

WHERE  
CAREERS  
THRIVE

When potential  
is unlocked,  
talent *thrives*



West  
Northamptonshire  
Council

Job description and person specification

## Head of Service – Development Management

Planning Service – Place, Economy and Environment 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'.



West  
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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 implement the Council's place shaping agenda and its objective to be positive and proactive in terms of supporting the best development within West Northamptonshire.

To lead and direct the Development Management Service in an appropriate, efficient and effective manner and provide a high-quality service to all our customers. To provide appropriate advice and oversee decision-making on all Development Management matters including the provision of high-quality pre-application advice, the effective and efficient processing of applications for planning permission, all other related consents, determinations and planning appeals.

### **Accountable to:**

Assistant Director – Planning and Development

The role sits within Planning and Development, part of the Place, Economy and Environment Directorate in West Northamptonshire Council.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. To lead and direct the Development Management Service, including the Major Projects and Mainstream Applications Teams, with direct line management responsibility for the Development Management Team Leaders.
2. To deputise for the Assistant Director as requested and to form a proactive part of the Planning Leadership Team, demonstrating positive and professional leadership behaviours at all times.
3. To contribute towards the creation of the Service Plan and lead the communication and delivery of any relevant outcomes.
4. To take responsibility for the robust and effective financial management, monitoring and reporting of the Development Management service budget (Tier 3).
5. To ensure all purchasing and procurement, including recruitment, is conducted in line with corporate guidelines with appropriate use of the Council's financial systems.
6. To manage and regularly review any Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to ensure they remain fit for purpose, relevant, best value for money and productive.
7. To take overall responsibility for the performance of the Development Management Service and ensure the Planning Service is consistently meeting, and exceeding, its statutory and corporate Performance Indicators and demonstrating best practice.

8. To represent the Council with external organisations, at Planning Committee and at its related working parties and advisory groups.
9. To act as a proactive ambassador for the Planning Service and appropriately liaise with the other teams and stakeholders to enable effective service delivery, and across the Council.
10. To ensure that planning decisions in the team are made (and seen to be made) with the utmost integrity and impartiality.
11. To deliver excellent customer service in every interaction for all internal and external customers, including Councillors.
12. To ensure timely responses to customer, MP and Councillor complaints and feedback to ensure the Planning Service is consistently meeting corporate service standards.
13. To provide appropriate technical advice to the public, developers, agents, Cabinet, other elected Members, other departments of the Council and other persons and bodies as appropriate in connection with development proposals and related matters in writing, by telephone or in person.
14. To support the Head of Planning Policy and Specialist Services by inputting into the formulation of planning policies and providing support to the Planning Policy team where required.
15. To support the Assistant Director with aspects of continuous process improvement and systems review where needed.
16. To support the Assistant Director with the delivery of the Planning Service's Communications and Engagement Strategy where required.
17. To support the Assistant Director with the co-ordination of the Agents and Developers Forum, Member training, Parish and Town Council training and staff CPD programmes as required.
18. To take responsibility and encourage personal development and continuous improvement within the Development Management team to develop a thorough understanding of current issues, processes, legislation or systems. To develop the team ensuring they are empowered to make decisions, improve service delivery and are supported in their ongoing professional development.
19. To lead the training and support of the Team Leaders and Principal Planning Officers, considering succession planning within the Planning Service.
20. To follow, at all times, all planning and other legislation such as Data Protection - GDPR, Freedom of Information (FOI) and Health & Safety at work.
21. To undertake any other duties commensurate with the general level of responsibility of this post.
22. To maximise personal productivity, minimise duplication and errors: and manage our information efficiently and securely to reduce risk, through effective use of Office 365 and our internal IT systems and applications.

23. Actively challenge and seek to eliminate any directly or indirectly discriminatory practice or behaviours.
24. Demonstrate awareness and understanding of other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs to 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.

