

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Planning Officer (Development Management)		
Directorate	Climate & Place, Economy, Employment and Planning		
Reporting to	Team Leader/Principal Planning Officer – Planning		
Grade	10		
Evaluation ref:	LGR0131	Job ref:	Family
Role purpose			
<p>To be responsible for the processing of a varied caseload of planning applications (including Householders, Prior Approval, Lawful Development Certificates, Change of Use, and minor developments) across Somerset, through negotiation with developers and their agents, drafting reports to Planning Committee and for delegated decisions.</p> <p>To undertake monitoring, compliance, and other planning functions to meet agreed timescales, make robust decisions, and deliver appropriate development. To prepare appeal statements and attend hearings as expert witness in connection with planning and enforcement appeals, to represent the Local Planning Authority and defend its decisions.</p> <p>To respond promptly to enquiries from developers, Councillors, and the public on a range of development matters to ensure an efficient and reliable service is provided taking account of relevant legislation, policies, and the procedures of the Council.</p>			
Responsibilities			
<p>To work as part of the Council's wider planning service, to provide pre application advice and to process applications for a wide range of development schemes, undertaking negotiations with developers and their agents.</p> <p>Drafting reports for Planning Committee and for delegated decisions taking account of relevant legislation, policies, and the procedures of the Council.</p> <p>To provide professional support and guidance to the public, agents, and Councillors engaged in the processing of applications for planning permission, listed building consent, notifications, conservation area consent, advertisement consent and monitoring, and compliance activities, including the carrying out of site inspections, drafting reports and recommendations, and negotiating with applicants in accordance with procedures, good practice, and performance targets.</p> <p>To attend Planning Committee meetings and present oral reports to the Committee on development management matters taking all necessary following action.</p> <p>To prepare appeal statements or proofs of evidence, and to act as expert witness for the Local Planning Authority, in connection with planning and enforcement</p>			

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appeals and informal hearings as required. In addition, where necessary support Senior Officers in preparation for and participating in court proceedings to secure compliance with planning legislation and/or prosecution.

To process planning applications, as appropriate, including meeting applicants and developers, undertaking site visits, and to examine, report, and make recommendations on such planning applications, certificates of lawfulness, proposals, and related matters to Planning Committee or through delegated processes as appropriate.

Assessing the planning merits and providing reports to Planning Committee and delegated decisions as directed by the Service Manager. Assessing the planning merits of potential enforcement and compliance cases and to undertake negotiation with all interested parties on compliance matters to establish actions which result in solutions or resolution with a clear emphasis on continuous improvement, performance delivery, and providing the highest standards of customer service.

To provide general advice to the public, Councillors, and developers in terms of requirement for planning permission, planning and enforcement processes, negotiating with all interested parties concerning planning and enforcement caseloads, and advising of required actions to support solutions or resolution.

At all times maintaining high levels of customer service and meeting performance standards, having regard to the development plan, other planning policies and the Council's corporate priorities and objectives.

To carry out Monitoring and Compliance activities including investigating and resolving complaints regarding breaches of planning control, planning conditions, and legal agreements, undertaking site visits, site surveys and inspections as directed, including for the purpose of monitoring planning consents, conditions, and obligations.

Impact

The Officers offer support to the Technicians in terms of judgement, legislation interpretation and knowledge of case law and policies.

Planning Officers have working caseloads ranging from 35-60.

Planning Horizon:

Within the next 5 years Somerset will be working jointly to provide one local adopted plan for the whole area. Planning Officers feed into policy development by testing and translating policies in terms of ease of delivery.

Knowledge / Experience / Skills

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	Essential	Desirable	
Knowledge			
<p>Ability to provide detailed advice across a range of planning issues in a development management/planning environment, including process and procedural matters.</p> <p>Good knowledge of planning, enforcement, planning policy, case law, and relevant legislation.</p> <p>Interpretation of legislation - interpretation of relevant planning legislation and case law in respect of issues arising from pre-application enquiries, applications, appeals, and planning enforcement</p>	X		
Experience			
<p>Experience of working in Development Management and demonstrate the ability to manage a caseload and competing workloads to maintain performance targets.</p> <p>Experience of working within a team to support team development and CPD.</p>	X		
<p>Experience of defending the Council at appeal (Hearing/Inquiry).</p>		X	
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications			
<p>Degree in Town Planning or related subject and equivalent experience. Will require membership of (or be eligible to join) the RTPI.</p>	X		
Skills			
<p>Good negotiation skills and the ability to contribute positively to the resolution of issues.</p> <p>Working under pressure and to strict deadlines, prioritising, organising, and planning own and others fluctuating workloads.</p> <p>Ability to communicate with a range of stakeholders clearly and proactively.</p>	X		

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Ability to adapt, responding to change as required.

Ability to use influence and persuasion to achieve objectives.

Ability to use thoughtful judgement to manage complex service delivery.

Flexible approach to the working day.

Shares knowledge and expertise with others.

IT Literacy – will need to be familiar with Microsoft Office applications, comfortable with data input, report writing, and presentations.

Customer Focus – will need to be a clear communicator with excellent negotiation skills. Able to develop and maintain relationships with Members.

Work Ethic - will need to be a methodical and well organised worker to meet performance targets.

Networking skills to build relationships with developers.

Will need to be enthusiastic, have a flexible approach to working hours and be a good team player.

Promote the need for change and models this behaviour.

Ability to adapt to changing priorities.

Working Conditions

Working Arrangements

Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.

Corporate Responsibilities

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Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, organisational policy, and professional codes of conduct to uphold standards of best practice.

Deliver the aims of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do, ensuring team members are also aware of their responsibilities and maintaining their understanding that Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Date: