



West Northamptonshire Council

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title:	Senior Planning Officer
Location:	The Guildhall
Grade:	Grade 7
Salary:	£34,474 - £39,590
Directorate:	Place and Economy
Section:	Development Management
Team:	Development Management
Responsible to:	Development Management Team Leader and Principal Planning Officer
Directly responsible for:	N/A
Indirectly responsible for:	Planning Officers and Planning Technician
Total budgetary responsibility:	None

JOB PURPOSE

To be responsible for the processing of Development Management matters including the handling of pre-application advice, planning applications and appeals including negotiations with applicants and agents and other interested parties and to undertake effective partnership working with key stakeholders. Assist in the preparation of planning policy including research, monitoring and consultation.

KEY RESULT AREAS

- Deal with a varied caseload of the planning, advertisement, listed building consent applications with the emphasis on more complex cases including the provision of pre-application guidance and advice and discharge of conditions. To prepare reports for submission to the Development Manager / Team Leader and Planning Committee together with the presentation of cases to the Council's Planning Committee.
- To assist in the guidance and development of the professional development of more junior members of the team in the delivery of a quality decision making environment.
- Liaison / meetings with the provision of advice and guidance to customers on planning and related matters. Provision of advice to and response to the requests of the elected Members of the Council.
- To advise and guide members of the Planning Committee through appropriate recommendations and substantiate and justify them in order to seek to ensure that decisions are reached in accordance with law, practice, policies and Government advice and are reasoned and sustainable on appeal.
- To represent the Council as an expert witness at appeal (public inquiries/ hearings), ensuring that the views of the Council are properly represented and submitted within the required timescales.
- To take a positive approach to pre-application enquiries and provide advice in accordance with the Council's policy on pre-application advice.
- To negotiate and project manage major/ complex planning and development proposals including EIA and the negotiation of S106, liaising/ consulting with other relevant local planning authorities on strategic matters within the Council's area engaging with internal and external partners and be the lead officer on such projects as necessary with support from Principal Planning Officers/ Team Leader/ Development Manager.
- Assist the Planning Enforcement service in the investigation and resolution of breaches of planning control.
- To be proactive in the delivery of a customer focused service, and support the Development Manager, Team Leader and Principal Planning/ Enforcement Officers over proposed and anticipated changes that may be required to practice and procedure.
- To deputise for the Principal Planning/ Enforcement Officers, Development Management Team Leader and the Development Manager when required, including presenting reports to Planning Committee, attending Chairman's briefings and Committee site visits.
- To assist in the preparation, consultation and monitoring of planning policy documents as part of the production of the Council's LDF documents.
- Ensure that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of you and other persons, and to comply with policies and procedures relating to health and safety within the Council.

- Demonstrate a clear commitment to equality/ diversity in both the delivery of services and to colleagues. Demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs.
- To carry out any other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope, levels and purpose of this job description.
- To participate in any relevant training for the duties of this post and to achieve the key objectives of the Council.

Note: Job Descriptions will be subject to review and possible change on an annual basis, subject to corporate priorities.

PEOPLE AND RESOURCES

The jobholder is responsible for the following people and resources:

- No direct supervisory responsibility for staff
- Indirect responsibility of supporting Planning Officers and Planning Technician

Job-holder's position in relation to their manager, peers and direct reports:

- Reports direct to a Principal Planning Officer and indirectly to a Team Leader and Development Manager

JOB DEMANDS

This job entails the following demands:

- The negotiation of Section 106 agreements and in the instruction of Legal Service in respect of drawing up the agreements.
- Screening and scoping of EIA development.
- Managing and negotiating a varied caseload of development applications and pre-applications including more complex cases, including urban development under Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Regulations.
- Preparation of the Council's evidence in respect of planning and enforcement appeals and giving evidence on behalf of the Council at Inquiries, Hearings and the High Court as directed by the Development Manager.

- Commitment and perseverance to complete work to a high standard to meet established performance indicators, statutory requirements and committee deadlines.
- Positive partnership approach and belief in effective consultation and liaison.
- Customer focussed.
- Occasional attendance at and presentation to the Planning Committee and public meetings as and when directed by the Development Manager.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential/Desirable?		Methods of Assessment			
	E	D	Application Form	References	Interview	Other
KNOWLEDGE						
Degree in planning or related subject	X		X			
Post graduate RTPI accredited planning qualification or similar	X		X			
Chartered Membership of the RTPI	X		X			
Further specialist qualification in a related discipline e.g. Urban Design		X	X		X	
At least 4 years post-graduate experience working within a local planning authority Development Management service or relevant consultancy experience dealing with the full range of applications including major applications which require a project management and development team approach, negotiating / processing 106 agreements and EIA development	X		X		X	
Experience of acting as witness at public inquiry and / or hearing		X	X		X	
Undertaken CPD to keep up to date with Planning issues	X					
Experience of presenting planning applications to Planning Committee		X	X		X	

SKILLS	E	D	Application Form	References	Interview	Other
Good interpersonal skills	X		X		X	
Good Communication skills (verbal and written)	X		X		X	
Good networking skills – ability to develop good working relationships with external partners	X		X		X	
Good negotiation skills	X		X		X	
Good ICT skills	X		X		X	
Full Driving Licence	X		X		X	
To be able to work as part of a team	X		X		X	
Ability and willingness to provide good quality and equitable customer service	X		X		X	
Ability to negotiate and devise solutions to problems as part of the planning process	X		X		X	
ATTRIBUTES	E	D	Application Form	References	Interview	Other
Demonstrate awareness of Council’s Policies and practices for own job purpose	X		X		X	
Ability to work on own initiative	X		X		X	
Ability to prioritise competing work demands	X		X		X	
Ability to work with partners to deliver shared outcomes	X		X		X	
Ability to work to tight deadlines and achieve performance targets	X		X		X	
Ability to handle a varied workload and to act on own initiative	X		X		X	
Ability to work with people at all levels	X		X		X	