

**London Borough of Brent
Executive - 21st July 2003**

**Report Title: Establishment of New Post of Assistant Director
(Finance and Resources)
Report by the Director of Social Services**

Report No

For Action

Name of Wards Affected

ALL

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines proposals to strengthen financial management and planning within Social Services by creating a new Senior Management position of Assistant Director [Finance and Resources]. This report seeks the Executive's approval to the creation of this new post and to the Job Description and Person Specification.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Executive approves the creation of the new post of Assistant Director [Finance and Resources].
- 2.2 The Executive approves the Job Description and Person Specification (Appendix One).
- 2.3 The Executive note that the appointment will be made by the Senior Appointments Sub-Committee.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The post has been evaluated at Hay 4; the salary range is up to £80,000 including on-cost in a full year. It is proposed to meet the funding for this post from the additional resource sought within the report. "2003/2004 Revenue Budget" which appears on tonight's agenda. That report addresses the need for improvement of financial management in Social Services.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Under Standing Order 78(c) Assistant Director post can only be created by the Executive.
- 4.2 Under Standing Order 78(d) the appointment must be made by the Senior Staff Appointments Committee.

5.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The creation of the new post of Assistant Director (Finance and Resources) which is additional to the Head of Finance post, will, by definition, have some slight impact on the roles and responsibilities of the Head of Finance post. That function will continue to exist because the new Assistant Director post is positioned at a highly strategic level with ultimate day to day responsibility for financial management in Social Services. It is envisaged that the Head of Finance will continue to undertake the majority of duties currently undertaken, and will provide an ongoing contribution to the financial management process in Social Services. The Director of Social Services has been in consultation with the Head of Finance in regard to those matters.

6.0 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 Social Services is currently responsible for a net revenue and capital budget in excess of £77million. Expenditure against this budget in general covers staffing, the cost of purchasing care in the independent sector and the costs of directly provided care. Budgets are divided between the main Service Units: Older People, Children, Learning Disabilities, Physical Disabilities and Mental Health.
- 6.2 In 2001 there was a major restructuring of the operational management of the department. This established a new senior management team and reduced the number of service units in order to improve the performance of the department. At the same time the Quality and Support Division was established.
- 6.3 The departments finance function had been developed to fit the previous devolved service unit structure and it was acknowledged that changes to a more centralised finance unit were required. A Head of Finance post had been established in 2000. In 2002 a proposal was made to strengthen the finance structure by appointing 4 additional management accountants accountable to a central head of finance. These posts will support the budget holding managers and manage the finance staff in the service units. Plans were made to standardise financial systems across the whole department.

7.0 DETAIL

- 7.1 The general intention of the plans to strengthen the departments finance function remains in place. Recruitment to the new posts of management accountants is underway. However it is now abundantly clear that the plans for centralising, improving and standardising those functions require a very senior officer to be appointed in order to develop, co-ordinate and implement those plans, to assume ultimate day to day responsibility for the Social Services budget, and to ensure continuous effective financial management in Social Services.

- 7.2 It is proposed to establish an Assistant Director post to be a key member of the senior management team advising that group robustly on all matters financial. The requirement for a post at Assistant Director level in Social Services is prompted by a number of factors as follows:
- The need to develop and implement co-ordinated financial strategies linked to service objectives including the Social Services medium and long-term financial strategies.
 - The increasing demands on resources and hence the need to improve monitoring and accounting.
 - The recent expansion and complexity of partnerships and financial arrangements.
 - The need to demonstrate the highest level of financial stewardship and governance
 - The need to provide the highest quality advice and financial information to Members, the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance and Social Services and other senior officers.
 - The need to maximise resources from external funding sources.
 - In addition the post holder will build a finance team and finance systems in order to deliver the highest quality financial advice. S/he will ensure that all budget holders are advised and supported to deliver effective financial management.
- 7.3 In addition the post holder will lead the establishment of a single creditor system for Social Services and will develop systems that deliver high quality central monitoring within a devolved budget management system.
- 7.4 The Job Description and Person Specification are appended to this report (App 1).
- 7.5 The Acting Director of Human Resources has been consulted regarding this post as required by Standing Order 78. Agreement of the Executive is required to the creation of this post under standing order 78 of the Constitution.

8.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

None

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LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**JD2****JOB DESCRIPTION**

Post Title	Assistant Director (Finance and Resources)	Post No	
Service Area	Social Services	Grade	Hay ()
Unit	Directorate and Support		

Basic Objectives of the post

Effective financial management of the Social Services Budget (net £77m 2003/2004).

Advising the Director, Departmental Management Team and Service Unit Managers on all matters financial.

Working with the Council's Strategic Finance Group to develop and deliver the Council's strategic objectives while ensuring that the Council's statutory S151 and S114 responsibilities are met.

Developing and delivering, with the Departmental Management Team, the Department's medium and long-term financial strategy, linked to service objectives.

Building a departmental finance team and finance systems to provide the highest quality advice to Members, the Director of Social Services, Director of Finance and Chief Executive.

Ensuring that all departmental financial resources are used in the most cost effective way to meet service priorities.

Responsible for:

Staff of the service (approx. 50) and budgets in excess of £2m.

Responsible to:

1. Director of Social Services
2. A professional responsibility to the Director of Finance.

Main areas of responsibility

General

1. The postholder must at all times carry out his / her duties with due regard to the Council's Customer Care and Equal Opportunities policies.
2. To be a member of the Departmental Management Team providing strategic financial advice to the Executive, Council Committees and senior management.
3. To act as advisor to the Director and the Executive member on all areas within the postholders responsibilities.
4. To ensure that services all meet Best Value requirements.
5. Given the recent expansion and developing complexity of partnerships and financial arrangements, to take the lead role in ensuring that financial matters are clearly

addressed in all partnership arrangements, particularly those with Health to ensure that any such arrangements protect the Council's financial position.

