
Senior Policy Officer – Local Government Finance

Information for applicants

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Senior Policy Officer – Local Government Finance

Reference: CCN SP1 2017

**Closing date for
applications:**

5pm Monday 11th September

**Interview and assessment
date:**

22nd or 25th September

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of **Senior Policy Officer; Local Government Finance** with the County Councils Network (CCN).

Local government is going through a period of rapid change. The challenge of reduced public expenditure and the opportunities presented by the devolution agenda necessitates radical innovation and a fundamental re-think of public services.

As the national representative body for 37 county council and county unitary authorities, the County Councils Network (CCN) is at the cutting edge of the debate on the future of public services in England. Over the past four years, CCN has developed into a major national stakeholder on local government and wider public sector policy, representing the single largest grouping of upper tier councils in England.

On local government finance and funding, CCN represents the unique and distinctive financial issues facing county authorities in England.

In this varied and exciting role, you will lead the development of CCN's policy development and national advocacy on local government finance and funding. Working closely with the Head of Policy & Communications and partner organisation, the Society of County Treasurers (SCT), you will be at the heart of delivering CCN's national advocacy to help shape the national debate, influence Government policy and support CCN member councils.

This is a key post in a dynamic and small organisation. You will find yourself leading major policy and research projects on local government finance. Alongside our national campaign for fairer funding through the Government's Needs-based fair funding review, you will co-ordinate our input into reforms to business rates retention and lead our response to major financial announcements, such as the local government finance settlement.

There will also be the opportunity as part of the wider team to shape the organisation's future direction and national story for our member councils.

You will liaise with senior councillors, officers and civil servants, and a wide range of high-profile national stakeholders and external agencies. You will also gain experience of the wider aspects of national advocacy across media, communications and public affairs, working closely with the Media & Communications and Public Affairs Officers.

The ideal candidate will be someone with:-

- An excellent knowledge of local government policy, ideally with experience of direct working within a county council or county unitary, a multi-functional authority, local government related or advocacy organisation.
- Exposure to local government finance and funding at senior levels within a county council, upper-tier council, and/or national advocacy organisation.
- A developed understanding of local government finance, including the key funding streams for upper and lower tier councils; the current and future challenges of local government funding; and national reform agendas.
- Experience of corporate policy development and/or advocacy in a local government or related environment and developing relationships with key stakeholders/influencers.
- Direct experience of working in a political environment and a track-record of working with Council Leaders and Senior Officers to formulate policy.
- A developed understanding of national advocacy, policy development and public affairs environment, including the LGA, Houses of Parliament, and other relevant national stakeholders.

This role could be the perfect opportunity for a flexible and ambitious public policy professional with experience of local government finance looking to develop their career on the national stage in an organisation with a growing profile and reach.

If you are a highly flexible team player with proven ability to manage a complex and conflicting workload, enjoy hard work, relish new challenges and welcome responsibility, then you will be interested in this post.

We look forward to receiving your application.



Simon Edwards
Director CCN

Job Description

Job title: Senior Policy Officer (Finance & Funding)

Grade: 5 (SCP 16-20 £43,530- £49,355)*

Employment Type: Fixed Term 2 years, Full Time**

Responsible to: Head of Policy & Communications

Job purpose: To lead the development of local government finance and funding policy and advocacy as a member of the CCN Team in order to achieve the CCN's overall objectives.

Key contacts: Lead members, senior level officers, civil servants, external contacts and partner organisations.

* Starting point negotiable for an exceptional candidate

** With a view to a permanent appointment following the fixed term period

Principal Accountabilities

1. To lead the development of policy positions on local government finance and funding in order to support member councils and achieve CCN's objectives.
2. Undertake detailed analysis and research to inform the development of CCN policy positions, advocacy and campaigns regarding local government finance and funding.
3. To contribute to the development and delivery of CCN objectives and work programme – including initiating, preparing, editing and co-ordinating high quality papers, research, reports and publications across the full range of CCN activities.
4. To contribute to the development of CCN communications, public affairs and media activity in your specified area of the CCN work programme, working closely with Media and Public Affairs Officers.
5. Provide high quality policy advice, support, oral and written briefings to CCN Chairman, CCN Director, CCN Spokesman and CCN Head of Policy & Communications in your specified area of the CCN work programme.
6. To develop and maintain professional relationships with key stakeholders within the LGA, Whitehall and other key influencers, securing and organising meetings for members and officers to communicate CCN's policy and advocacy priorities.
7. Provide policy input to seminars and events, and contribute to the successful delivery of the CCN Annual Conference.

