



LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW

Chief Officers' Employment Panel Supplemental Agenda

Date: Thursday 31 August 2023

Agenda - Part I

4. **Recruitment of Interim Director of Finance and Assurance (Section 151 Officer)**
(Pages 3 - 12)
Report of the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development

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**Report for: Chief Officers'
Employment Panel**

Date of Meeting:	31 August 2023
Subject:	Recruitment of the Interim Director of Finance and Assurance (S151 Officer) post
Responsible Officer:	Stacy Bailey – Director of HR & OD
Exempt:	Public (with exempt appendix 2 – by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 in that it contains information relating to an individual)
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Role Profile for the Director of Finance and Assurance (S151 Officer) Exempt - Appendix 2 – Candidate Pack

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the process for recruitment to the Interim Director of Finance and Assurance (s151) post. The Panel is asked to interview the shortlisted candidates and agree on the remuneration package.

Recommendations:

The Panel is requested to:

Following the interview of the shortlisted candidates, whose details are attached in exempt Appendix 2, recommend to Council the designation to the role of Interim Director of Finance and Assurance (S151 Officer), on an hourly rate to be determined by the Panel and until a permanent postholder is in post, subject there being no material and well-founded objection by any member of the Executive.

Section 2 – Report

Director of Finance and Assurance (S151 Officer)

The Director of Finance and Assurance (Section 151 Officer) post is a statutory role for the Council and holds significant responsibilities in how the Council manages and delivers services to residents. The previous permanent post holder resigned and left the Council in August 2023. Following the interviews held on 12 July 2023, a candidate was offered the Interim Director of Finance and Assurance (S151 Officer) post but did not accept the offer.

An interim arrangement was put in place to ensure the Council could fulfil its statutory responsibilities, allowing the Deputy S151 Officer to act up in the post until the recruitment process was completed.

Various interim staffing agencies were asked to submit candidate CVs along with the Deputy S151 Officer for the post. The submissions have been shortlisted by a panel including the Managing Director, Director of HR & OD and the Corporate Director of People.

Legal Implications

The Chief Officers' Employment Panel has delegated powers to:

- Approve remuneration packages of £100,000 or over for any Council post; and
- To appoint Chief Officers.

The Director of Finance and Assurance (S151 Officer) is a statutory role and full Council will be required to designate to this post before it is offered to the successful candidate following the recommendation from the Panel.

As the Director of Finance and Assurance will be the S151 officer an offer of employment can only be made once members of the Executive have been given 5 clear working days to express any material and well-founded objection.

The Panel is also required to report back to Council to designate the post and for information purposes on all such approved remuneration packages.

Financial Implications

The Director of Finance and Assurance (S151 Officer) role is graded at D3, £132,168 - £145,575. The cost of this post, which is budgeted for, and part of the establishment, is £198,564 (including employers oncosts).

Risk Management Implications

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below. **n/a**

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? **No**

- The role quoted in this report has a responsibility to deliver the Council's vision and values by addressing inequalities faced by the residents of Harrow.
- One of the responsibilities of this postholder is to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and the reduction of inequalities, ensuring that everyone can contribute through everyday actions to deliver the required health and wellbeing outcomes.

Council Priorities

1. **A council that puts residents first**
2. **A borough that is clean and safe**
3. **A place where those in need are supported**

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Ella Kesek

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 15 August 2023

Statutory Officer: Jessica Farmer

Signed by the Monitoring Officer

Date: 18 August 2023

Chief Officer: Dipti Patel

Signed by the Corporate Director of Place

Date: 15 August 2023

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Akhil Wilson, Head of Resourcing, Akhil.wilson@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

- | | |
|-----------------|----|
| 1. Consultation | NO |
| 2. Priorities | NO |

Job Title	Director of Finance & Assurance (S151)
Pay Grade	D3
Directorate	Resources
Division	Finance & Assurance
Reports to	Managing Director
Location	Dependant on the Line Manager

