

Chief Operating Officer

Job Description and Person Specification

Purpose

Reporting to the **Chief Executive Officer**, this role directs, administers and coordinates the internal operational activities of the London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA) in accordance with policies, goals and objectives established by the Chief Executive Officer and the LPFA Board (the Board). The role holder is accountable for the provision of fit for purpose operating platforms and processes which will enable delivery of the business strategy, specifically in IT, investment/pension management operations and data.

The COO will deliver and own the Target Operating Model for the organisation, efficiently and effectively optimising the operations, corporate functions and data functions, ensuring a resilient and secure framework within which the organisation can operate.

Operating in a local government and Local Government Pensions Scheme (LGPS) compliance environment, the role has oversight responsibility for the delivery of the finance outcomes in terms of its effectiveness, quality and accuracy of reporting. The role works in partnership with a small number of senior officers as part of the senior leadership group.

The COO is additionally responsible for the creation of a business-centric programme management function that provides a change management framework to oversee key initiatives and additionally tracks progress against the business strategy. This will include building and managing a central data function to deliver a data strategy that meets the needs of the business, our stakeholders, and regulatory requirements for the LPFA.

The role holder will also act as the LPFA's Section 151 Officer, a role providing financial and technical advice to the Board and CEO whilst ensuring the advice is in the public interest and provides value for money. The Section 151 Officer supports the effective governance of the LPFA through being a key part of the collective responsibility (with the Chief Executive and other strategic officers).

Key Responsibilities

- Maintains and further develops a fit-for-purpose operations strategy in support of business outcomes.
- Develops and establishes operating policies consistent with the organisations overall policies and objectives and ensures their adequate execution. Appraises and evaluates the results of overall operations regularly and systematically and reports these results to the CEO.
- Directs internal operations to achieve budgeted results and other financial criteria and to demonstrate value for money, savings or efficiencies from operational activity within the business.
- Builds and leads a team that has the right capabilities to deliver the COO remit.
- Acts as a role model for others against the LPFA's values and actively builds a healthy and inclusive culture.
- Plays the role of strategic sponsor in the governance structure of key operational and technology projects.
- Oversees the finance function across its responsibilities and acts as the lead at the Board and its Committees; acts as LPFA Section 151 Officer.
- Oversees the identification and delivery of a robust IT strategy and framework aligned to the corporate objectives, initially managing an outsourced IT provider.
- Builds and manages a business-centric programme management function that provides project management capability across the organisation, sets the framework for change



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management and additionally tracks progress against the annual key performance indicators in order to ensure the strategy will be delivered over time;

- Builds and manages a central data and management information function which captures, maintains and distributes both business and Fund data across the business.
- Provision of resource management oversight to advise the CEO on potential resource stretch, capability and utilisation.

Person Specification

1. Professionalism – demonstrate high level of professionalism, due allocation of responsibility and integrity with an appreciation for the importance of discretion regarding sensitive and confidential information.
2. Self-awareness - self-reflects and works effectively with difference and group dynamics.
3. Communication - facilitates contribution and able to ask for help internally and externally.
4. Influence - influences and networks to build engagement and alignment.
5. Development - develops new leaders at all levels and models self-development.
6. Direction - sets and communicates long-term strategy and ensures delivery for customers.
7. Agility - sets challenges and drives change to achieve best outcomes.
8. Team Player - enjoys working and collaborating as part of a comparatively small but diverse team, experience of leading teams and ensuring their development.
9. Flexibility - willing to get hands dirty and not unduly status conscious.
10. Problem-solving skills - minimises operational risk as much as possible, anticipates solutions and deals effectively with unforeseen circumstances.
11. Change/project management skills – oversees all aspects of a change or project, from the initial vision through to reporting of the benefit realisation.

Qualifications & Experience

Essential experience

- Proven experience in a Chief Operations Officer role within a complex organisation or similar, ideally within the pensions, investment, local government or LGPS sectors.
- Demonstrable senior management level experience in operational activity with depth in the disciplines of operations, finance, data and technology.
- Demonstrable track record of designing, implementing and evidencing robust operational control processes.
- Experience in contracting for, managing and providing oversight of complex outsourced service providers or suppliers.
- Strong knowledge of operations, business continuity and resilience, data governance, ICT managed services, information security oversight, outsourced service providers and adviser/suppliers.
- Experience of providing oversight, management and reporting on significant and complex change programmes.
- Experience of ICT security and control frameworks.
- Proven track record of handling sensitive and confidential information.
- Financial qualification and management of a finance function.



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- Ability to effectively lead, manage and develop both directly reporting colleagues and the wider team.
- Ability to create a culture of managing deadlines while ensuring the quality of outputs.
- Ability to work with CEO and Board-level colleagues, senior leaders and other key shareholders demonstrating strong interpersonal and influencing skills with high levels of integrity and trustworthiness.
- Ability to assimilate technical information and present it in a cogent and understandable manner for a range of audiences, demonstrating strong written, verbal communication and presentation skills.
- Effective planning, organisational and analytical skills.
- Problem solving and decision-making capability.
- Awareness and understanding of the wider business, economic, market, legislative and regulatory environment in which the organisation operates.

Desirable Experience

- Operating within the pensions or investment management industries.
- Local government governance and protocols and LGPS scheme finances and accounting requirements.
- Good working knowledge of modern financial management practice including the application of IT in the areas of finance and investments and the ability to assess the suitability and reliability appropriate to our environment.
- Servicing and involvement with corporate boards or public sector committees.
- Designing and implementing a new operational, IT and/or data function, for example, in a post-merger, acquisition or restructuring situation.
- People management, leadership and coaching. Ability to lead and manage multi-disciplined professional teams and provide visible and supportive leadership, fostering a high-performing culture where individuals take personal accountability and strive for continuous improvement.
- Awareness of the systems and data challenges facing the asset and pensions management industry.
- Exceptional communication and presentation skills with the ability to both understand and translate complex issues into clear messages for peers, employees, and shareholders alike.
- Knowledge of data management and analytics.
- Knowledge of procurement and supplier management.
- Other corporate knowledge including health and safety, ESG and public policy impact on business and public businesses.

Qualifications

- **Essential** - Recognised accountancy qualification, e.g. CIPFA, CIMA, ACCA, with relevant professional qualifications to fulfil the Section 151 Officer role.
- **Desirable** - A bachelor's or master's degree in business administration (BBA or MBA) or an industry-relevant equivalent.
- **Desirable** - Project Management Professional.

Reasonable adjustment will be made to working arrangements to accommodate a person with a disability who otherwise would be prevented from undertaking the work.