8. To establish and maintain positive working relationships and networks with members and officers in CCN member councils and partner organisations to support the policy and advocacy work of CCN.
9. To represent the CCN effectively at high level meetings in order to pursue advocacy and policy positions.
10. To organise and attend key meetings including preparing agendas, taking minutes and/or providing written feedback at meetings as required, as well as ensuring effective follow up actions.
11. To manage the delivery of project work to time, quality and budget, working with LGA and other relevant organisations where appropriate.
12. To operate according to equal opportunities principles.
13. To undertake any other duties appropriate to the post as may be required and contribute to the effective operation of the CCN.

Person specification

Qualifications and Experience

1. Educated to degree level (or equivalent).
2. An excellent knowledge of local government policy, ideally with experience of direct working within a county council, a multi-functional authority, local government related or advocacy organisation.
3. Exposure to local government finance and funding at senior levels within a county council, upper-tier council, and/or national advocacy organisation.
4. Experience of corporate policy development and/or advocacy in a local government or related environment and developing relationships with key stakeholders/influencers.
5. Direct experience of working in a political environment and a track-record of working with Council Leaders and Senior Officers to formulate policy.
6. Project, client and/or media management experience.

Knowledge

7. An excellent understanding of the range of service functions which are provided by county and county unitary councils. An appreciation of the corporate agenda for CCN member councils and understanding of the range of partnerships with which member councils work.
8. A developed understanding of local government finance, including the key funding streams for upper and lower tier councils; the current and future challenges of local government funding; and national reform agendas.
9. A developed understanding of national advocacy, policy development and public affairs environment, including the LGA, Houses of Parliament, and other relevant national stakeholders.
10. A good understanding of national political environment, including the local government and wider public sector policy programmes of the main political parties.
11. A good working knowledge of Microsoft word, excel, and PowerPoint as well as social media.

Skills and Abilities

12. Ability to network and to establish effective working relationships at all levels,

- including with elected members and key stakeholders.
13. Excellent oral and written communication skills. An ability to write concisely and with political sensitivity. Experience in presenting verbally to a mixed range of audiences.
 14. Ability to analyse complex problems and to assimilate information from a range of sources and to synthesise these in succinct terms.
 14. Excellent understanding of excel spreadsheets and ability to understand and interpret complex financial information.
 15. Effective research, data and information gathering skills.
 16. A flexible approach and the ability to prioritise and manage own workload and manage conflicting priorities.
 17. An understanding of political and organisational sensitivities and an understanding of the political environment.

Personal Characteristics

18. Ability to work as part of a team and contribute to the development of others, a flexible 'can do' approach to work and readiness to adapt to changing projects and work requirements.
19. Self-motivated and self-supporting with excellent interpersonal skills.
20. Intellectually agile and innovative.
21. Appreciation of, and commitment to, equal opportunities.

Recruitment process

Application Form

Those applying for the role are asked to complete the application form in full, including the assessment section in line with the job description and specification.

The application form can be downloaded from via the CCN website www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/about/ccn-team/recruitment

If you would like an informal discussion or more information regarding the role please call James Maker, Head of Policy & Communications, on 02076643009

Please return completed application forms to james.maker2@local.gov.uk.

Selection and Assessment Process

Shortlisting will take place after the closing date and shortlisted candidates will be invited to an **assessment and interview** on either the 22nd or 25th September 2017. Whilst we will do our best to offer an alternative date this is not always possible in every case.

The assessments will consist of a short exercise which reflects the requirements of the role. Further details will be provided for short listed candidates.

Please note if you have not heard from us by within two weeks of the closing date your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion.

About CCN

CCN is a cross-party special interest group of the LGA and represents 37 English councils that serve counties. CCN membership includes both upper tier and unitary authorities who together have over 2,600 councillors and serve 26 million people (47% of the population) across 86% of England.

