Job description and person specification

**Senior Technical Support Officer**

**WEST0764**

Planning Service, Place & Economy Directorate

Thank you for your interest in this role. Our vision at West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is: ‘to make West Northants a great place to live, work, visit and thrive’.

We truly stand by this and work hard every day to make this a reality, and at WNC it’s about our people. People who thrive with ambition, bring new ideas, demand better ways of working, care about every detail, and who never shy away from a challenge.

Our culture is a gateway for new experiences. A place to forge new opportunities. To empower you in your career and unite you with like-minded people. When potential is unlocked, talent thrives.

# **Purpose and impact:**

To provide customers, the public, internal and external stakeholders including Councillors with a high quality, consistent and efficient support service for the effective administration and robust performance management of the Planning Service. To support the Technical Support Manager, Technical Support Team Leaders and all other members of the Planning Service in their role and duties.

# **Accountable to:**

Technical Support Team Leader

# **Responsibilities:**

1. To make a proactive and positive contribution to the effective delivery of the Planning Service, this will include working flexibly and positively to achieve the objectives on the council.
2. To deliver excellent customer service in every interaction for all internal and external customers, including Councillors.
3. To respond in a timely and professional manner to requests for support from members on the public seeking to engage with the Planning Service. This will include providing feedback to the Customer Contact Centre and the Complaints and Customer feedback teams where required
4. To support the timely responses to (and monitoring of) customer, MP and Councillor complaints and feedback to ensure the Planning Service is consistently meeting corporate service standards
5. To support the regular entry of data into, and the collation of data from , DEF and our IT systems to ensure the Planning Service in consistently meeting, and exceeding, its statutory and corporate Performance Indicators and demonstrating best practice
6. To Process customer data in accordance with GDPR and within the required service levels as set by the Technical Support Manager, or corporately where applicable, including the processing and redaction of comments and other documents prior to online publication.
7. To process and record payments received for planning applications in accordance with the Council’s procedures.
8. To provide support to other members of the Planning Service in the timely registration, validation and processing of planning applications, pre-application enquiries, Planning Performance Agreement’s, extensions of time, appeals, enforcement cases and any other processes carried out within the team / service and in accordance with agreed service standards.
9. To issue any relevant planning documents to applicants, agents or consultees as required.
10. To support the Technical Support Team Leaders in the preparation of documents, correspondences, notifications, and presentations for the Councils Planning Committees and Planning Policy Committee.
11. To provide support to the Planning Policy team where required, particular during peak periods of public or internal consultations.
12. To support the Assistant Director of Planning, Technical Support Manager and Team Leaders with aspects of process improvements and systems reviews where needed.
13. To support the Assistant Director of Planning, Technical Support Manager and Team Leaders with the delivery of the Planning Services Communications and Engagement Strategy where required.
14. To support the Assistant Director of Planning, Technical Support Manager and Team Leaders with the co-ordination of Agent & Developers Forums, Member training, Parish & Town Council training and staff CPD as required.
15. To take responsibility and encourage personal development and continuous improvements within the team alongside the Technical Support Team Leaders to develop a through understanding of current issues, challenges, processes, legislation, or systems.
16. To support the Technical Support Team Leaders in the training and support of Career Grade Officers and Apprentices within the team and Planning Service, and to deputise for the technical Support Team Leaders when required.
17. To follow, al all times, all planning and other legislation such as data Protection (GDPR), Freedom of Information (FOI) and health & Safety at work.
18. To undertake any other duties commensurate with the general level of responsibility of this post.
19. To maximise personal productivity, minimise duplication and errors; and manage our information efficiently and securely to reduce risk, though effective use of Office 365 and our internal IT systems and applications.
20. Actively challenge and seek to eliminate any directly or indirectly discriminatory practice or behaviours.
21. Demonstrate awareness and understanding of other people’s behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs and ensure that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons.

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:**

The requirements for the role are outlined below and will be part of the selection process. Each of the criteria listed below will be measured by:

(**A**) Application Form, (**T**) Test, (**I**) Interview, (**P**) Presentation, (**D**) Documentation.