6. Leading on the development, implementation and maintenance of quality management systems within the service for all major processes.
7. Managing the effective use of resources including staff and budget.
8. Ensuring that all budget holders are advised and supported in their effective budget planning and management. This includes providing good information and systems, training and individual support.

Financial

9. Manage the finance function centrally and in the service units including qualified accountants and technical support staff. Develop effective communication and identity within the team so that it becomes a valued service with Social Services.
10. Ensure that all financial functions are effectively carried out including:
 - Preparing and gaining approval for the social services revenue budget.
 - Preparing prompt and accurate revenue monitors.
 - Balancing social services final accounts.
 - Preparing CIPFA returns.
 - Acting as a financial advisor to working groups.
 - Liaise with the Council's external auditors.
11. Contribute to the strategic work of the Strategic Finance Group.
12. Ensure that quality standards are adhered to in the financial content of relationships with external providers.
13. Provide the financial input to Best Value reviews.
14. Urgently implement a single corporation financial system and central payments system.
15. To provide timely and accurate financial information as required by the SSI Performance monitoring processes.
16. Provide the financial implications in reports to the Executive and other Committees.

Asset Management

17. Overall responsibility for the management of the Department's buildings.
18. Prepare and maintain the Department's asset management strategy.
19. Lead on major initiatives that will realise the department's access to new investment, e.g. LIFT, PFI, partnership arrangements. Provide advice to operational managers where they are working to maximise investment.
20. Ensure that the Department's administrative and operational requirements are provided efficiently and represent value for money.

Strategic

- 21. Provide leadership to all those involved in financial management in the Department.
- 22. To develop the department’s medium and long term financial plan to support the Service Delivery Plan.

Service Delivery

- 23. To maximise resources from external funding sources in order to ensure effective management of financial resources to ensure optimum service delivery within social services.
- 24. Direct, develop and deliver the effective management of all social services financial processes and development activities, ensuring the Council’s compliance with its statutory duties and responsibilities.
- 25. Developing a culture that promotes the finance function as an integral part of delivering effective and efficient services.

Other

- 26. To be accountable for the full delegated powers of a senior manager including authority over the units staffing from appointment to dismissal including the power to change establishment.
- 27. Any other duties of a nature appropriate to the post as may be required from time to time.

Signed	Postholder	Date
Signed	Manager	Date

Person specification - Assistant Director (Finance and Resources)			
<i>Area of Competence</i>	<i>Short- li s ti n g</i>	<i>Interview</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
Experience & Ability			
Qualified accountant with minimum 5 years post qualification experience.	X		
Demonstrable experience and record of success working at a senior management level, within a large, multi-functional organisation with comparable scope and complexity.	X	X	
A proven record of successful financial management and participation in the formulation of innovative financial objectives, policies and strategies within a large, multi-disciplined organisation.		X	
Track record of delivery and change management. Ability and determination to see projects through to conclusion.	X	X	
A successful record of building effective and productive working relationships at all levels.		X	
Successful record of establishing a positive performance culture, effective performance and service quality evaluation that involves users and providers in driving up standards and performance.		X	
A record of success in financial management including budget formulation and rigorous financial monitoring and control procedures.			
A record of engaging successfully with others, building productive working relationships with a variety of bodies (internal & external); this role will require liaison with groups such as the council's Finance Strategy Group, Members, the Scrutiny Committee, external service providers and Health.		X	X
Commitment to organisational development backed by a personal record of self development.	X	X	
Ability to demonstrate the highest levels of financial stewardship and governance.	X	X	
Understanding of the issues in relation to managing in a diverse organisation.		X	
Financial Skills			
Financial and commercial awareness, with strong analytical skills and a creative and innovative approach to funding and problem solving.		X	X
Knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting service delivery within tight financial limitations.		X	X
Planning & Organising			
Plans well in advance, organises, schedules and monitors plans.		X	X
Decision making			

Ability to make decisions, take initiatives, and initiate action. Weighs up a situation and takes or recommends a course of action after considering the benefits as well as the problems		X	X
An innovator and motivator, who can promote new thinking and focus to achieving the Social Service Department's objectives and continuous improvement.			
Communication			
Able to think and communicate strategically		X	X
Ability to communicate effectively and persuasively with a wide range of audiences through :-			
(a) oral and		X	X
(b) written communications	X		X
Expresses information, thoughts and ideas fluently and concisely.	X	X	X
A confident and resourceful manager who can operate effectively in a complex, multi-discipline environment and has credibility because of what they do and how they do it, rather than relying on their position or profession.		X	X
Motivating & Directing others			
Ability to organise and motivate others to achieve organisational goals. Generates and sustains enthusiasm and commitment of staff. Sets clear standards for the performance and quality of work.		X	X
Ability to provide visible and supportive leadership, empowering, enabling, motivating and developing the workforce and fostering a positive and creative organisational culture.		X	
Ability to manage and monitor performance effectively, and set clear objectives for the review of individual and service level performance.		X	X
Results orientation			
Ability to maintain an energetic approach, showing drive and determination to get ahead. Changes systems or work methods to improve performance. Is keen to commit to achieving results and do a thorough effective job.		X	X
A strong financial leader and effective manager who is, energetic, determined, positive, robust and resilient enough to cope with the demands of the role.		X	
Other			
Resilience and drive to meet the demands and pressures of the post, including the ability to cope effectively at times of crisis, manage competing priorities and work in a pressurised political environment.		X	X