

Principal Planning Officer

Department	Development and Building Control
Pay Grade	G9
Responsible to	Major Applications Team Leader

Role Purpose

To respond to pre-application enquiries and to process, evaluate and make recommendations on major planning applications, including those of a complex and controversial nature and those of a strategic scale. To attend Committees, Member and other briefings and represent the Council at appeals, hearings and public inquiries.

To provide guidance and support to planning officers and senior planning officers on major planning applications and related work within the team through case reviews and day-to-day support. To consider officers recommendations and determine major planning applications under delegated powers.

To contribute at a senior level to all aspects of development management in the planning service and to participate in the delivery of the service plan objectives with respect to service improvements, customer service and the timely delivery of planning decisions in accordance with adopted performance standards.

Role Specific Responsibilities / Accountabilities

- To allocate work within the team in connection with the Team Leaders, alongside considering officers recommendations and issuing decisions under delegated powers.
- To carry out case reviews with Planning Officers and Senior Planning Officers to assist them with their caseloads and provide guidance to those more junior team members.
- To undertake service improvements and projects as required by the Team Leaders to ensure that the service adapts and is responsible to changes in local and national planning guidance.
- To review and manage work streams within the team, alongside the Team leader, to ensure the requirements of statutory legislation and performance targets are met
- To attend Committees and Member briefings to present and explain the nature and scope of the applications being discussed. At the Committee meeting to respond to questions raised to ensure that Members and the public have an understanding of the application, the basis of the officer recommendation and the relevant planning policies.
- To ensure that Planning Officers receive direct training on more complex planning applications as part of their own professional development

- To manage and formulate responses to pre-application enquiries received in writing to ensure consistency of planning advice from pre-application stage to decision making at application stage.
- To mentor nominated planning officers within the team and provide opportunities for joint working on planning applications or joint projects identified by the Team Leaders.
- To evaluate, negotiate and make recommendations on large and complex major planning applications, reserved matters and condition discharge, including the negotiation of s106 legal agreements to secure appropriate infrastructure delivery for development.
- To represent the Council at appeals, hearings and public inquiries to justify the Council's decision to an independent planning inspector and to seek to ensure that development takes place in accordance with national and local planning policy guidance.
- To assist with the recruitment and induction of new staff as directed by the Team Leaders to ensure the formation of a well-functioning team of professional officers to secure performance delivery.
- To carry out such other duties that may reasonably be required.

Knowledge, Skills and Qualifications

Minimum knowledge, skills and qualifications required to perform this role; relevant experience may be a substitute.

Essential Criteria

- Significant Development Management experience including mentoring or managing staff and managing a complex case load of major development including the negotiation of s106 legal agreements
- Able to analyse issues and recommend the way forward on a sound basis
- Able to display a high level of ability in writing clear reports on complex or controversial issues; exhibit clear and comprehensive writing style in plain English principles
- Experience of appeal work including hearings and public inquiries
- Experience of EIA development
- Ability to work as part of a team or on own initiative
- Able to communicate with a range of people from different backgrounds, including ethnic, social, and professional, both verbally and in writing
- Good time management and organisational skills
- Presentation skills
- Competent IT user, able to learn and use different systems
- Educated to Degree Level, or equivalent
- Recognised planning qualification
- Eligible for membership of the RTPI
- Full UK driving licence

Desirable Criteria

- Experience of considering officers recommendations and issuing delegated decisions

Appendix

Generic Employee Responsibilities / Accountabilities

- Contribute to the delivery of the corporate objectives of the Council developing good working relationships to promote the interests and reputation of the Council building a positive image of the organisation.
- Participate in a culture of learning, collaborative working and excellence to build a culture of high performance, which inspires and supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan.
- Ensure that all duties are carried out in compliance with relevant statutory processes, corporate policies and the Council's constitution.
- Proactively seek opportunities to continuously improve ways of working and Council services by evaluating activities to enhance performance.
- Assist with the development of team members' skills and knowledge through a culture of learning, collaborative working and excellence to build a culture of high performance which inspires and enables people and supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and strategic objectives.
- Develop good working relationships with local people, local businesses, the voluntary sector, regional authorities, government and a wide range of other partners in order to promote the interests and uphold the reputation of the council and so building a positive image of the organisation.
- Assist in the participation, recruitment, leadership and development of team members as required.
- Promote equality, diversity, access to services and tackling discrimination both within and outside the council to ensure there is a clear and consistent focus across the organisation and its partners in delivering an inclusive customer experience to all.
- Generally to comply with the Health and Safety policy and guidance ensuring the required mechanisms are used and to support the promotion of a culture of good health, safety and welfare, especially if nominated or appointed specifically to carry out simple checks at your place of work and log the activity.
- Follow the council's safeguarding procedures and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults across Council services.
- Participate in risk management in service areas and follow required reporting procedures, as appropriate, to minimise risks to the Council's operations.
- Follow and adhere to all Data Protection procedures and processes in accordance with relevant legislation ensuring all personal data of employees, members of the public and clients is used appropriately and retained within guidelines.
- The Returning Officer in this constituency is responsible for the election process. There is an expectation that Council employees will, as reasonably requested to do so, assist the returning officer in election processes.
- In the event of a major incident or disaster you may be required to provide assistance in whatever capacity necessary to provide the necessary organisation, co-ordination and supply of resources to support the local key emergency services.

Generic Employee Behaviours

Our behaviours framework links to our values and identifies the core knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes we require from our people to deliver services.

Customer Focus

- Deliver a high standard of customer services
- Develop effective customer relationships
- Improve customer service to meet local needs and aspirations

Achieving Excellence

- Strive to be excellent
- Deliver increasing efficiency / effectiveness
- Use taxpayers' money wisely to deliver the highest quality services to the satisfaction of our customers

Our People

- Work collaboratively together as one team
- Invest in own performance and career and support colleagues
- Work creatively and responsibly