

Role Profile and Specification – Principal Planning Officer

Service Area	Planning Service
Role Title	Principal Planning Officer
Location	Oxted/Agile
Reports to	Planning Development Manager
Grade	M3
Duration/hours	Permanent - 37 hours per week

Service Area Purpose

This role will be a key technical lead in one of the teams sitting in Development Management (DM). DM is part of the wider Planning Service. The DM teams are responsible for providing pre-application advice, planning application case work and appeals.

Job Purpose

To support the functions of their team and wider DM work through the provision of technical advice and processing of pre-application advice, planning applications and appeals. To assist the Planning Development Manager, Head of Planning (DM) and their deputy in managing and building a high performing team which is responsive to the needs of its customers and maintains excellent levels of communication. Major components of the role will be to assist Head of Planning (DM) with:

- Delivering the Development Management Improvement Plan;
- Helping to deliver the Council's green growth agenda.

The role will have a small management function with responsibilities associated with assisting with line management and mentoring of junior staff in their team.

Specific Responsibilities

Management/leadership

- Assisting the Planning Development Manager and Head of Planning (DM) in delivering improvement and transformation.

- Assisting with the effective recruitment, induction, coaching, and mentoring of junior staff.
- Line managing of junior staff, including performance management.
- Supporting the Planning Service with meeting income generation targets.

Technical work

- To act as one of the main technical leads on Development Management matters.
- Directly responsible for processing and negotiating a range of planning applications and carrying out delegated decisions in accordance with the scheme of delegation.
- Assist with preparing committee agendas, attending committee meetings and presenting planning applications and other planning related matters to elected Members of the Council.
- Processing of all types of planning appeals, including writing appeal statements, giving evidence at public inquiries and attending Inspector's site visits.
- Help foster cross DM and wider Planning Service working to support a one team culture and to ensure a joined-up approach to cases.
- Help maintain effective partnerships within the council, to support joined up services.
- Liaising with other departments/specialist advisors both within and outside the Council, including Legal Services, to minimise risk of legal challenges to the Council's decisions in performing its statutory planning functions and inputting to legal agreements to ensure the provisions are comprehensive and effective.
- Assisting with the embedding and ongoing development of the ways of working and the Council's Values and Behaviours.
- Undertake such other duties, training and/or hours of work as may be reasonably required, and which are consistent with the general level of responsibility of this post.

Person Specification

Qualifications / Education

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree level qualification. • Have or working towards Corporate Membership of Royal Town Planning Institute. • Full driving licence and use of a car. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of a commitment to continuous professional development.

Experience

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of mentoring junior staff. • Considerable professional competence / expertise and proven relevant experience, with the ability to apply knowledge across the whole work area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in a matrix environment where cross team and corporate working are essential. • Experience of generating income from Development Management functions. • Experience of working in, or with, green belt authorities.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of providing professional advice in relevant planning matters to Members and Corporate level stakeholders. • Managing conflicting priorities sometimes under pressure. • Experience of presenting reports to Planning Committee and preparing and giving evidence at planning Hearings and Inquiries. • Some experience in contributing to service development and/or implementation. 	
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Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good understanding of UK policy and Development Management systems and the statutory framework for the determination of planning applications and provision of planning advice. • Commitment to placemaking and nature recovery. • Commitment to income generation. • Commitment to maintaining statutory performance standards. • Political awareness and understanding of the dynamics between elected members and officers, decision-making in local authorities and the relationship between other agencies. • Good communicator with ability to communicate effectively with a range and variety of audiences, and work well with teams. • Good influencing skills with ability to provide detailed advice and explain the Council's position on specific issues. • Ability to mentor and effectively line manage junior staff. • Ability to assimilate complex as well as difficult/ varied information and to exercise judgement and creative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest in using technology to improve business outcomes. • Knowledge and experience of Salesforce.

<p>thinking in resolving a range of difficult problems and developing solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to deliver results and performance improvements. • Ability to deliver high levels of stakeholder and customer service. • Capability to manage and advise junior staff in their handling of planning casework. • Ability to motivate and act as a champion for change. • Ability to think innovatively and practically. • Excellent report writing skills. • Proficient in MS Office and other databases used across the organisation. • A willingness and ability to undergo training and personal development to acquire the skills necessary to perform to a high standard in a changing environment. • Understanding of the broad requirements of the data protection principles. • Commitment to equality and diversity. 	
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