



SURREY HEATH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Candidate Information Pack

SENIOR CONSERVATION AND URBAN DESIGN OFFICER (PLANNING)



September 2024

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Knoll Road, Camberley GU15 3HD
human.resources@surreyheath.gov.uk



A Message from the Head of Planning

Thank you for your interest in this role for the Council. This is a fantastic opportunity for an exceptional individual with the drive and talent to be a key part of a busy Development Management team, by helping the service fulfil and exceed performance targets and to be involved in exciting planning projects within Surrey Heath Borough Council.

I wanted to let you know that alongside our clear ambition, we are also a friendly and collaborative organisation where our staff feel really proud of the work that they do and the difference they make every day to the lives of our communities. This makes Surrey Heath a very special place to work.

I hope in the pages below we are able to give you a flavour of what Surrey Heath has to offer. If this excites your interest, I'd be delighted to receive your application.

Best wishes,

G.Chinniah

Gavin Chinniah
Head of Planning
Surrey Heath Borough Council





About Surrey Heath the place

Situated in North West Surrey, with a population of 91,000, Surrey Heath is a beautiful place to live and work. We rank first in the Home Counties for wellbeing (NOMIS 2019) and first in England and Wales for tree coverage (Bluesky). Combine that with close proximity to London and Heathrow Airport, and our ambitious regeneration programme for Camberley town centre (the Borough's largest town), and we have a lot to offer.

The borough covers 36.5 square miles in north west Surrey, on the border of both Berkshire and Hampshire and is a contrast of urban and rural environments. The area has unique military heritage with the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, where all Officers in the British Army are trained, and Deepcut Barracks.

Generally a highly affluent area, people who work here have the second highest average weekly wage in the South East. But having enough homes for people that need them and are affordable is a significant challenge, especially when balanced against the need to maintain the green nature of the borough and the extensive specially protected heathland (SPA).

We know a number of our residents and their families that are struggling, a situation made more challenging by the fragile national economy and rapidly rising food and fuel prices. In some



parts of the Borough there is a life-expectancy gap of up to 11 years and with the number of older people expected to rise more in Surrey Heath than other places over the next five years.

This is a uniquely challenging time for local businesses, therefore a strong economy and vibrant town and village centres are vital for local employment and future business success. The Council has invested significantly over recent years in Camberley town centre. We will continue our work with our towns, villages and rural communities to make these areas attractive to businesses and visitors.

About Surrey Heath Borough Council

We are one of the smallest Boroughs in the country with 35 elected members, and over 250 staff with a strong ethos for public service.

We are an ambitious organisation with a clear sense of direction. This is set out in the Council's Five-Year Strategy which was developed out of the largest public and stakeholder engagement process ever undertaken in the borough. The Council's priorities are expressed under the four themes of Economy, Environment, Health and Quality of Life and Effective and Responsive Council. This in turn feeds into our Annual Service Delivery Plans.



We employ over 250 staff directly with a strong ethos for public service. We also enjoy a friendly and supportive staff culture which is reflected in our organisational values.

We recognise that nothing can be achieved in isolation, and we have a strong foundation in Surrey Heath of teamwork through collaboration and partnership working. This is just as important for us internally as externally which includes local voluntary organisations, Frimley NHS, the County Council, the Department of Work and Pensions, local Housing Associations, and the Business Improvement District (BID) and neighbouring Councils.



Many of our front-line services are delivered through external contracts or through partnerships with neighbouring Councils. We also provide services on behalf of other Councils.

We have made excellent progress with delivering our Medium-term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which was established last year and is focused on addressing the impact of the pandemic and its aftermath on the Council's finances, including the impact on traditional income sources. Overall we have a good track record of financial management which is owned at every level in the organisation. We also have a healthy level of financial reserves.

Delivery is important to us and in Surrey Heath and this is underpinned by effective governance and project management, excellent customer service and meaningful community engagement.

Delivering Well



Investing in the future

The Council is committed to investing in the future of the borough. This includes the acquisition of The Square shopping centre, the House of Fraser store, and the purchase of the former BHS and Alders sites. We have also undertaken a significant refurbishment programme within The Square, and completed major public realm improvements in the Town Centre.

In 2021 we also saw the completion of our brand-new Leisure Centre - a £24 million, state-of-the-art facility in Camberley. The leisure centre has been a roaring success with attendance levels close to double what was achieved by the previous leisure centre.

We are also investing in our staff, with excellent learning and development opportunities, graduate and apprenticeship programmes, and best-in-class ICT systems to underpin our commitment to collaboration and agile working.



