

Job Description

Job title	Senior Planning Officer
Directorate	PLACE : Regeneration, Culture and Environment
Division	Planning Service
Range	MPR 6
Reports to	Principal Planning Officer

Main purpose of the job:

To effectively and efficiently deal with a caseload of all types of planning and other applications as well as associated appeals and pre-application advice requests. This could include being the lead officer on many schemes and co-ordinating a Development Team or being part of a Corporate Multi-Function Team.

To assist in the development and implementation of systems and procedures to ensure the achievement of the required performance targets both as part of a team and individually, as well as a consistency of decision making.

To take a lead role in enforcement work in dealing with the investigation of breaches of planning control and to progress the appropriate action as required, defending that action where necessary through the appeals process or in court.

Liaise with stakeholders in a way that promotes the [vision and values](#) of the Council.

Accountabilities and outcomes:

Deal with all types of planning applications and other applications, including complex and major schemes, from pre application to determination including undertaking site visits, providing advice and negotiating with applicants, agents and developers and the preparation of the necessary delegated and committee reports with recommendations.

Attend and present planning applications to Planning Committee, at members site visits and member presentations, including articulating and endorsing recommendations.

Assess and clear details submitted in relation to the discharge of planning conditions in a timely manner in order to facilitate appropriate development in Medway.

Defend the Council's decisions at appeal and present the Council's case on written representation and informal hearing appeals.

Manage own workload to ensure application and pre-application deadlines and performance targets are met.

Provide advice and assistance to more junior planning staff in relation to planning queries and members of the Planning Enforcement Team with regard to breaches of planning control and formal action.

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

Key Corporate Accountabilities:

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

To understand and actively keep up to date with GDPR responsibilities, including completing regular refresher training.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all employees are required to act in such a way that safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

To participate in the Performance Appraisal process and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs utilising the Career Development Framework.

To actively promote the Council's Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

Promote the Medway Carbon Neutral by 2050 commitment; supporting the Council action plan to ensure we play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

Organisation:

This role reports to the Principal Planning Officer.

The post holder will not be required to line manage others but may be required to direct, coordinate or train other employees.

The post holder will be required to liaise with all stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation.

Working Style:

HYBRID - a flexible working arrangement whereby an employee can undertake their work either in the office and/or partially or mainly from home on a temporary or permanent basis.

Person specification

All criteria at level A are considered essential unless stated otherwise.

Qualifications

Level A

- Degree in planning related subject or at least 3 years' experience in Development Management
- Eligible for RTPI Membership or similar

Level B (in addition)

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Level C (in addition)

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Knowledge

Level A

- Complete understanding of the development planning system and its legislative framework.
- Full understanding of the planning application and associated processes.
- Full knowledge of the varying types of appropriate planning enforcement action.
- Understanding of IT systems and their application and use in the Development Management function.
- An awareness of the One Medway Council Plan.
- Knowledge of legislation, policies and procedures in relation to GDPR and data protection, equalities and safeguarding.

Level B (in addition)

- Knowledge of planning legislation and associated regulations and guidance and ability to apply to applications, appeals and advice.
- Knowledge and understanding of wider national policy and local context for planning in Medway, with the ability to provide advice on these matters.
- Knowledge and understanding of the One Medway Council Plan and service plan and how this role and the team contribute to delivering the outcomes

Level C (in addition)

- Knowledge of legal requirements and case law in the context of Development Management.
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Experience

Level A

- At least 3 years' experience working in Development Management or equivalent environment
- Extensive experience of effectively and efficiently processing a high volume of all types of planning applications from pre application to determination.
- Extensive experience of dealing with a range of appeal types associated with a caseload of applications.

- Extensive experience of the enforcement of planning control.
- Experience of dealing with customers in a courteous and helpful way by keeping them advised of progress and offering them a solution to their problem.
- Demonstrable experience of presenting applications to Planning Committee
- Demonstrable experience of coping well under pressure and difficult situations, able to identify and act on own development needs.
- Demonstrable experience of contributing to change and listening to new ideas.

Level B (in addition)

- Extensive experience of presenting applications to Planning Committee
- Demonstrable experience of thoroughly analyzing information, and considering alternative solutions, adapting to new ways of working where necessary.

Level C (in addition)

- Demonstrable experience of dealing with major planning applications/appeals.
- Experience of dealing with applications that are subject to a Planning Performance Agreement.

Skills

Level A

- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook
- Full driving licence valid for use in the UK and access to own transport for work purposes
- Understanding of, and ability to read, plans, drawings and accompanying reports likely to be submitted in support of planning applications.
- Ability to manage time effectively, planning own workload and setting appropriate objectives and deadlines.
- Excellent communication, negotiation, consultation and influencing skills tailored to meet the needs of a wide range of audiences and stakeholders.
- Ability to build and maintain supportive and empathetic relationships, securing people's support and commitment to a course of action or different way of thinking by presenting ideas convincingly and persuasively, and to lead major negotiations.
- Able to demonstrate an understanding of how the organization works and how this fits into the political environment, with a commitment to cross boundary and team working.
- Ability to think about alternative ways of doing things and being open to new work practices and responsive to change.
- Commitment to equality and diversity, accepting differences and treating everyone fairly.
- Ability to demonstrate an understanding of how teams work with other services and takes a proactive approach towards helping others.

Level B (in addition)

- Ability to lead a team through negotiation on major and/or controversial planning proposals with a range of stakeholders.
- Able to manage complex projects, assessing and taking account of known risks, able to adapt to changes and problems along the way.

Level C (in addition)

- Extensive negotiation skills to improve development through the pre-application and application process.
- Ability to work independently on caseload with minimal supervision or assistance.
- Ability to mentor and develop more junior members of staff.