

Job Description and Person Specification

Job details

Job title:	Planning Officer
Grade:	TBC
Reports to:	Lead Planning Officer
Responsible for:	N/A
Directorate and Service area:	Growth and Regeneration

Purpose of the job

This role works across the functions of Planning Policy and Development Management and Enforcement. The postholder will fulfil allocated tasks and duties to meet the operational demands of the Planning Service.

Policy: Effectively lead on projects, workstreams and effectively project manage key evidence documents to inform and support policy development. Support the delivery of Council's planning policy function, ensuring guidance is up to date by planning and participating in projects and work streams including researching and writing policy, consultation and engagement exercises and assisting in taking those projects and work streams through the milestones to external examination where necessary. Assisting in implementing and delivering policies and guidance in practice, preparing appeal statements, appearing at hearings and answering enquiries from applicants, their agents and other customers in relation to planning matters, advising other departments as required.

Development Management and Enforcement: To implement the policies and procedures of the Council with regard to the management of development. Ensure the timely processing of planning submissions and related activities such as appeals, in accordance with national and local performance targets. To investigate, assess and take appropriate action in respect of alleged breaches of planning control to safeguard the environmental quality and amenities of North Northamptonshire, and maintain public confidence in the planning system.

Principal responsibilities

Generic:

1. Assisting senior colleagues and Managers in the Planning Service.
2. Ensuring the highest levels of customer service.
3. Support initiatives and all aspects of process improvement and systems review where needed.
4. Take responsibility for personal development and continuous improvement to develop a thorough understanding of current issues, processes, legislation or systems.
5. To maximise personal productivity, minimise errors and produce high quality and timely work outputs.

6. Attendance at evening and weekend meetings/committees/exhibitions.

Policy:

7. Assisting in developing policy, and other planning and design guidance, based upon appropriate evidence, involving stakeholders and the public in policy development and taking draft policy through formal adoption processes, including preparing for Key Decisions and Examinations in Public as necessary
8. Undertaking research to provide a sound and up to date evidence base for policy development for both North Northamptonshire as a whole, and for specified places as a key element of place shaping.
9. Participating in projects to deliver local plan objectives, in relation to a topic or a spatial area.
10. Maintaining a broad knowledge of the policy issues across North Northamptonshire and developing specialist knowledge in certain aspects according to business needs, preparing briefings for senior officers, managers and Councillors.
11. Providing guidance and support for communities considering or preparing neighbourhood plans
12. Facilitating at public events as part of community engagement
13. Assisting in maintaining databases and monitoring systems. Analysing evidence and drawing out trends, patterns and characteristics for both the borough as a whole and specified places in need of policy development.
14. Providing policy observations on applications for planning permission, advice to other Council departments, and working on corporate projects as required, including the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
15. Preparing statements and other materials for appeals and prosecutions, and to appear as the Council's representative at inquiries, hearings and court.
16. Assist on work on Special Projects which may from time to time arise.
17. Assist the preparation of commissioning briefs and the procurement of professional consultants to advise the Council on technical matters essential to support plan making.
18. To assist in developing the application of Information Technology in the planning policy process, including the Council's Geographical Information System.

Development Management and Enforcement:

19. Assisting in the validation of planning applications and other submissions.
20. Dealing with a case load of some of smaller scale planning applications, and/or alleged breaches of planning control, including the carrying out of site inspections, research, consultations and assessment of the case. Making appropriate recommendations in accordance with the policies of the Council under the direction of senior colleagues.
21. Preparation and presenting of Committee reports on planning and other applications.
22. Negotiating to improve development proposals.

23. Providing advice and assistance to the public, prospective applicants, and others about more complex planning proposals. Providing effective customer liaison and information to all in actual and alleged breaches of planning control.
24. Liaison with other sections of the department, other departments of the Council and other bodies to ensure full consideration is given to all factors relating to proposed developments.
25. Liaison with other sections of the service, other sections of the Council and other bodies to ensure full consideration is given to all factors relating to proposed developments and/or a joined-up corporate approach to enforcement in the public interest.
26. Preparation of statements and representing the Council as an expert planning witness at hearings, inquiries or in Court.
27. Dealing with service complaints (where appropriate) in accordance with the Council's corporate complaints procedure; assisting the Local Government Ombudsman where necessary in their investigations.

General responsibilities applicable to all jobs

1. Demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs.
2. Comply with the Council's policies and procedures including (but not limited to) safeguarding, financial regulations, promotion of equalities, customer care, agreed audit actions and health and safety (ensuring that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons).
3. Carry out any other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of this job description and which are commensurate with the grade of the post.

This job description reflects the major tasks to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the major tasks may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

Person Specification

Attributes	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
Education, Qualifications and Training	<p>A relevant degree or equivalent qualification to allow future access to Chartered membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute (or equivalent).</p> <p>Demonstration of a Personal Development Plan that explains a commitment via Licentiate, Associate or the Experienced Practitioner route, to achieving Chartered Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute (or equivalent).</p>	<p>Chartered membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute (or equivalent).</p> <p>Some experience of working in the English Planning System.</p>
Experience and Knowledge	<p>Conversant with policy documents, plans, maps and architectural drawings.</p> <p>Understanding of the English Planning System.</p>	<p>Experience of using computerised planning systems and GIS.</p> <p>Working knowledge of current planning legislation and practice.</p>
Abilities and Skills	<p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Report writing skills</p> <p>Able to deliver excellent customer service under pressure</p> <p>Computer literate</p> <p>Good organisational skills</p> <p>Able to travel independently to multiple sites across the Council's administrative area to undertake site visits on a frequent basis (3-5 times a week), or further away to</p>	<p>Able to successfully negotiate planning improvements with developers</p>

Attributes	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
	<p>attend meetings and events on behalf of the Council. For example, the ability drive with access to own transport.</p> <p>Good time management skills</p> <p>Good personal presentation</p> <p>A team player</p> <p>Confident and assertive</p> <p>The ability to carry out site visits or investigations on a variety of outdoor locations including domestic properties, overgrown land, and building sites. Must be able to use ladders and scaffolding and be able to walk across sites with uneven ground conditions.</p>	
Equal Opportunities	<p>Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs.</p>	
Additional Factors		