Communicating with our residents and businesses

We deliver a range of high-profile communications campaigns each year to ensure that our residents and businesses have access to the information they need.

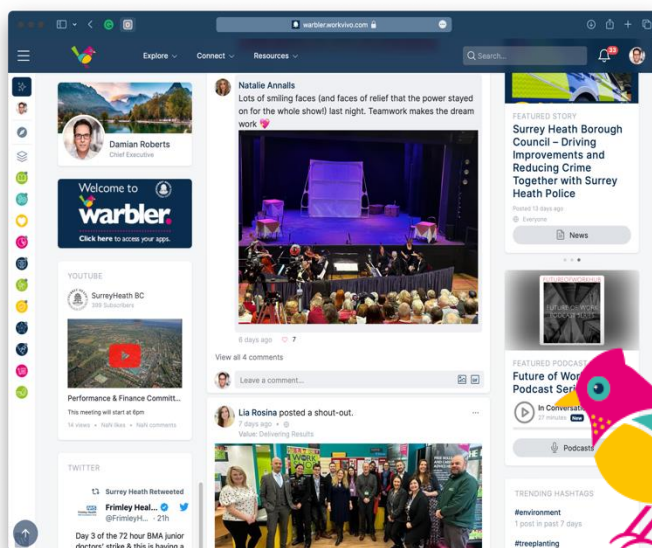


Driving Improvement
Working hard to tackle the issues that matter to you.
Find out more at surreyheath.gov.uk/drivingimprovement



Communicating with our staff

We are proud of how we communicate and engage with our workforce from our new “Warbler” staff intranet to our all-staff briefings, staff awards and our large scale face to face events. This supports our highly trusted relationships between managers and staff, our strong sense of



identity as an organisation, and helps us ensure that we continue to deliver on our commitment to openness and transparency.



Opportunities for all



We believe that everyone should have access to the services that we offer whether that is having their waste collected, accessing our beautiful green spaces, living a healthy lifestyle, planning for where they live, visiting our vibrant town or village centres, starting a new job, or building a new business. They need to know about these services, that we are here for them, and that they can trust their Council to deliver to their needs. All of our staff have a role in achieving this and in helping to create a Council that everyone can feel proud about.

What our staff say...

"Surrey Heath Borough Council has helped shape me into the person I am today, and with continuous support and opportunities, I am confident my career will only flourish here."

"I would strongly recommend Surrey Heath Borough Council to anyone."

"The friendly atmosphere allows for a non-judgmental and positive experience and I believe the Council does well in fostering collaborative working across services."

"It is an exciting time to be joining Surrey Heath Borough Council as we deliver our ambitions for the next five years, put in place new strategic partnerships and start delivery of a range of exciting new initiatives."

97%

"I am proud of the work of my team"

Staff Survey June 2022

94%

"I work with highly capable people"

Staff Survey June 2022

97%

"My line manager trusts me to do a great job"

Staff Survey June 2022

92%

"I am encouraged to offer my ideas & suggestions for improvement"

Staff Survey June 2022



Our ethos is to invest in our staff; offer opportunities to individuals to grow and develop their skills and nurture our talented people.

Our training and development for staff includes: A well development talent-management approach including apprenticeships, internship programme and Local Government Association National Graduate Development programme; Internal mentoring programme; Surrey Learn Partnership providing excellent personal development opportunities; Management development programmes for aspiring, new and experienced managers; Significant investment in staff qualifications and career paths via the 'Post entry training' scheme and a wide range of e-learning and induction training.



How to apply:

Applications are to be completed online and submitted no later than **20 October 2024**. CV's can be submitted via the online portal but cannot be accepted without a completed application. The Panel will include Gavin Chinniah (Head of Planning) and Jonathan Partington (Development Manager).

Appointment Information

Salary

The salary grade for the post is SH6 and the incremental points are:

SH6	6.23	39514
SH6	6.24	40925
SH6	6.25	42300
SH6	6.26	43730
SH6	6.27	44366

Employees new to the Council will normally be appointed to the first point of the salary range for their grade. Where the candidate's current employment package would make the first point of the salary range unattractive (and this can be demonstrated by the applicant in relation to current earnings) or where the employee already operates at a level commensurate with a higher salary, a higher salary may be considered by the recruiting manager subject to negotiation. This will be within the salary range for the grade and agreement with HR Manager or Head of HR, Performance and Communications to keep a consistent and fair approach. The candidate's level of skill and experience should be consistent with that of other employees in a similar position on the salary range.

All incremental progression within the grade is related to the performance of the post holder in accordance with the Council's Performance Management Scheme. All performance related changes are effective from 01 April of each year.