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills experience and qualifications required for this job.

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| **Skills and abilities:** | Essential / Desirable | Measured by |
| Displays a positive, ‘can do’, proactive and supportive attitude  in a team environment | E | A & I |
| Consistently strives for continuous improvement and  excellence | E | A & I |
| Time/priority management: high level of proficiency | E | A & I |
| Ability to work under pressure, handle stress and to deadlines | E | A & I |
| Displays good attention to detail | E | A & I |
| Verbal: display a good level of ability; exhibit a clear &  comprehensible verbal style | E | A & I |
| Writing: display a good level of ability; exhibit a clear &  comprehensible writing style in line with Plain English  principles | E | A & I |
| Specialist IT skills: DEF MasterGov or other planning related  system, QGIS or other mapping software, Microsoft Office  packages, such as Outlook, Excel, PowerPoint, etc., ERP Gold  (or other finance/HR system) & any other system used within  the service or Council (Essential), | E | A & I |
| **This is applicable to all roles in WNC that are required to use IT equipment:** Demonstrate effective use of Office 365 (incl. Teams, OneDrive, etc.) or willingness to undertake training during the probation period. | E | A & I |

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| **Knowledge:** | Essential / Desirable | Measured by |
| Knowledge of all Microsoft Office products such as Outlook,  Word, Excel & PowerPoint | E | A & I |
| Understanding of current data protection legislation and its  application to the Planning Service | E | A & I |
| Knowledge of the planning process, planning system and  legislation | E | A & I |
| Proficient in identifying and communicating national and local  validation criteria on planning applications | E | A & I |
| Knowledge of the types of plans and maps submitted in  support of an application, their interpretation and how to  verify them against validation and legal requirements | E | A & I |

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| **Relevant experience:** | Essential / Desirable | Measured by |
| Experience of working in a busy office environment | E | A & I |
| Experience of working within Local Government | E | A & I |
| Experience of working in a busy customer focused area | E | A & I |
| Experience of using Planning Software such as DEF & QGIS, or other planning systems | E | A & I |

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| **Education, training and work qualifications:** | Essential / Desirable | Measured by |
| 5 GCSEs (or equivalent) including Maths and English at Grade  5/ Grade C or above. | E | A |

All appointments are subject to standard pre-employment screening. This will include identity, references, proof of right to work in the UK, medical clearance and verification of certificates.

# **Day-to-day in the role:**

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| **Hours:** | 37HRS PER WK | **Primary work base:** | The Forum, Towcester |
| **Job family band:** | Regulatory & Technical | **Worker type:** | Part-flexible |
| **Salary range:** | £29,060 - £30,712 | **Budget responsibility:** | [provide c. £x figure] |
| **People management responsibility:** | N/A |  |  |

**Working conditions & how we work:**

As a Part Flexible employee, the expectation will be to work 2 days a week within our Towcester officer, with the remaining times worked from home or other WNC location. During initial training, the expectation will be to be office based, daily for approx. 4-6 weeks.

# **Our organisational values and behaviours**

Everything we want to achieve for West Northants depends on having the right people in place and doing the right things and we want all colleagues to THRIVE, both personally and professionally. Our values and our behaviours framework underpin how we work and what partners and customers can expect from us. We want to do our very best for our residents, service users and businesses and for our staff – we want everyone to THRIVE.

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| **T** | Trust | We are honest, fair, transparent and accountable. We can be trusted to do what we say we will. |
| **H** | High Performing | we get the basics right and what we do, we do well. We manage our business efficiently. |
| **R** | Respect | we respect each other and our customers in a diverse, professional and supportive environment. |
| **I** | Innovate | we encourage curiosity, we are creative and seize opportunities to grow individually as an organisation and as an area. |
| **V** | Value | We continually strive for best practice and ways of improving existing procedures, practices and systems and thereby promoting efficiency and cost effectiveness |
| **E** | Empower | we believe in people, will listen, learn and trust them to make decisions. We help people to realise their ambitions. |

**“Valuing colleagues as individuals and encompassing our different perspectives to deliver our collective ambitions. One West inclusive culture”**