Role Purpose

- The post is the Council's Chief Finance Officer under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and fulfils the statutory role of Chief Finance Officer by ensuring that the associated statutory duties are discharged as laid out in CIPFA's guidance for a S151 officer. The post holder is responsible for all financial and other governance systems.
- In addition, the Council's Chief Finance Officer is also subject to professional standards, as Section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires the responsible officer under Section 151 of the 1972 Act to be a member of a specified accountancy body.
- The postholder is a key member of the Corporate Strategic Board, helping it to develop and implement strategy and to resource and deliver the Council's strategic objectives sustainably and in the public interest.
- The postholder must be actively involved in, and able to bring influence to bear on, all material business decisions to ensure immediate and longer-term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered, and alignment with the organisation's financial strategy.
- The postholder must lead the promotion and delivery by the whole organisation of good financial management so that public money is safeguarded at all times and used appropriately, economically, efficiently and effectively.
- The postholder is responsible for the strategic and general management of the Finance division in line with priorities laid out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, Corporate Plan and departmental service plans.
- The post-holder also has the right of access to the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council, as deemed necessary or appropriate by the post-holder.
- The post is responsible for leading and managing the following teams:
 - Finance (Corporate, Directorate and Schools Finance)
 - Treasury and Pension Fund Administration
 - SAP Support
 - Procurement
 - Internal Audit and Corporate Anti-Fraud
 - Insurance
- The post holder holds the responsibility for being the interface to the Council's trading arrangements.
- The post works as part of the Resources Management Team alongside Legal & Governance Services, Human Resources & Development, Strategic Commissioning and Customer Services & IT.
- Budget - Responsible for the effective management of the Council's budgets. Provides guidance to other Corporate Directors and Divisional Directors on the control of their capital and revenue budgets:
 - A total gross revenue budget for the Council of £600m in 2019/20
 - A total gross capital budget in the order of £77m, in 2019/20
 - Direct responsible for the control of the directorate revenue budget of £4.1m, in 2019/20
 - Directly responsible for the administration of the Local Government Pension Fund with prime responsibility for the budget of £830m (as at 01/03/19) and the operation of the pension fund strategy.

- Staff - Responsible for:
 - Direct Reports – 9 fte
 - Overall Staff Numbers – 72.03fte

Job Context (Key outputs of team/role)

- The post is the strategic and operational lead for Finance functions across the Council and must build effective working relationships with all Council services to be able to provide good support and effective challenge. The post promotes effective management of their duties across the whole Council in support and commitment to the delivery of Council services.
- Lead and direct the effective development and implementation of the following key strategies on behalf of the Council:
 - Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - Financial Management Strategy
 - Capital Programme
 - Treasury Management Strategy Statement
- The post holder is the Council’s financial representative at national and regional events, meetings and working parties, and will represent Harrow Council at the Society of London Treasurers and West London Treasurers meetings.

Generic Duties

- Implement and champion, through service and staff development, the Council’s Health and Safety, Equal Opportunity and Information Security Policies.
- To ensure that the post holder complies with their responsibilities as laid out in the council’s health and safety policy and takes an active role in promoting a positive health and safety culture.
- Promote and ensure participation in the Council’s individual performance appraisal and development initiatives and information management best practice.
- To support the operation and general elections when requested by the returning officer.
- To motivate, train, develop and performance manage staff to maintain an effective workforce capable of meeting its objectives.
- To manage the function **or team** so that the services provided are responsive to customer requirements, accessible to all areas of the community and provide value for money
- To develop the structures, systems, and policies necessary to support effective service delivery.
- To formulate annual operational plans and budgets for the function **or team** so that there are clear priorities and appropriate resources are allocated to their achievement.
- To resolve the most complex and high-level operational issues so that they are resolved effectively, and precedents are set for the resolution of similar issues.
- To develop **or contribute to** longer term (2-3 years) plans for the services managed so that they are developed in line with Council and Government priorities and customer requirements.
- To ensure services link effectively with related service provision, within or external to the Council, so that coherent and value for money services are provided. Where appropriate, and in conjunction with other service providers, to undertake joint planning of service delivery and/or for the closer integration of service provision.
- Prepare monitor and control the service budget to ensure that expenditure is in line with the agreed business plan.
- To manage the teams and service provided in a way that promotes the Council’s approach to diversity.

Values, Behaviours and Equalities

We want our colleagues to live our values. These values describe what we stand for and how we do things at Harrow whilst inspiring, challenging and guiding us towards the delivery of our organisational ambitions and goals. Our three values are:

Be Courageous, Do It Together and Make It Happen

These values will also help us to achieve our equalities vision of being a proud, fair & cohesive Harrow, a great place to live, work & visit.

