City of Edinburgh Council job description

Post title	Financial Controller
Directorate	Customer and Corporate Services
Service	Finance and Procurement
Responsible To	Head of Strategic Corporate Finance
Number of post holders	TBC

Purpose of job

Leading the Council's Centre of Excellence for financial and statutory reporting, you will be accountable for the integrity, timeliness and transparency of the Council's single-entity and Group Annual Accounts (including the Lothian Valuation Joint Board and the Integration Joint Board), prepared in accordance with the IFRS-based CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice and relevant Scottish regulations. You will champion internal controls, modernise and digitise accounting operations and steward finance data so decision-makers have fast, decision-ready information.

The post is a key supporting officer enabling the Director of Finance to discharge Section 95 responsibilities for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs.

The what - major tasks and job activities

1. Lead the production of the Council's Annual Accounts (single entity and Group) and related statutory disclosures in line with the IFRS-based CIPFA Code, SeRCOP and Scottish local authority accounting regulations. For a large and complex group structure with multiple subsidiaries over 2bn revenue and 3bn capital.
2. Lead the accounting, statutory reporting and company secretarial functions for a number of subsidiary companies, charitable trusts, joint ventures and the Common Good fund.
3. Oversee financial consolidation across subsidiaries, associates, joint committees and joint ventures (including LVJB and IJB), ensuring robust elimination, disclosure and audit trails.
4. Responsible for the year-end close, monthly/quarterly closes and consolidation timetables; continuously compress cycle times while maintaining quality.
5. Responsible for the group taxation strategy and having lead responsibility for the Council's VAT return and VAT advice.
6. Lead the external audit interface, including audit planning, Prepared-By-Client (PBC) management, resolution of findings, and delivery of the Annual Audit actions.
7. Maintain and continually improve a proportionate, risk-based internal control framework across record-to-report (R2R), procure-to-pay (P2P), order-to-cash (O2C), treasury, grants, fixed assets and payroll; ensure effective balance sheet ownership and reconciliations.
8. Oversee complex technical accounting, prepare and agree accounting position papers, and ensure the timely implementation of new/updated standards in the Code.
9. Ensure robust narrative reporting (including Annual Governance Statement and Remuneration Report), alignment to Best Value principles and clear, accessible public reporting.
10. Act as finance data owner for the general ledger, subledgers and chart of accounts; define standards, controls and dimensionality to enable granular, insight-ready reporting.

11. Sponsor automation and process redesign across close, consolidation and reporting (e.g., workflow, reconciliations, disclosures, journal approvals), reducing manual effort and error.
12. Set and monitor KPIs for controllership (close timetables, reconciliation completion, aged items, audit adjustments, control effectiveness), using root-cause analysis to drive improvement.
13. Provide stewardship for master data, interfaces and data quality across source systems (procurement, HR/payroll, revenues/benefits, asset and project systems) to ensure "right-first-time" flows into the ledger and reporting.
14. Determine and optimise the operating model (centres of excellence, enabling technologies) for sustainable capacity and resilience.
15. Leadership, partnership and decision support - Lead, coach and develop a high-performing team of qualified accountants and analysts, promoting continuous improvement, professional standards and service excellence.
16. Partner with relevant stakeholders to ensure non-duplication of reporting, strong hand-offs and consistent financial narratives.
17. Provide expert advice to senior officers, the Council Leadership Team and Committees; prepare high-quality reports, technical briefings, and responses to FOIs and elected member queries.
18. Build financial literacy across the Council through targeted training and clear guidance, making complex accounting and risk concepts understandable for non-finance leaders.
19. Ensure the integrity and security of the Council's financial information and ledgers; oversee ledger governance, journal policies, access controls and segregation of duties.
20. Oversee the implementation of the control framework across the financial systems in line with Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) legislation
21. Oversee statutory financial returns and submissions to national bodies and stakeholders, ensuring accuracy and consistency with the audited accounts.
22. Promote good financial management and robust internal control so that public money is safeguarded and used appropriately, economically, efficiently and effectively.

The how

- Must be a fully qualified CCAB accountant with substantial post-qualification experience leading statutory reporting, group consolidations and external audit in a complex organisation. Strong, current knowledge of IFRS as adapted by the CIPFA/LASAAC Code and public-sector reporting.
- Advanced judgement in complex technical areas and proven design and assessment of internal controls across end-to-end finance processes.
- Deep understanding of ERPs, close/consolidation and reporting tools; stewardship of chart of accounts, master data and interfaces; ability to standardise, automate and raise data quality to enable near-real-time reporting.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving capability; synthesises signals from balance sheet, cash flow and performance data to advise executives; aligns management and statutory views with FP&A.
- Credible, inclusive leader with excellent written/oral communication; able to coach teams, influence senior stakeholders and represent finance at Committees. Champions a data-driven, tech-enabled culture in controllership.
- Apply lean/agile approaches to simplify value streams (close, consolidation, disclosures) and deliver measurable efficiency, quality and control improvements.
- Exercises professional judgement over accounting treatments, control environment design and reporting positions, escalating appropriately to the S95 and Audit Committee.

Environment - work demands, physical demands, working conditions, work context

Operates in a complex, high-profile, politically led environment with demanding statutory deadlines and multiple stakeholders; balances quality, timeliness and assurance.
Works primarily in an office/hybrid setting using standard IT equipment and financial systems; occasional out-of-hours effort may be required at peak close/audit periods.
High regulatory risk and requirements. Will apply expertise and professional judgement to comply with global IFRS standards in a complex organisation.

Supervision and management of people
Leads a specialist team comprising a minimum of 10 qualified accountants, trainees and analysts delivering statutory reporting, technical accounting, capital and fixed assets, group/consolidation, and financial controls.

Resources the job holder will be responsible for
Shared responsibility for the security, accuracy and integrity of Council-wide financial information and systems (general ledger, subledgers, consolidation and reporting tools).

Additional information - health and safety Protecting the health and safety and welfare of our employees, and our third parties including members of the public, contractors, service users and pupils, is the starting point for a forward-thinking Council.
All employees' responsibilities:

1. Taking care of their own health and safety and welfare, and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.
2. Co-operating with management and following instructions, safe systems and procedures.
3. Reporting any hazards, damage or defects immediately to their line manager;
4. Reporting any personal injury and work-related ill health, and accident or incident (including 'near misses') immediately to their line manager, and assist with any subsequent investigation, including co-operating fully with the provision of witness statements and any other evidence that may be required.

Line managers have additional responsibilities for ensuring all health and safety risks under their management are identified, assessed and controlled, with specialist input from H&S Advisers and others including Occupational Health where required. Where the risks cannot be adequately controlled the activity should not proceed.
Additional information can be found in the Council Health and Safety Policy.