Recruitment of
Assistant Director – Assurance and Partnerships

Andrew Tromans
Penna plc I September 2026

Tameside
Metropolitan Borough

Contents

Welcome to Tameside

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining Tameside Council as our Assistant Director – Assurance & Partnerships.

This is a genuinely exciting time to join both the Council and our Finance Service. Over the past year, we have been reshaping the way finance, governance and assurance support the organisation, strengthening our leadership capacity and creating the foundations for a modern, high-performing service that enables transformation, supports better decision-making and delivers improved outcomes for our residents, communities and businesses.

As part of that transformation, we have created this brand-new Assistant Director role.

Whilst you will fulfil statutory responsibilities as the Senior Assurance Lead and Chief Audit Executive for the Council, this is much more than a traditional audit and assurance position.

We are looking for someone who can provide strategic leadership across assurance, risk, governance, counter fraud, insurance, business continuity and our key strategic partnerships including SWAP (South West Audit Partnership) who we partner with for our Internal Audit function.

In this role you will be helping to ensure that assurance becomes an enabler of organisational success rather than simply a measure of compliance.

Over the last twelve months, we have invested significantly in strengthening our audit and assurance arrangements, and this role offers a rare opportunity to build on those foundations.

We want to continue evolving our approach from one centred primarily on inspection and compliance towards one that provides constructive challenge, builds confidence, supports innovation and acts as a trusted adviser to colleagues across the Council.

Success will depend upon developing strong relationships across the organisation, working alongside services as a critical friend and ensuring that effective governance and proportionate controls enable, rather than inhibit, positive change.

You will work closely with the Chief Executive, elected Members, senior officers and our external partners, providing independent assurance whilst helping to shape strategic decision-making across the Council.

An important aspect of the role will be overseeing our strategic partnerships, ensuring they continue to deliver high-quality services whilst maintaining the independence, professional standards and organisational assurance that our residents rightly expect.

As our new Assistant Director, you will have the opportunity to help redefine what assurance looks like within local government. We are seeking someone who can move beyond the traditional assurance role and help create a joined-up, intelligence-led approach that brings together risk, performance, governance and transformation and uses technology, data and AI to provide insight and foresight. We are looking for a leader who can help us realise that opportunity whilst maintaining strong governance and public accountability.

Success in this role will be measured by much more than audit plans and assurance reports. It will mean strengthening governance across the organisation, embedding a mature approach to risk management, improving organisational resilience and helping us continue our journey towards stronger assurance, better decision-making and a culture where governance is recognised as adding genuine value to everything we do.

In return, you will have the opportunity to shape an important new leadership role within an ambitious and supportive organisation that is committed to continuous improvement. Whether you are already operating as a Chief Audit Executive or are an experienced senior assurance leader looking for the opportunity to broaden your influence and make a lasting organisational impact, this role offers the chance to lead change, develop your leadership profile and help shape the future of assurance at Tameside.

Please contact Penna to arrange a confidential conversation if you would like to learn more. If you have the skills, experience and ambition we are looking for, I look forward to receiving your application and meeting you during the recruitment process.

Zoe Evans
Tameside Council

The Opportunity

Assistant Director – Assurance and Partnerships (Chief Audit Executive)

Salary of £98,303

Ashton-under-Lyne / Hybrid (circa 2 days onsite per week, on average)

The Opportunity

This is a rare opportunity to join an ambitious local authority at a pivotal stage in its transformation and play a leading role in shaping how assurance, governance and risk support the delivery of better outcomes for residents.

Reporting to the Strategic Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), you will act as the Senior Assurance Lead and Council's Chief Audit Executive leader, providing strategic leadership across, internal audit, risk, counter fraud, insurance, business continuity and corporate assurance, whilst overseeing key strategic partnerships including SWAP (South West Audit Partnership) who we partner with for our Internal Audit function..

Far more than a traditional internal audit role, you will help redefine the way assurance supports the organisation – moving from compliance and assurance in isolation towards a modern, enabling function that acts as a trusted adviser and critical friend to services, supporting innovation whilst ensuring effective governance, proportionate control and informed decision-making.