Main Duties / Accountabilities

1. Lead the development of the Council's financial vision and strategy with long term oversight of the Council's financial position working alongside the Council's business transformation programme.
2. Build and promote a culture of excellent financial management and value for money across the Authority.
3. Provide useful, accurate and understandable financial advice to senior officers, partners, elected members and external agencies and government departments.
4. Lead the annual budget setting and MTFs process, and ensure it is appropriately integrated with the wider integrated planning process.
5. Provide a strategic overview of financial performance of the Council through benchmark comparison and information to provide a sound basis for policy development across service areas.
6. Take responsibility for the production of the Council's balanced medium term budgets working alongside and with all Council Services.
7. Maintain effective in year financial and management accounting and reporting using effective financial management information and ensuring actions are taken to balance the budget including the production of monthly management accounts. Ensure there is integrity to the information contained in the Council's general ledger.
8. Oversee the investment of the Council's cash balances to ensure the best return consistent with the agreed risk profile.
9. Ensure adequate attention is focused on the cash flow of the Council with oversight of income management.
10. Manage the annual closure of the accounts to ensure that statutory deadlines are met and that accounts are accurate and of good quality.
11. Ensure there are adequate arrangements in place for managing the Council's capital programme and ensure there is an attractive return on capital investment. Conduct capital investment appraisal as required.
12. Take responsibility for the timely and accurate monitoring and submission of all grant, funding and statutory financial returns.
13. Create an effective financial control environment and ensure that the Financial Regulations are up to date and well understood across the Council.
14. Ensure that Financial Management Systems (SAP) is well developed, fit for purpose, and used appropriately.
15. Ensure that there is an adequately resourced and skilled Finance function in place for the Council.
16. Developing and implementing a pension fund strategy and full responsibility for the financial administration of the Council's Pension Fund in compliance with LGPS regulations.
17. Facilitate the ability of the Council to become a trading authority and act as the interface / shareholder report to the Council's trading arrangements
18. Ensure that adequate insurance cover is in place to protect the Council's assets and to ensure there is no unnecessary exposure.
19. Ensure that there is an adequately resourced Internal Audit and Corporate Anti-Fraud function, in line with their responsibilities as the Council's S151 Officer.

20. Act as the interface to the Council Trading Arrangements 21. Coordination of Portfolio Holder Arrangements with Portfolio Holder for Finance and Commercialisation 22. Chairing of Resources Management Team 23. Chairing of Commissioning and Commercial Board and sign off of Procurement Gateways.		
Selection Criteria - Knowledge, Skills and Experience		
Role requirements	Essential	Desirable
Significant post qualification experience as a senior Finance professional in a large and complex public sector organisation	✓	
Working knowledge of the structures and processes of Local Government.	✓	
The post holder must be able to work under pressure and ensure that the organisation is responsive to changing demands and priorities.	✓	
Must have experience of delivering services for a diverse community.	✓	
Experience of delivering a high performing, high quality, value for money Finance function.	✓	
Proven track record of setting balanced budgets in a challenging financial environment	✓	
Significant management experience with demonstrable experience at a senior level within a similar organisation.	✓	
Experience of delivering business transformation in a complex organisation.	✓	
Experience of delivering effective change management in a complex organisation.	✓	
Experience of partnership working and making multi agency decisions.	✓	
Experience of providing sound strategic and long-term financial advice and challenging long-term decision making.	✓	
Experience of service planning and performance management.	✓	
Experience of employing continuous improvement techniques with successful results.	✓	
Experience of building and managing a highly motivated and successful team.	✓	
Experience of working with external Auditors.	✓	
Ability to build effective working relationships so as to be able to provide effective challenge and support across a broad range of Council services.	✓	
Strong interpersonal skills and ability to be a strong advocate of financial management across a broad range of Council services.	✓	
Political acumen and sensitivity to local political issues.	✓	
Experience of working within a political environment and communicating effectively with elected Members.	✓	
Ability to communicate with a wide audience of managers and staff and to enthuse them about financial management.	✓	
Excellent project management skills.	✓	

Ability to work as a team player as part of an effective management team.	✓	
Ability to communicate with outside bodies include commercial and public sector partners.	✓	
Strong and confident presentation style that will build on confidence from senior officers and Members.	✓	
Attendance at evening meetings is required.	✓	

Qualifications

Role Requirements.	Job specific examples (if left blank refer to left hand column)	Essential	Desirable
Educated to degree level or equivalent or has the equivalent relevant work experience.		✓	
CCAB Qualification		✓	

Other Requirements
The job involves travel for business purposes:

Manager Signature	Employee Signature
Job Title	Job Title
Date	Date

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