risk and managing quality assurance of service.

Significant expert knowledge and significant experience is required to resolve highly complex issues and proactively anticipate and mitigate problems. Design and develop innovative solutions which enhance the quality and efficiency of services and reputation of the council.

Occasionally the post will be expected to work from other locations.

Key Facts and Figures

Standard DBS check required.

Enable others to understand changes and developments in relevant area and learn new processes / procedures.
Responsible for ensuring contractors / providers deliver to agreed standards.
May manage project teams of both internal staff and external contractors / consultants.

Resourcing
Budget responsibilities Budget responsibility of up to £1 million. Resource and budget management of programme budgets across Financial Services. **Supervisory responsibilities** 5x Graduate Trainees (Sc6/PO3) 1x Principal Finance Officer PO3
Knowledge, Skills and Experience
Essential: • Thorough understanding of current local government accounting practice and procedures, with particular knowledge of the provisions of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, International Financial Reporting Standards, legislation and regulations. • Experience of interpreting, advising on, and implementing technical accounting legislation, regulations and codes including material relating to closure of accounts and associated subjects e.g. updated and new accounting standards. • Proven relevant experience of working in finance in a public sector organisation, to include experience of financial accounting and statement of accounts preparation. • Experience of financial reporting within a local authority or other public sector body. • Ability to extract and manipulate complex financial and non-financial data to demonstrate trends and correlations to support analysis and reporting. • Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate and build relationships with stakeholders at a senior level both internally and externally. • Excellent presentation and report writing skills and the ability to communicate clearly, including the ability to distil complex financial advice into appropriate formats and write clear and concise reports. • Experience of working in a complex organisation with competing priorities and the ability to manage workload and meet stakeholder needs. • Significant experience of using MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and ability to train and support others in its day-to-day use. • Experience of leading on financial processes and/or projects. • Experience of managing and developing staff.
Indicative Qualifications
Essential Fully qualified accountant (CIPFA, ACA, ACCA, CIMA) or part qualified with a demonstrable plan to achieve full qualification within 9 months. Evidence of post-qualification continuing professional development **Desirable** Educated to degree level or equivalent
The above profile is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by employees in this role. It is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and responsibilities which may be required. This role profile will be supplemented and further defined by annual objectives, which will be developed in conjunction with the post holder. It will be subject to regular review and the Council reserves the right to amend or add to the accountabilities listed.