CCN is a member-led organisation which develops policy, undertakes innovative research and makes representations to government on behalf of this significant proportion of the country outside the big conurbations. We also provide a range of support services to councils and promote service innovation through the sharing of best practice.

CCN is a special interest group of the Local Government Association (LGA). For more information about CCN please check out our website www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk

Benefits and conditions

Full details will be provided to the successful candidate

Working for the CCN

The post will be employed directly by CCN with payroll and pension services provided by Lancashire County Council. CCN adopts the LGA's terms and conditions.

Employment terms

CCN is offering this position on an initial fixed term contract of two years with a view to the position becoming permanent at the end of the contract.

CCN would also consider a fixed term secondment for the role. Please contact james.maker2@local.gov.uk to discuss any specific circumstances ahead of applying.

Salary

The starting salary for this post is £43,530 per annum including London Weighting. Yearly incremental salary increases are subject to performance and appraisal reviews, in addition to the national pay award.

CCN would be willing to consider a higher grade 5 (SCP 16-20 £43,530- £49,355) starting salary point for an exceptional candidate. Please contact james.maker2@local.gov.uk to discuss any specific circumstances ahead of applying.

Hours of work

Your hours of work will be 35 hours per week.

Annual leave and statutory holidays

Your annual leave entitlement will be circa 28 days.

In addition to annual leave, you will be entitled to statutory holidays occurring during your contract.

In the first and last years of service, members of staff are entitled to annual leave proportionate to the *completed* months of service in that year.

Performance review

The CCN operates a performance review scheme. The aims of the scheme are to help individuals to perform their role to the best of their ability and to develop their career to reach their full potential.

Whole time service

You will be expected to devote your whole time service to the work of the CCN and you shall not engage in any other business or take up any other appointment without the approval of the Director.

Political impartiality

Although CCN posts are not subject to the same political restrictions as local authorities, members of staff will be expected to behave in ways, which express clear political impartiality and will not be able to take up any public political office without the approval of the Director.

Sickness payments

The CCN applies the scheme agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services.

Pension

You have the opportunity to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. Details will be given to the successful candidate.

Season ticket loan

All employees may apply for an interest-free season ticket loan to assist in their travel to and from work.

Equal opportunities

The CCN is committed to providing equal opportunities for existing and potential members of staff. It is a condition of employment that all members of staff comply with the equality and diversity policy.

Location

Due to major refurbishments to Local Government House (Westminster), the CCN Office is currently relocated in Layden House, Farringdon, London for at least the next three months. Bicycle storage facilities and shower facilities are available at Layden House.

On return to Local Government House Westminster you will be based in the heart of Westminster in the leafy square surrounding St John's Church close to shops and amenities, Local Government House provides an influential position and a prestigious single base for local government.