In addition you will also receive a £2,000 per annum essential user car allowance, plus mileage.



Annual leave

The post carries an annual leave entitlement of 24 days. After 5 years continuous Local Government service, you will be entitled to an additional 5 days annual leave.

Pension

All Surrey Heath employees who are under the age of 75 and have a contract of employment for more than 3 months will automatically become a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) on their first day of employment unless they opt out of the scheme upon joining the Council. You will be required to pay the relevant contributions to Surrey County Council LGPS. Further information on LGPS can be found on Surrey County Council Pension website <https://www.surreypensionfund.org/>

Benefits

The Council recognises that its main asset is its staff. In recognition of this the Council offers a generous benefits package which is currently as follows:

- Local Government Pension Scheme
- A minimum of 24 days annual leave entitlement (pro-rata for part-time employees)
- An additional 5 days' annual leave after 5 years' continuous Local Government service
- Free private medical insurance for all staff after three years' continuous service at Surrey Heath Borough Council
- Additional days off at Christmas
- Three times salary Life Assurance cover for all staff in the Pension Scheme
- Free parking for all non-casual staff
- Regular health checks and other welfare initiatives and health promotions
- Subsidised gym membership
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
- Free VDU eye examinations every 2 years
- Free vaccinations when / where appropriate
- Staff uniforms where required for all appropriate employees
- Flexible working policy
- Commitment to regular learning and development linked to Corporate objectives and support for professional learning and development, where appropriate



ROLE PROFILE FOR JOB TITLE

Role Title: Senior Conservation and Design Officer (Planning)

Service: Planning

Location: Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 3HD

Reporting To: Development Manager

Role Purpose

To deliver high quality, robust and transparent decision making within tight time frames on conservation and urban design matters to ensure that the delivery of an excellent planning service for all of our customers. To provide comprehensive and detailed advice on planning applications, pre-application advice requests and correspondence to agreed and identifiable timescales, to deliver a successful planning outcome and provide a high-quality urban environment / public realm and to protect the borough's heritage assets. To independently manage key specialist projects related to conservation and design and its broader implementation within the borough, such as implementing a new Design Code for Surrey Heath Borough Council.

Main Duties and Accountabilities

Knowledge and Expertise

- Assist or lead the preparation of masterplans, site specific urban design briefs, public realm improvement proposals and policy and design guidance as required
- Assist the Development Management Team by providing urban design advice on planning applications, pre-application consultations and appeals.
- Assist the policy team regarding the urban design component of the local plan and supplementary planning documents as appropriate by identifying issues and recommend solutions that add value to production of sound policy and guidance documents.
- Provide training to members and officers on urban design matters including site visits.
- Contribute to service-wide improvement and development in line with the Council's corporate objectives and the Service's plan.
- Prepare reports for and attend meetings as required, which may include meetings outside of normal working hours including the attendance at planning committee.



- Participate in the planning of engagement events and production of supporting materials within agreed timescales.
- Participate in consultation events and engage effectively with the public.

Creativity and Innovation

- To be goal orientated and have a rational and methodical mindset
- Process driven with the ability to adapt, and to highlight problems and potential solutions.
- To work independently and come up with new strategies to improve the service and streamlining processes.

Financial Accountability

- Look at new ways to generate income through giving advice on both planning applications and pre-applications.
- To assist as required with the management of budgets, including ensuring that all necessary processes and procedures are carried out in a timely and effective way.

Impact upon the Organisation & the Community

- Supportive role within the planning service to assist with delivery and contribution to the Service Plan, Council's annual and 5 year plans
- Demonstrate the Council's Core Values and Behaviours.
- To give advice and guidance to Councillors and Portfolio for Planning.
- Attend Planning Application Committee when required to provide comments on design and conservation/ heritage matters.
- To assist with the management of Design Review Panels for the Council.

Management & Supervisory Responsibilities

- No direct management responsibility but needs to manage projects setting clear objectives and timeframes for delivery.

Initiative & Independent Action

- Autonomy to make day to day decisions with direction of Planning management
- To organise and manage own workload accordingly.



General

- Good customer care, interpersonal skills and a confident communicator
- Good team player
- Ability to produce and present detailed and quality analysis, reports, correspondence and records.
- To contribute to the continuous improvement of the services of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
- To promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, maintaining an awareness of the equality and diversity protocol/policy and working to create and maintain a safe, supportive and welcoming environment where all people are treated with dignity and their identity and culture are valued and respected.

Continuous Professional Development

- Ensure continually strives towards keeping up to date with all legislations and requirements for this role.
- Attend all internal and external courses relevant to this role.
- To comply with relevant Codes of Practice, including the Code of Conduct and policies concerning data protection and health and safety.