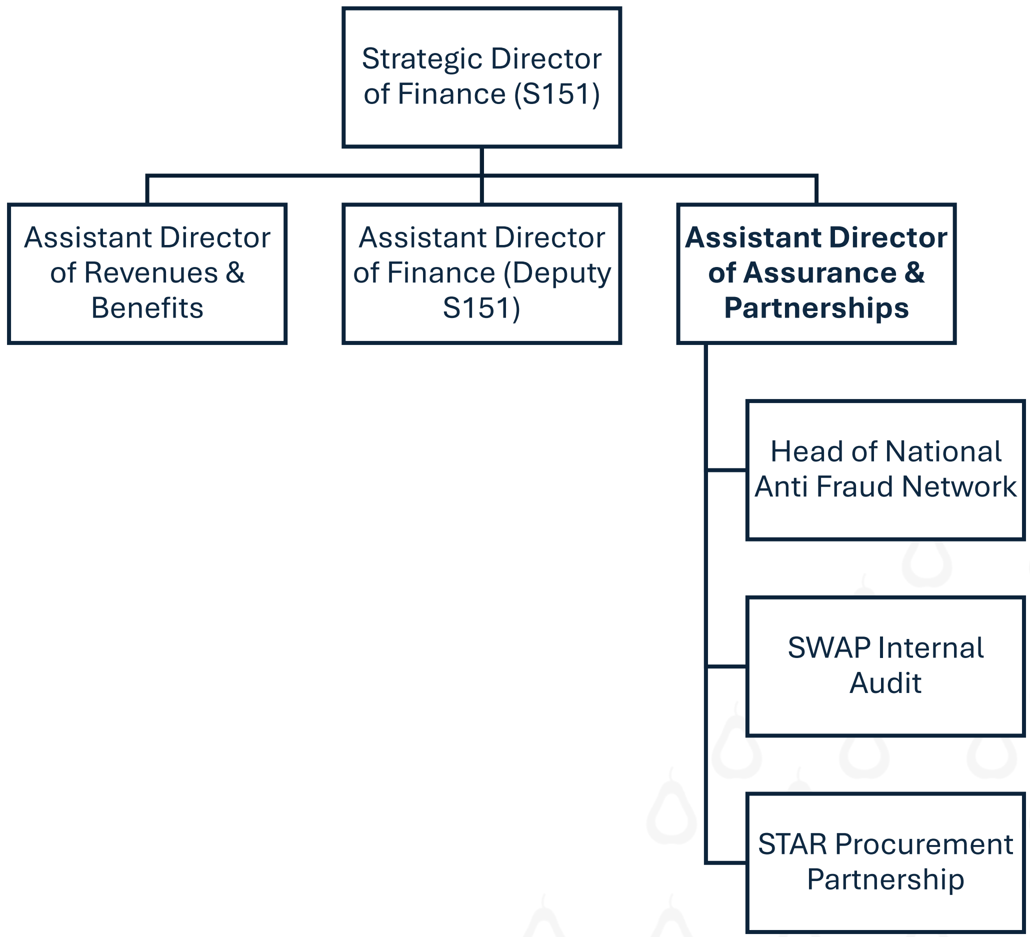
Working closely with the Chief Executive, Members and senior leaders, you will influence corporate decision-making, strengthen the Council's assurance framework, oversee major transformation programmes and help drive continuous improvement across governance, risk management and organisational resilience.

Candidates

We are interested in speaking with experienced Chief Audit Executives, Assistant Directors, Heads of Internal Audit, Heads of Risk, Governance or Assurance, together with other ambitious senior assurance professionals who have experience across multiple assurance disciplines.

You will combine strong professional credibility with outstanding leadership, relationship-building and influencing skills. Whether your experience has been gained within local government or another large, complex public sector organisation, you will be confident operating strategically, managing partnerships, constructively challenging senior stakeholders and enabling positive organisational change.

Structure Chart



Job Description

Assistant Director of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)
Salary Grade: SMT 1 (£98,303)
Tameside Council

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES OF THE ROLE

Purpose

Provide strategic leadership for the Council as part of the Senior Leadership Team in Finance covering assurance, risk and governance, while acting as the organisation's Corporate Assurance lead. Supporting the Council's transformation ambitions to ensure they are delivered safely and sustainably, balancing pace with control, articulating risk appetite, ensuring controls are proportionate, and maximising value for money for residents and taxpayers.

Act as the Council's senior assurance officer and accountable client officer for Internal Audit, overseeing the Council's internal audit partnership arrangements and ensuring that Internal Audit contributes effectively to the Council's governance, risk management and Annual Governance processes.

As a member of the Finance Leadership Team (DLT), work with the Strategic Director of Finance, Directors, Assistant Directors and Members to set the vision for an outcomes-focused, digitally enabled, financially sustainable Council, and provide independent, professional assurance on the delivery and governance of that vision.

Core Objectives

- Enterprise Assurance Leadership - lead and continuously improve an integrated assurance function spanning: risk management, internal audit partnership, counter fraud, insurance, information governance, business continuity and procurement partnership.
- Transformation Assurance & Impact - provide independent, constructive challenge and assurance across the corporate change portfolio including commissioning expert review where appropriate, ensuring robust options appraisal, benefits management, risk-based control design, and effective delivery.
- Value & Public Accountability - safeguard public money and trust by strengthening the council's control environment, preventing fraud/error and ensuring informed risk-taking that delivers better outcomes at lower cost.