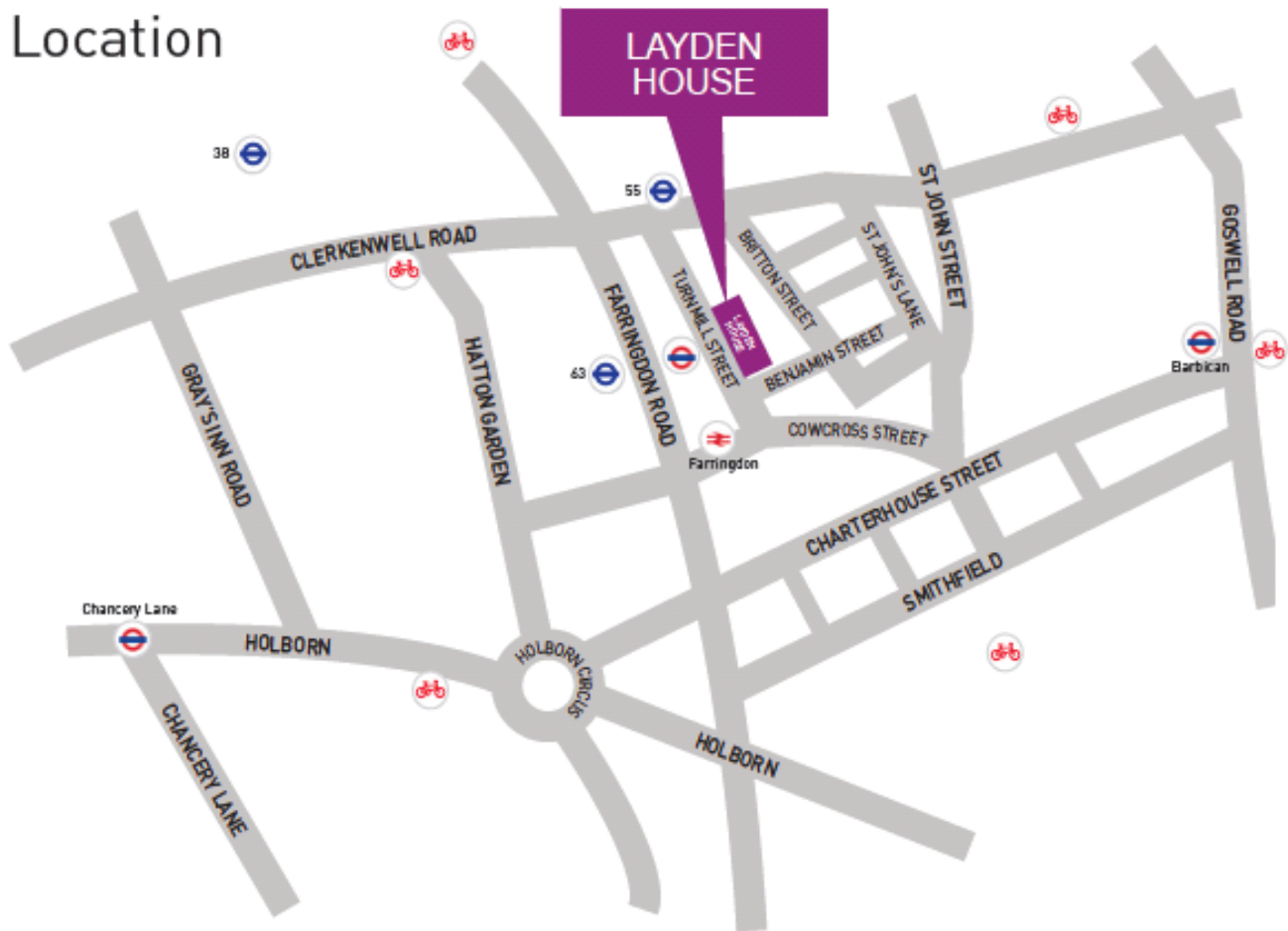
Local Government House is arranged as an open plan building offering tea and coffee points and quiet rooms on each floor, air conditioned meeting rooms, staff rooms, a roof garden, bicycle storage facilities and shower facilities.





Maps and travel information to both locations are provided below.

Layden House

The Local Government Association has temporarily relocated to our property in Farringdon during refurbishment work at our Westminster base.

Location



- 
Underground
 Circle, Hammersmith & City, Metropolitan lines: Farringdon/Barbican
 Central line: Chancery Lane
- 
Rail
 Thameslink: Farringdon
 (Barbican – restricted service)
 City Thameslink: Farringdon
- 
Bus
 63, 55, 38
- 
Cycle hire docking stations
 Farringdon Lane/Hatton Wall/Hatton Garden/Clerkenwell Green/
 Aldersgate Street/West Smithfield Rotunda

