



ROLE PROFILE FOR PRINCIPAL PLANNING OFFICER

Role Title: Principal Planning Officer

Service: Built Environment and Regulation

Location: Hybrid Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 3HD and working from home

Reporting To: Head of Planning Policy and Sustainability

Role Purpose

To help deliver a range of planning policy and conservation services for the Council.

Main Duties and Accountabilities

Knowledge and Expertise

- To have considerable experience of planning policy work and the production of a wide range of planning policy documents.
- To have an excellent understanding of national planning policy and the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan system.
- To prepare complex planning policies, technical evidence and research documents in support of the Local Plan and wider corporate projects.
- To have specialist knowledge in policy and background technical areas for the Local Plan.



- To engage with relevant stakeholders on planning policy matters through formal and informal consultation including Policy advice to the Development Management team.
- To prepare and present complex evidence at public inquiries and examinations in public as required by the Head of Planning Policy and Sustainability.
- To oversee the development of essential information systems for the Head of Planning Policy and Sustainability.
- To assist other service areas with work on matters pertinent to planning policy.

Creativity and Innovation

- Ability to lead and manage small and medium projects and develop new systems and approaches to support these.

Financial Accountability

- To award and manage contracts for small, medium and large projects within the terms of the Council's Standing Orders for Finance and Contracts.
- Budget administrating and monitoring of projects.

Impact upon the Organisation & the Community

- To work collaboratively across the Council.
- To deliver services to support the Community.

Management & Supervisory Responsibilities

- To project manage medium and large projects to achieve agreed outcomes in accordance with an agreed timetable, as required by the Head of Planning Policy and Sustainability.



- To oversee work by the Assistant Planning Officer, Planning Officer and Senior Planning Officer in support of these projects.
- To undertake line management responsibilities, as agreed with the Head of Planning Policy and Sustainability.
- To provide policy input into corporate projects as required and represent the Council on external groups.
- To actively assist in the delivery of an efficient and professional service.

Initiative & Independent Action

- Ability to independently lead and manage small, medium and large projects and to oversee the development of new systems and approaches to support these.
- To take responsibility to independently manage a complex workload and projects within priorities set by the Head of Planning Policy and Sustainability.
- To deliver outputs in accordance with standards set down in the Council's corporate standards or national and regional planning guidance.

General

- Engage with colleagues, other internal services, external organisations and groups, and the wider community about complex Planning Policy matters and other Council matters, as required.
- To attend any meetings, forums, workshops or exhibitions, or other functions in support of, or representing the Head of Planning Policy and Sustainability, as required.
- Prepare policy advice for the above.
- To provide a professional standard of service to our customers.
- To adhere to corporate customer care standards.
- Deals with any other matter reasonably assigned to the post-holder from time to time by the Head of Planning Policy and Sustainability or Director of Built Environment and Regulation.



Continuous Professional Development

- To undertake CPD in accordance with RTPI requirements.

Customers and Contacts

Important Internal Relationships

- Must be able to work well with the Planning Policy and Conservation Team and the Head of Planning Policy and Sustainability and colleagues in other teams and services
- Must be able to communicate effectively with Councillors, explaining complex planning policy issues.

Important External Relationships

- Will need to develop effective working relationships with officers at other Local Planning Authorities, Surrey County Council and other organisations.

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.



Job Title - Person Specification

Qualifications and Training

Criteria	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	Application (A), Interview (I) or Assessment (As)
Degree or MSc in Town and Country Planning/Urban Planning, or equivalent.	E	A
Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute.	E	A/I

Knowledge and Experience

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Extensive experience within a Local Planning Authority or similar environment to competently perform this role.	E	A
Experience of working in a political environment.	E	A/I
Extensive experience in providing planning policy advice.	E	A
Experience of producing technical evidence and planning policy documents.	E	A/I
Experience in public speaking and good presentation skills.	E	A/I



Excellent written and oral communication skills.	E	A/I/As
Observant with a keen eye for detail and experience to working with statistics.	E	A/I
Ability to read and understand complex documentation and focus on key issues.	E	A/I
Ability to work independently to tight deadlines.	E	A/I
Comprehensive current knowledge of the development plans process and best practice surrounding the production of development plan documents and planning policy.	E	A/I
Knowledge of the Neighbourhood Plan process.	D	A/I
Very good IT skills, including experienced in use of Microsoft Office and creating spreadsheets.	E	A/I
Good knowledge of Geographic Information Systems.	D	A/I
At least 5 years planning experience, with a significant proportion in a local authority planning team.	D	A
Experience of representing the Council in external meetings.	D	A/I
Experience of presenting to Councillors and producing Executive reports.	D	A/I
Knowledge of national environmental policy.	D	A/I
Experience of appointing and managing consultants.	D	A/I



Skills and Relations with People

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
An ability to network and develop effective working relationships with key internal staff, councillors and a wide range of individuals and organisations.	E	A/I
Enjoys working within a team environment but can work independently.	E	A/I
An interest in working with the public.	E	A/I
Ability to listen to what is being said and act accordingly.	E	A/I
High standard of oral and written communication skills.	E	A/I
Awareness of need to think and act in a collaborative style.	E	A/I
Organised with attention to detail.	E	A/I
Excellent prioritisation skills and the ability to manage own case load.	E	A/I
Able to work to tight deadlines.	E	A/I
Ability to communicate difficult and complex messages.	E	A/I
Able to deal with difficult customers.	E	A/I
Awareness of Data Protection requirements.	E	A/I

Creativity and Innovation



Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Experience and ability to plan a programme of work, assign resources and work flexibly to achieve agreed outcomes.	E	A/I
Ability to apply planning knowledge, creativity and innovation to produce unique Planning Policy documents which reflect the local circumstances within Surrey Heath.	E	I
Able to work in a team environment and collaboratively with others.	E	A/I
Managing contracts on a day-to-day basis.	D	A/I
Helping to introduce new practices and policies within the Council.	D	I



Financial Accountability

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Knowledge of financial standing orders and contracts procedures.	D	A/I
Ability to evaluate contracts to assess value for money.	E	A/I

Impact upon the Organisation and the Community

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Recognise the impact of the planning function upon the community and relationship to the Council's functions and corporate priorities.	E	I
Able to provide input into corporate projects and policy groups.	E	I

Management and Supervisory Responsibilities

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
An ability to work with a wide range of people and provide clear direction on projects.	E	A/I



An ability to mentor and coach staff and undertake appraisals.	E	A/I
Able to manage projects and tasks.	E	A/I
Able to support the Assistant Planning Officer, Planning Officer and Senior Planning Officer.	E	A/I
Proven experience of managing staff	D	A/I
Able to represent the Council on external groups.	E	A/I

Initiative and Independent Action

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Ability to make expert judgement and recommendations where information and political influence produces conflicting pressures.	E	I
Willingness to develop in the role and show initiative.	E	I
Able to lead and manage medium to large sized projects on a day-to-day basis to agreed deadlines.	E	A/I
Able to work on own initiative without supervision.	E	A/I
Evidence of initiating new projects.	D	A/I



Additional Requirements

Criteria	Essential or Desirable	Application, Interview or Assessment
Full valid driving licence.	E	A
Ability to carry out site visits.	E	A/I
Able to attend evening meetings, on average once a month.	E	A/I

Safer Recruitment & DBS Requirements

- Our organisation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and expects all staff to share this commitment.
- No DBS Check Required

