

Job Family:	Policy & Advisory Operational Management	Grade:	10
Job Title:	Strategic Finance Business Partner	Directorate:	Resources
Date:	07 March 2024	Version:	2:1

Role Profile - Details Specific to Job Family

These roles provide a broad service that set policy and provides advice to support and assure all of the council's day to day activities. They gather information required by other groups to make strategic decisions and translate this into corporate policy and strategic advice. They have little or no direct accountability for outcomes; however, what they are accountable for is the quality of advice they provide to business leaders.

At the lower levels, these roles tend to focus on research and analysis and the interpretation and implementation of policies. At the higher level, role holders set strategy, develop policy and provide assurance across the Council more broadly.

Role Profile - Details Specific to Grade

Roles will focus on interpreting and applying policies to support local needs. Thinking is focused on specific parts of the Council rather than the Council as a whole and is usually limited to the annual business planning cycle. Will operationalise plans and deploy resources to meet these plans and objectives.

Lead professionals delivering a capability to ensure the effective, cost efficient delivery of a support service.

Brief Description of job role and department

The Shared Finance Service ambition is to add value, inspire success and this role is part of the Shared Finance Service (SFS) team collectively responsible for delivering SFS activities to realise this ambition. The role provides direct support to the Head of Financial Planning & Business Partnering.

The post holder will provide strategic financial business partnering support to the corporate core and front line service areas of the Councils. The post holder will be required to act as a critical friend to the Council, delivering useful analysis and insight that informs strategic decision making and drives strong financial management across the Council. The post holder will support the management of financial risk to protect the financial health of the Council and to ensure financial planning is robust and aligned to Council priorities. The post holder may support areas funded by revenue, capital and/or ring-fenced budgets such as the Dedicated Schools Grant or Housing Revenue Account. The post holder will work as part of the Senior Leadership Team of the service to provide inspirational leadership and drive cultural change to ensure the service reflects the INSPIRE values and achieves excellent outcomes.

Representative accountabilities

- Apply professional judgement to interpret and apply policies and procedures to meet specific local or service needs.
- Provide day to day management and professional supervision to staff to ensure operational plans and activities are delivered effectively.

- Provide assurance that the Council's operations are being conducted within defined regulatory, statutory and professional standards.
- Lead small projects and implement changes and improvements within agreed cost, time and quality standards.
- Where relevant manage service level budgets and resources in order to support the delivery of intended outcomes and demonstrate value for money.

Budgetary accountabilities

- Support the Head of Financial Planning & Business Partnering to lead and coordinate medium term financial planning for the Council's budgets
- Support and advise senior budget holders to manage financial risk and protect the financial health of the Council
- Challenge and support budget holders to manage within limited and reducing resources
- Provide line management and budgetary control over a team of 1-5 FTE's

Specific accountabilities

Leadership & Management

- Take a proactive role in providing inspirational leadership to the finance team as part of the Senior Leadership Tier of the shared finance service
- Provide direct line management of 1-5 staff to support the area of the business you are allocated to as Strategic Finance Business Partner
- Support staff development through coaching and mentoring across the service, helping to fulfil the Shared Finance Service ambition of growing our own talent
- Play an active role in Council leadership networks and lead by example to embed corporate values and beliefs

The post holder will be assigned as **either** a corporate Strategic Finance Business Partner, **or** as a service directorate Strategic Finance Business Partner. The functional responsibilities for these 2 areas are as follows:

Corporate SFBP

- Support the development of the Medium Term Financial Plan and take responsibility for ensuring the MTFP is underpinned by robust and accurate working papers
- Lead and co-ordinate the creation of detailed budget estimates ensuring these are implemented on 1 April and aligned to the published MTFP
- Support the Head of Financial Planning & Business Partnering to prepare budget reports, analysis, and budget options for consideration by senior officers, Members and Council committees
- Provide detailed analysis of grant settlements and other funding announcements, ensuring financial impact on the Council is assessed and communicated clearly to senior officers

- Respond to consultations and assess the financial impact of new legislation as required
- Lead on future years forecasting and scenario planning for income from Business Rates and Council Tax, working closely with the Financial Reporting & Control Managers to provide expert advice on the budgetary impact of the collection funds
- Support the Head of Financial Strategy to align financial plans to other corporate policies and strategies including the corporate plan, and to develop a strong understanding of the Council's financial position and associated challenges across the Council and external stakeholders
- Co-ordinate the completion of statutory returns or ad hoc requests for information relating to Financial Planning or Budgets
- Build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders both internal and external, taking a proactive role in relevant professional networks and information forums
- Work collaboratively with service directorate Strategic Finance Business Partners to ensure key financial risks to the Council are appropriately reflected in medium term financial plans and strategic business partner resource is targeted towards the management and mitigation of these risks
- Support the senior management team of the Council to oversee implementation of budget proposals and update medium term financial plans in light of new and emerging financial issues
- Provide high quality professional advice on the financial implications of corporate proposals and draft financial comments on Committee Reports to inform decision making
- Lead on the development of a SFS culture that encourages challenge and empowers finance staff to challenge services to deliver more from their financial resources by testing the status quo and seeking improved outcomes
- Empower staff to fulfil their potential and create interesting & varied career paths through effective apprenticeships and training schemes and supporting individuals to gain relevant financial qualifications

