

Job Description

Job Title:	Head of Finance
Reporting to:	Executive Director Finance
Department:	Finance
Direct Reports:	Senior Business Partners Finance Manager Finance Operations Manager Income Services Manager Insurance Manager Procurement Manager
Budget:	£2m pa staffing budget
JD date reviewed:	July 2024
Job Level:	

Job Purpose

To lead on ensuring the integrity, accuracy and timeliness of all aspects of Eastlight's financial reporting, maintaining robust financial controls, and managing a broad range of accounting, partnering and compliance services. This role is pivotal in ensuring operational excellence within the finance function and promoting a culture of accountability, customer-centred service provision and continuous improvement.

Key Strategic Responsibilities

- Lead efforts to modernise the finance control function, aligning with the broader finance transformation agenda
- Engage with senior leadership to ensure financial control initiatives are well-aligned with organisational strategic objectives
- Inspire a culture of professional excellence and continuous improvement within the team

Key Functional Responsibilities

Financial reporting:

- Ensure accurate and timely financial reporting in accordance with statutory requirements and accounting standards
- Oversee the preparation of monthly and quarterly management accounts and annual financial statements which includes quarterly forecasting of the expected financial position

Financial controls:

- Develop, implement, and maintain robust financial controls to safeguard the assets of the association
- Ensure compliance with all financial regulations, laws, and accounting standards, providing guidance and training to the finance teams as necessary
- Review and keep up to date all financial policies and procedures, including Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation

- Responsible for the Finance team Business Continuity Plan, ensuring this is updated regularly

Audit and compliance:

- Lead and coordinate the external audit process, including preparing and submitting financial statements and liaising with external auditors to ensure a smooth year-end process and audit cycle
- Stay up to date with accounting standards and regulatory changes, leading Eastlight's response to finance consultations, implementing best practice and ensuring compliance
- Monitor compliance with financial policies and procedures, identifying and addressing any areas of concern
- Ensure timely delivery of internal audit actions

Taxation:

- Oversee the management and day-to-day advice on tax compliance and planning, including VAT and corporation tax returns, and ensure Eastlight operates in line with tax laws and regulations

Budgeting and forecasting:

- Lead the budgeting and forecasting processes in a c£110m per year turnover business, work with relevant teams to develop and monitor the budget and provide insight and analysis on financial performance
- Business partnering
- Engage with various business units and provide financial insight and data-driven analytics to support informed decision-making
- Build strong relationships with internal stakeholders to ensure financial considerations are integrated into operational planning and decision-making

Finance systems and processes:

- Oversee the maintenance and optimisation of finance systems and processes to ensure accurate reporting and efficient financial operations
- Embed and measure rigorous Finance related SLAs and operating KPIs to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the Finance team
- Oversee transactional finance activities, service charge accounting and rent setting processes, ensuring compliant, timely and transparent service provision
- Lead initiatives to improve the functionality, efficiency and integrity of finance systems and data, and continually transform and streamline processes to reduce cycle time and improve accuracy
- Ensure finance processes are well designed, understood and documented
- Support systems and process implementations in and other transformation initiatives across Eastlight

Insurance and procurement:

- Oversee the management of insurance policies and procurement processes to ensure financial soundness and compliance with organisational policies
- Ensure compliance with relevant procurement legislation including robust monitoring and control processes
- Prepare and present insurance and procurement KPI reports to EMT and F&T Committee providing assurance controls are embedded

Regulatory returns:

- Ensure timely and accurate submission of regulatory returns, maintaining strong relations with regulatory bodies

Asset & Liability Register:

- Responsible for the Asset & Liability register, ensuring this is accurate and up to date.
- Regular review of the register and taking forward 3rd party recommendations on how maintain and improve the register
- Annual confirmation that the register is accurate and report to Audit & Risk Committee providing assurance
- Ensure the register has relevant evidence to provide assurance to ARC, Board and the Regulator
- Ensure the register links to the Strategic Risk Register and Business Plan

Risk Registers:

- Responsible for the Finance team Strategic and Operational Risk registers, ensuring these are maintained and updated regularly
- Lead and embed a Risk register across Finance, creating accountability and ownership for these

Value for Money (VFM) Strategy:

- Responsible for leading on the VFM Strategy and embedded this throughout Eastlight
- Support the Executive Director Finance in any VFM initiatives
- Support the Leadership team in delivering VFM, including assessing return on investments and cost of providing each service

Team leadership and development:

- Lead, mentor, and develop a team of finance professionals, promoting a culture of continuous improvement and high performance
- Visible, accountable leadership that empowers our people and is focussed on rewarding behaviours and delivery
- Ability to build strong effective relationships
- Open-minded, curious, and flexible
- Ability to communicate complex business information to a variety of audiences
- A wide range of skills and abilities essential to be able to lead and manage a function at a senior management level such as inspiring, influencing, persuading, and negotiating to achieve successful business outcomes
- An ambassador and role model

Board and Directors Support:

- Prepare and present financial results and statements to senior stakeholders and provide expert support and guidance as necessary to the Board, Committees, EMT and Leadership Team
- Collaborate with other leaders to promote a strong and healthy culture among the workforce at Eastlight
- Deputise for the Executive Director Finance if and when required

Person Specification	
Education & qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional accounting qualification (e.g. ACCA, ACA, CIMA, CIPFA or equivalent)
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive experience in financial control and reporting, preferably within a housing or property environment • Strong knowledge of accounting standards, tax laws, and financial regulations • Experience of transforming a finance function in an organisation of similar complexity and scale • Experience of leading digital transformation preferred but not essential • Experience of writing Committee and Board reports and presenting these
Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technically strong in IFRS, financial and statutory reporting • Proven communication, leadership and interpersonal skills, able to engage effectively with senior internal and external stakeholders • Proven team player and line manager • Meticulous attention to detail and exceptional organisation skills, able to prioritise effectively and meet deadlines • Proven analytical, strategic thinking, and problem-solving skills, adept at analysing and interpreting large data sets • Proficiency in MS Office and relevant software and systems – knowledge of business intelligence tools is preferred • Clear, accurate and engaging report writing and presentation skills • High level of integrity and professionalism, aligned with Eastlight's values and objectives • Open minded, ambitious, curious and flexible, committed to continuous learning and development