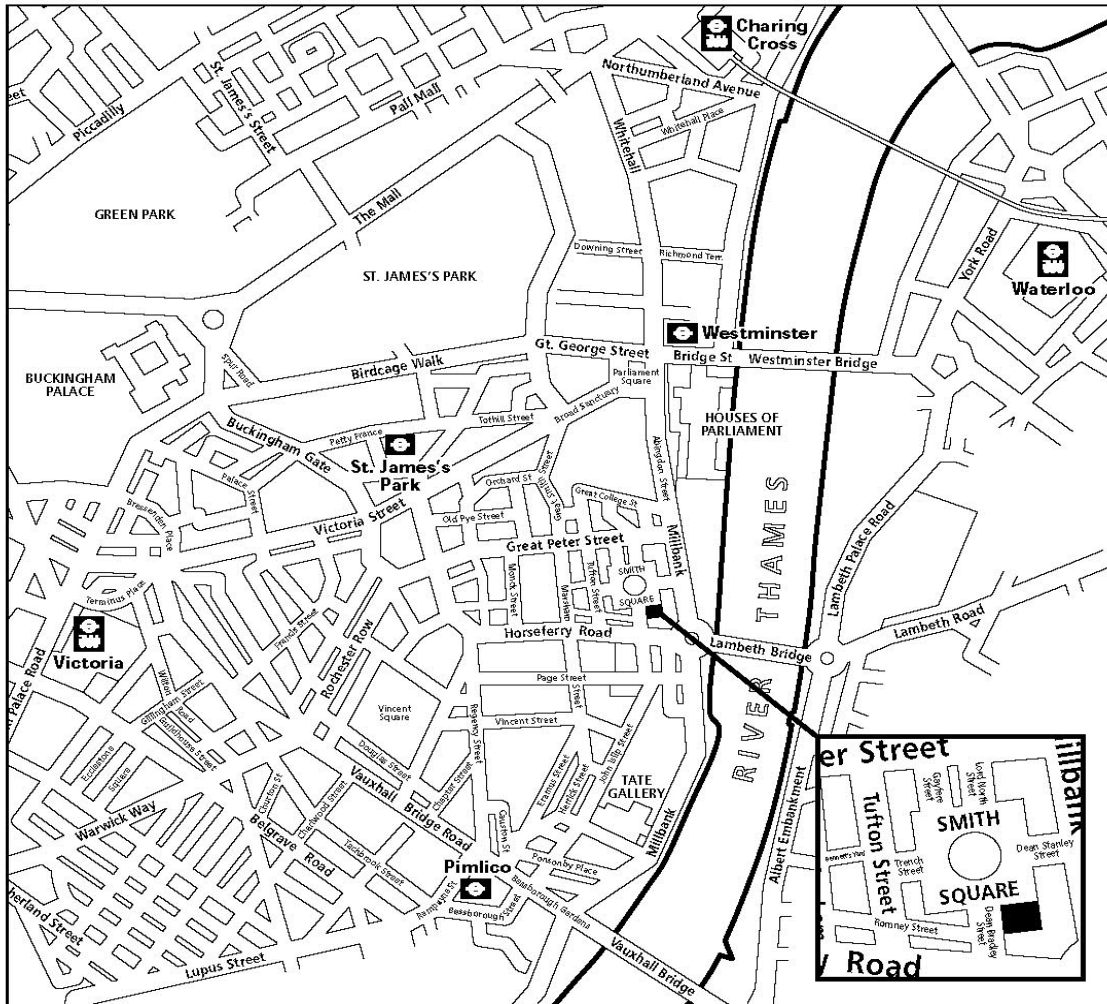
Local Government Association

76-86 Turnmill Street
 London EC1M 5LG
www.local.gov.uk

020 7664 3000
info@local.gov.uk

The building is located directly opposite the Turnmill Street entrance to Farringdon Underground.

Local Government House



Local Government House,
(Formerly known as Transport House),
Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ

Public transport

Local Government House is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are **Victoria** and **Waterloo**; the local underground stations are **St James's Park** (Circle and District Lines); **Westminster** (Circle, District and Jubilee Lines); and **Pimlico** (Victoria Line), all about 10 minutes walk away.

Buses **3** and **87** travel along **Millbank** and the **507** between **Victoria** and **Waterloo** goes close by at the end of **Dean Bradley Street**.

Bus route – Millbank

87 Wandsworth - Aldwych

3 Crystal Palace - Brixton - Oxford Circus

Bus routes - Horseferry Road

507 Waterloo - Victoria

C10 Canada Water - Pimlico - Victoria

88 Camden Town - Whitehall - Westminster - Pimlico - Clapham Common

Cycling Facilities

Cycle racks are available at Local Government House. Please telephone the LGconnect on 020 7664 3131.

Central London Congestion Charging Zone

Local Government House is located within the congestion charging zone. For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at www.cclondon.com

Car Parks

Abingdon Street Car Park

Great College Street

Horseferry Road Car Park

Horseferry Road/Arneway Street