Service Directorate SFBP

- Act as the senior Finance professional for one or more Directorate areas developing subject matter expertise and taking responsibility for producing accurate and useful financial information and forecasts, based on sound assumptions and realistic estimates, to support both the S151 Officer and Strategic Directors to manage the Council's finances
- Lead and manage the provision of business partner support to one or more directorates, ensuring team resources are targeted towards managing key financial risks, major budget pressures and opportunities
- Provide direct support to one or more Council directors, enabling them to play their part in protecting the financial health of the Council and supporting them to deliver robust financial management in their service areas
- Support the development and delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan and take responsibility for ensuring service budget proposals are challenged and tested to ensure they are realistic, viable, and based on commercially sound assumptions
- Support the creation of detailed budget estimates for your service areas ensuring these are aligned to the published MTFP
- Support the Head of Financial Planning & Business Partnering to prepare budget reports, analysis, and budget options for consideration by senior officers, Members

- and Council committees
- Respond to consultations and assess the financial impact of new legislation as required
- Support the Head of Financial Planning & Business Partnering to align financial plans to service policies and strategies, and to develop a strong understanding of the Council's financial position and associated challenges across the Council and external stakeholders
- Co-ordinate the completion of statutory returns or ad hoc requests for information relating to Service budgets
- Build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders both internal and external, taking a proactive role in relevant professional networks and information forums
- Deliver excellent strategic business partner support to Council services to:
 - Deliver the Medium Term Financial Plan and approved budget plans
 - provide high quality professional advice and support to budget managers, delivering useful insights and translating business intelligence into business success
 - support core financial processes and activities for revenue and capital budgets, including financial planning and budgeting, financial management and monitoring activities, and financial year end processes
 - support and challenge services to manage key financial risks and play their part in protecting the financial health of Sutton Council
 - Add value to the Councils as effective business partners
 - Act as the service gateway to the Shared Finance Service ensuring stakeholders have appropriate access to high quality professional advice and expertise from across the Shared Finance Service
- Work collaboratively with corporate Strategic Finance Business Partners to ensure key financial risks to the Council are appropriately reflected in medium term financial plans and strategic business partner resource is targeted towards the management and mitigation of these risks
- Take responsibility for escalating significant financial issues and risks arising in services to the Head of Financial Strategy and ensure the S151 Officer of the Council is aware of changes to risks that may impact financial sustainability
- Act as an enabler for your service areas, proactively seeking opportunities to add and preserve value, whilst supporting the S151 officer to fulfil their statutory responsibilities by providing a "S151 perspective" to service decision making
- Support the directorate management team for your service areas to oversee implementation of budget proposals and provide updates for inclusion in medium term financial plans in light of new and emerging financial issues
- Provide high quality professional advice on the financial implications of service proposals and draft financial comments on Committee Reports to inform decision making
- Lead on the development of a SFS culture that encourages challenge and empowers finance staff to challenge services to deliver more from their financial resources by testing the status quo and seeking improved outcomes
- Empower staff to fulfil their potential and create interesting & varied career paths through effective apprenticeships and training schemes and supporting individuals to gain relevant financial qualifications

Person specification (knowledge, skills, experience and behaviours required in the role)

Essential Knowledge and Experience

- Completed a relevant professional qualification that supports delivery of functional responsibilities (e.g. CIPFA, CIMA, MBA etc) or demonstrable equivalent experience of operating at that level.
- Experience of working within a business partnering model and/or the ability to demonstrate an awareness of what is required to deliver the outcomes of the model
- Experience of working alongside senior managers in a Senior Finance role
- Experience of working within a finance team which is customer focused
- Experience of delivering strategic finance advice within a large and complex organisation
- Experience of providing advice and challenge to budget holders, managers and Finance colleagues.
- Experience of leading or providing financial support to change programmes and business improvement initiatives, or development of corporate strategy
- Experience of developing in depth technical understanding of complex financial issues to support financial planning

Desirable Knowledge and Experience

- Experience of successfully delivering customer engagement activities or business partnering in a large and complex organisation
- Experience of developing expertise in non-financial subjects to support customers
- Experience of interpreting complex or detailed legislation, policy or strategy documents to identify financial implications and deliver insight
- Experience of developing or contributing to medium term financial plans and strategies
- Knowledge and experience of relevant service areas or corporate financial management
- Experience of working with external partners such as schools, health partners or Council owned companies

Capabilities and Behaviours

- Strong numerical and analytical skills with ability to provide detailed and accurate information at pace with little oversight
- Capability to work independently, making decisions and taking responsibility for resolving issues
- Ability to interpret complex or detailed legislation, policy or strategy documents to identify financial implications and deliver insight
- Ability to manage conflict or competing objectives to deliver creative and innovative solutions that contribute towards achieving corporate priorities
- Ability to provide effective challenge and scrutiny to financial and performance plans and forecasts
- Strong performance management capabilities
- Ability to develop strong working relationships and establish personal credibility with a wide range of stakeholders both within and outside of the Council
- Flexible and agile approach to work that focuses on achievement of outcomes and high quality services that meet customer needs

- Enthusiastic and empathetic approach to coaching, mentoring and inspiring colleagues using high levels of emotional intelligence to achieve high standards of personal and team performance
- Creative approach to problem solving and improving delivery of finance services
- Commercially astute mindset that is open to change and embraces innovation
- Open and adaptive approach to leadership, taking personal responsibility for achieving success for the Shared Finance Service

Mandatory accountabilities/requirements for all LBS staff

- Ensure all health and safety standards are adhered to for the relevant work area
- To carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Council's Core
- Values and Equality and Diversity Policy and all other Borough and departmental policies and procedures