

Job Title: Definitive Map Officer

Job number: 332023116

Grade: £35,045

# Overall purpose of the job

The position of Definitive Map Officer is required to fulfil the Council’s statutory duties and powers in respect of public rights of way in accordance with, in particular, the Highways Act 1980 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The post holder oversees any legal changes to the rights of way network in North Northamptonshire and always ensures that the legal integrity of the Definitive Map and Statement (the legal record of rights of way) is preserved so that the Council is protected from legal action taken by either the Secretary of State or members of the public. The legislation regarding public rights of way and Definitive Maps is both broad and complex and the post holder provides a specialist advisory service to a wide range of stakeholders.

# Main accountabilities

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|   | **Main accountabilities**  |
| 1.  | To prepare periodic Legal Event Orders (‘LEOs’) and ensure the accurate preparation and publication (by legal order) of the periodic consolidation of the Definitive Map and Statement. Any inaccuracies could result in costly legal claims being made against the Council. |
| 2.  | To investigate applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders (‘DMMOs’) and Public Path Orders (‘PPOs’) in detail so that the Council is protected from successful legal challenges to its decision making process.  |
| 3.  | To produce reports with recommendations for the Assistant Director of Highways Transport and Infrastructure (the officer with the relevant delegated powers) and draft any subsequent legal Orders. If the reports are not thorough and accurate this can lead to legal challenges and unnecessary costs for the Council and/or applicant. |
| 4.  | To prepare the Council’s case for written representations, public hearings or public inquiries if there are objections to Orders (either DMMOs or PPOs) to try to ensure that the inquiry inspector confirms the Council’s Order and that the Council is protected from excessive costs claims. To give evidence and be cross-examined as an expert witness in courts of all levels and public inquiries to execute the Council’s legal responsibilities in an efficient and cost-effective manner. |
| 5.  | To ensure accurate rights of way registers and records are created, kept and maintained to ensure that the Council meets it statutory obligations in this regard. A significant amount of the records is kept on the Council’s website and GIS system. The maintaining of these records ensures compliance with the Council’s best practice policies and procedures, thereby enhancing the Council’s service to the public. The post holder conducts rights of way searches and provides signed legal extracts of the Definitive Map (which may be used as legal evidence). |
| 6. | To work with the Planning Authority by providing expert, professional advice to the legal teams in the making and confirming of PPOs under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect the legal integrity of the routes on the Definitive Map. |
| 7. | To contribute to the content and policies within the local Rights of Way Improvement Plan and Local Transport Plan to set targets for the next five years. |
| 8. | To examine, review, advise on and accept Landowner Deposits to ensure that they cannot be called into question later, thereby protecting the landowner and the integrity of the Council. |
| 9. | To ensure that reasonable care is always taken for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and others and to comply with priorities and procedures relating to health and safety. |

**Person Specification**

**Qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience**

Minimum level of qualifications required for this job

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| **Qualifications Required**  | **Subject**  | **Essential/ Desirable**  |
| Educated to graduate level or higher (or equivalent) in an appropriate field or significant relevant experience. |  |  E |
| Member of IPROW (Institute of Public Rights of Way) |  | E |
| Current valid driving licence |  | E |
| 5 GCSEs  | Including English and Maths | E  |

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

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| **Identify**  |  **Essential/ Desirable** |
| **Knowledge** |  |
| A good understanding of the legal and historical background to the Definitive Map with good knowledge of highway, environmental or land law. A working knowledge of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Highways Act 1980 and earlier Highways Acts in so much as these are concerned with public rights of way. | E  |
| Excellent IT skills including Microsoft Office and GIS systems (to create maps of a very high standard of accuracy) | E  |
| Excellent map reading skills with the ability to read and interpret historic maps and documents including early highways records such as Inclosure Acts and Awards | E  |
| Ability to supply specialist technical and legal advice to solicitors, land agents, local authorities and other third-party organisations | E  |
| Exceptionally skilled at report writing and able to draft Orders or legally binding agreements such as Definitive Map Modification Orders, Public Path Orders and Deed of Dedication. |  |
| **Skills**  |   |
| Ability to communicate effectively with solicitors, land agents, public, external contractors and internal customers. | E  |
| Competent IT skills including word processing, GIS, spreadsheets and electronic mail systems. | E |
| Ability to prioritise workload, work to deadlines and work well under pressure. | E |
| Ability to negotiate with landowners, objectors and other third parties to achieve required outcome. | E |
| **Experience**  |   |
| Proven extensive experience of working with Definitive Map and Public Rights of Way legislation. | E  |
| Proven experience of negotiating and communicating effectively at all levels and of presenting ideas on service issues to colleagues and the community  | E |

**Disclosure level**

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| What disclosure level is required for this post?  | **None**  |

**Work type**

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| What work type does this role fit into?  | **Flexible** |