Accountabilities

Strategic Leadership & Corporate Influence

- Act as the Council's most senior professional lead for assurance and risk; shape and embed the risk appetite and internal control framework across all services and change programmes.
- Provide expert advice to the Chief Executive, Strategic Director of Finance,

Job Description

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Members on governance, risk, internal control and transformation assurance; prepare and present high-quality reports to SLT, Cabinet, Audit Committee, Council and the Pension Board.

- Exercise direct, independent access to the Chief Executive and Chair of the Audit Committee where necessary.

Assurance & Portfolio Governance

- Establishes and chairs the Corporate Assurance Framework, including gated reviews, with delegated authority to escalate, pause, or require remedial action for programmes where assurance thresholds are not met, ensuring safe, sustainable delivery aligned to the Council's risk appetite.
- Ensure controls are proportionate to the risk profile; advise on optimal control design (prevent/detect/correct) and risk acceptance decisions in line with agreed appetite.
- Champion innovation with control: promote practical methods (Lean, systems thinking, design thinking,
- automation, data-led assurance) to reduce the cost of control while improving outcomes.

Internal Audit Partnership & Counter Fraud

- As client for the Council's partnership for internal audit provision, support production of and setting of the annual and strategic audit plans (Council and GMPF), ensuring appropriate focus on transformation, digital/AI, cyber, information governance, financial resilience and third-party risk.
- Provide client oversight of the delivery, effectiveness and value of the internal audit service whilst supporting the Internal Audit Charter and governance arrangements that safeguard auditor independence.Lead the Council's counter-fraud strategy, ensuring all allegations are investigated promptly, sanctions are pursued where appropriate, and proactive counter-fraud culture and controls are embedded (including NFI participation).

Risk, Insurance & Resilience

- Lead the corporate risk and insurance functions, ensuring risk registers are dynamic, material whole-Council risks are escalated, and risk transfer/self-insurance decisions optimise value for money.
- Oversee business continuity & emergency planning arrangements; assure annual testing and organisational learning, including out-of-hours incident leadership where required.

External Assurance & Partnerships

- Maintain constructive relationships with External Audit and other review bodies to coordinate assurance and avoid duplication; act as client for key partnerships including NAFN and STAR Procurement to ensure services meet Tameside's needs.

People, Performance, And Resources

- Build a high-performing, multi-disciplinary Assurance team with a modern skillset (data analytics, cyber, commercial, programme assurance).

Job Description

- Manage budgets for the Assurance function, securing value for money and making the case for investment where it reduces risk/costs or improves outcomes.
- Drive continuous improvement through benchmarking, quality standards, and professional accreditation.

Corporate Contribution

- Actively contribute to corporate strategy, policy and financial planning; deputise for the Strategic Director of Finance as appropriate while safeguarding assurance independence.
- Role-model the Council's values, and lead by example on ethical standards, equality, diversity and inclusion.

Key Measures Of Success

- Oversee improved governance within the organisation including a positive Annual Head of Internal Audit Opinion, risk and control; improved trend in audit assurance ratings and timely implementation of high-priority actions.
- Material contribution to the Council's financial sustainability through better risk-based decision-making, fraud loss prevention/recovery, and reduced cost of poor quality.
- Maturing risk culture: clear articulation and use of risk appetite; risk/controls integrated into planning, commissioning, and performance.
- External assurance feedback (e.g., External Audit, inspection/regulators) recognises effective governance and assurance coordination.

Financial Responsibilities

- Ensure effective systems of financial control across assurance activities and strong coverage within the annual internal audit plan.
- Oversee budgets for the Assurance function; commission and manage any specialist assurance resources and partnership functions.
- Identify, quantify, and track financial impacts of assurance activity (e.g., avoided costs, fraud detected/prevented, insurance recoveries, benefits realisation assurance).
- Indicative scale statements (to support NJC scoring—replace placeholders during evaluation):
    - Provision of assurance over the organisation's strategic risks, ensuring that the most significant exposures are subject to appropriate oversight and insight.
    - Achievement of counter fraud outcomes that demonstrate effective identification and prevention of fraudulent activity.
    - Oversight of the corporate insurance programme, including management of premiums and the self-insurance fund.

Strategy & Policy Development

- Lead development and continuous improvement of the Council's Assurance & Risk Strategy, Internal Audit Charter, Counter-Fraud & Corruption Strategy, Risk Management Policy, Information Governance policies and Business Continuity plans.

Job Description

Ensure alignment with professional standards and codes; horizon-scan emerging risks (digital/AI, cyber, supply chain, climate, safeguarding, financial resilience) and advise on policy/controls implications.

Performance & Customer Focus

- Deliver responsive, business-partnering support to services and programme teams, balancing independent challenge with practical, solution-focused advice.
- Establish service standards and KPIs for the Assurance function; publish transparent performance and learning reports to SLT, Members and the public where appropriate.