Customers and Contacts

Important Internal Relationships

- Head of Planning
- Development Manager
- Planning Policy and Conservation Manager
- Building Control Manager
- Corporate Management Team
- Planning officers
- Infrastructure Delivery Officer
- Technical Support Team
- ICT

Important External Relationships

- Councillors
- Planning
- Planning Applications and Pre-Application



Additional Requirements

- To continuously suggest/improve and/or update processes and procedures by digitalisation and streamlining with a view to maximising effectiveness, efficiency and to enable data sharing.
- To work collaboratively with colleagues in accordance with our corporate values and policies to achieve the Council aims and objectives.
- Ability to work from home if required, with access to reliable fast broadband connectivity.
- No contra-indications in personal background or criminal record indicating unsuitability in this role.
- Legally entitled to work in the UK.
- Ability to participate in the Council's out of hours Civil Emergency arrangements.
- Carries out any other duties commensurate with the grade of this post as is required of the Council.



Senior Conservation and Urban Design Officer (Planning) Person Specification

Qualifications and Training

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Undergraduate degree, or equivalent qualification in in planning, urban design, building conservation, architecture, architectural history or landscape architecture	Essential	Application
A member of the RTPI, IHBC, RIBA or equivalent professional body or eligible for full membership.	Desirable	Application

Knowledge and Experience

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of Planning and Listed Building legislation, policy guidance and circulars, practice and case law and the ability to apply that knowledge to deliver a responsive, high quality service to a diverse case work in Conservation and Urban Design.	Essential	Application and Interview
Good IT capabilities with databases	Essential	Application
Experience of working in a local planning authority	Desirable	Application and Interview
Ability to produce and present detailed and quality analysis, reports, correspondence and records	Essential	Application and Interview
Knowledge and understanding of how to implement effective customer relations and customer care practices.	Essential	Application and Interview



Skills and Relations with People

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Ability to balance the demands of the development sector with the need to safeguard the borough's heritage assets, while improving the urban realm.	Essential	Application and Interview
Ability to organise own workload and work within agreed timeframes to maintain high quality decision making at speed and to achieve set deadlines and targets.	Essential	Application and Interview
Articulate in written and oral communication skills with particular reference to report and letter writing, public speaking, presentation skills and communicating with Members, the public, staff and other professionals.	Essential	Application and Interview
A good team player with a supportive and positive approach.	Essential	Application and Interview
Flexible approach to working hours, location and getting the job done and the ability to attend meetings and other events outside normal working hours, occasionally at short notice.	Essential	Application and Interview
Effective report writing skills including preparation of local plan documents, committee reports, development plan examination statements or equivalents.	Essential	Application and Interview
Ability to analyse and interpret data and present key facts including policy implications in the preparation of reports, policy formulation and other material.	Essential	Application and Interview
Ability to prepare briefs for and assist in the selection, control and monitoring of consultants.	Essential	Application and Interview
To work as part of a team taking into account the needs of other Council Departments and	Essential	Application and Interview



with a willingness and ability to share knowledge with other staff.		
Able to use initiative to identify solutions to problem solving and demonstrating a 'can-do' attitude to improvements in service delivery.	Essential	Application and Interview
Ability to assist in identifying need for change and to introduce and manage changes designed to improve service delivery.	Essential	Application and Interview

Creativity and Innovation

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
To be goal orientated with a track record of delivering results	Desirable	Application and Interview
Have a rational and logical mindset	Desirable	Application and Interview
Process driven with the ability to adapt, and to highlight problems and offer potential solutions.	Essential	Application and Interview

Financial Accountability

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
None identified.	N/A	N/A

Impact upon the Organisation and the Community

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Supportive role to the wider planning service	Essential	Application and Interview
Understand the importance of the role in the Service Plan, Council's Annual and 5 Year Plans.	Desirable	Application and Interview



Demonstrate the Council's Values and Behaviours..	Essential	Application and Interview
To give advice and guidance to Councillors and Portfolio for Planning. Attend Planning Application Committee when required.	Essential	Application and Interview
To assist with the management of Design Review Panels for the Council.	Essential	Application and Interview

Management and Supervisory Responsibilities

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
None identified.	N/A	N/A

Initiative and Independent Action

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Ability to make decisions but know when to consult with managers.	Essential	Application and Interview
Attention to detail, accuracy and thoroughness of work.	Essential	Application and Interview
Ability to manage and organise own workload.	Essential	Application and Interview

Additional Requirements

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Full driving licence.	Desirable	Application

DBS Requirements

- No Check Required