Skills and abilities:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Displays a positive, 'can do', proactive and supportive attitude in a team environment	E	A, T, I, P
Consistently strives for continuous improvement and excellence	E	A, I, P
Strong interpersonal and team building skills	E	A, I, P
Time/priority management: high level of proficiency	E	A, T, I
Ability to work under pressure, handle stress and to deadlines	E	A, T, I
Displays good attention to detail and accurate research skills	E	A, T, I, P, D
Excellent and robust negotiation skills	E	A, I
Verbal: excellent level of professional ability; exhibits a clear & comprehensible verbal style	E	A, T, I, P
Self-awareness: Ability to communicate and display consistent professional conduct with a wide range of people, in person, by telephone and email	E	A, I
Strategic Awareness: An excellent understanding of the 'bigger picture' and the Planning Service's role corporately.	E	A, I, P
Writing: excellent level of professional ability; exhibits a clear & comprehensible writing style in line with Plain English principles	E	A, I, D
General IT skills: basic keyboard/typing skills, use of Windows, word- processing and email	E	A, I, D
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),	D	A, I, D
<b>This is applicable to all roles in WNC that are required to use IT equipment:</b> Demonstrate effective use of Office 365 (incl. Teams, OneDrive, etc.) or willingness to undertake training during the probation period.	E	A, I

Knowledge:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Excellent knowledge of working effectively in a political environment with a wide range of stakeholders	E	A, I
Thorough knowledge and understanding of planning legislation, case law and policy, planning techniques and the development management and enforcement process (including S106 and the community infrastructure levy).	E	A, I, D

Relevant experience:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
5 years' + experience in Development Management and dealing with planning applications and appeals.	E	A, I, P, D
Demonstrable leadership, line management and mentoring experience at a senior level	E	A, I, P, D
Budget management experience	E	A, I
Performance management experience	E	A, I, D
Depth and range of practical experience that demonstrates coverage of a significant range of planning applications and development management activities	E	A, I, P, D
Recent experience in dealing with appeals (including informal hearings and public inquiries)	E	A, I, P
Significant experience of presenting reports to Planning Committee (or equivalent), senior management and Member Committees.	E	A, I, P

Education, training and work qualifications:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Relevant undergraduate degree	E	A, I, D
Relevant Post-Graduate qualification	D	A, I, D
Corporate membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute and evidence of continued professional development.	E	A, I, D
Managerial or leadership qualification	E	A, I, D
Financial training	D	A, I, D

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.

**Additional pre-employment checks specific to this role include:** Basic Disclosure

## Day-to-day in the role:

<b>Hours:</b>	37	<b>Primary work base:</b>	The Forum, Towcester
<b>Job family band:</b>	RT11	<b>Worker type:</b>	Part-flexible
<b>Salary range:</b>	£62,010 to £68,113	<b>Budget responsibility:</b>	Yes
<b>People management responsibility:</b>	Major Project Team Leader, Development Management Team Leaders (x2)		

### Working conditions & how we work:

Office based with frequent external meetings.

This role has been identified as a part-flexible worker type, this means that you will be able to worker from other work locations and when not working from an office you will be working remotely for up to 3 days a week (including from home).

## 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.

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



# When potential is unlocked, talent *thrives*

Choose a career that offers you a true sense of achievement, fills you with pride and challenges you in a positive way, everyday.

## The benefits of a career at WNC include:

- **People** are at the centre of everything we do. Without our people, we wouldn't be able to deliver services to the people in our community.
- **Ambition** runs through everything we do at West Northants Council, we nurture and develop our people's ambition and willingness to succeed, to continually improve the service we provide to the community.
- **Care** is at the heart of West Northants Council, we care in so many ways; seen and unseen, helping our colleagues and community to thrive.
- **Flexibility** is key, we know work-life balance is critical to wellbeing, so we work hard to make sure our benefits package promotes and improves wellbeing; from annual leave, sick pay, family leave and flexible working, financial security offered by a local government pension scheme and life assurance, and discount schemes which make a difference to your day-to-day life, through to employee helplines offering free legal, health, financial and wellbeing advice and support.

We want you to have balance and be happy.