Leadership & Management

- Provide visible, values-led leadership; recruit, develop and retain talent; build career pathways and professional succession.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement, candour and psychological safety to support open escalation and learning from risk events.

Flexibility

- Work with a degree of flexibility required to perform work not specifically referred to above but falling within the scope of the post at the appropriate grade, and which may include out-of-hours activity during incidents or exercises.

Health & Safety

- Ensure safe and efficient delivery of services by achieving high standards of health and safety and reducing risk.

The Council's Commitment To Equality

- Deliver the Council's commitment to equality of opportunity both in the provision of services and as an employer. Promote equality in the workplace and in the services the Council delivers.

Person Specification

Qualifications

- Full member of a CCAB body or other equivalent in a relevant discipline (e.g. CMIIA, ERM [the international certificate qualification in risk management], ACFS [a certified counter fraud qualification] or MBA) with significant post-qualification leadership experience – Essential.
- Recognised management/leadership qualification – Desirable.
- Degree or equivalent experience; post-graduate qualification (e.g., MBA, Masters) – Desirable.

Technical / Knowledge Requirements

- Significant senior leadership experience spanning assurance and transformation, translating corporate strategy into risk-balanced delivery across a portfolio of services/programmes in a large public sector organisation (preferably local government).
- Deep understanding of governance, risk and control in complex change (operating model, digital/AI, commercial/procurement, property/estates, workforce).
- Demonstrable experience acting as Chief Audit Executive, senior assurance leader, or accountable client officer for internal audit arrangements.
- Proven track record of designing and embedding risk appetite and control frameworks, including data protection, information security and cyber.
- Evidence of delivering measurable value (cost avoidance/recovery, benefits optimisation, reduction in control failures/fraud loss).
- Experience of leading assurance coverage for major change portfolios.

Behavioural Competencies

Personal Effectiveness

- Communicating & Influencing – communicates with impact at SLT/member level; provides clear, balanced advice and constructive challenge.
- Respecting Others – champions equality, diversity and inclusion; builds collaborative relationships.
- Striving for Excellence – high levels of personal drive, resilience and learning mindset create an achievement-oriented culture.
- Political Awareness – operates effectively in a political environment with credibility and tact.
- Analytical Skills – highly developed problem-solving using data and insight; comfortable with ambiguity and enterprise-wide trade-offs.

Leadership

- Setting Direction – establishes a compelling vision for assurance and transformation assurance; champions continuous improvement and responsiveness to change.
- Managing Performance – builds high-performing teams; sets clear standards and holds self/others to account.

Person Specification

- Developing Talent – invests in people; creates professional development routes (including data analytics and digital assurance).
- Change & Project Management – track record of enabling transformational change in complex environments; adept with portfolio, programme and project assurance methods.

Working In Partnership

- Team Working – works collaboratively with SLT and members; fosters cross-council teamwork and shared outcomes.
- Cross-Tameside Working – identifies opportunities for collaboration across directorates and with partners; understands legal, commercial and social context.
- External Partnership Working – builds effective relationships with external audit, regulators, shared services (e.g., SWAP, STAR, NAFN), suppliers and other councils to share best practice and deliver value.

Next Steps & How to Apply

This guidance contains important information to help with your application:

Please apply by submitting a CV and Supporting Statement (no more than four sides of A4 in length per document aligned to the person specification). Please also include your contact details.

Please ensure your full employment history is outlined in your CV; where there are essential criteria, competencies and/or qualifications please make clear how you meet these. We may wish to verify this information during the recruitment process.

Please provide the details of two referees. Note that we will only approach referees for candidates proceeding to final selection and only with your permission. Please clearly indicate whether we can approach each referee before the selection date.

Please share with us in your Supporting Statement the values and behaviours that you bring to your leadership, and how you will transfer your skills and experience into this role.

Please complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form when you upload your details via our website.

Please upload your application by the closing date – no applications will be accepted once the long listing process has begun.

Following long-listing, you will be contacted directly by a Penna consultant to update you on the status of your application.

Asking for adjustments: we're committed to making our recruitment practices barrier-free and as accessible as possible for everyone. This includes making adjustments or changes for disabled people, neurodiverse people or people with long-term health conditions. If you would like us to consider doing anything differently during the application, interview, or assessment process, including providing information in an alternative format, please contact us.

To apply for this role, please visit the following link to upload your CV and Cover Letter: https://penna.com/jobs

Key Dates	
Applications Deadline	27 September 2026
Technical Interviews (Virtual)	1-2 October 2026
Final Interviews (In person)	12 October 2026

For questions or a confidential discussion, please contact:

Andrew Tromans
on 07805 226301 or
andrew.tromans@penna.com

Penna Executive Search

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Any questions?
Please don't hesitate to contact us

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