

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Senior Planning Policy Officer		
Service	Planning		
Reporting to	Team Leader – Policy Implementation or Local Plan		
Grade	Grade 10		
Evaluation ref:	RP241	Job Family ref:	

Role purpose

The postholder will play a leading role in the preparation, development and implementation of the Somerset Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans and related planning policy guidance, helping to shape sustainable growth and development across Somerset. The postholder will provide expert planning policy advice, guidance and direction to internal and external stakeholders, managing complex and sensitive policy projects and contributing to the successful delivery of the Council's strategic planning objectives.

Working as part of a wider planning team, the postholder will support the delivery of the Council's placemaking agenda and corporate priorities. This includes preparing policy evidence, appeal statements and inquiry submissions, and representing the Council as an expert witness at hearings, examinations and planning inquiries to ensure planning decisions are informed by robust and effective planning policy.

Accountabilities

- Effectively manage and prioritise your own workload, largely unsupervised, working pro-actively with all officers to meet statutory deadlines.
- Working independently on planning policy matters including policy drafting and preparation/commissioning of supporting evidence, including the procurement of consultants where appropriate.
- Prepare professional reports, presentations, recommendations and briefings to communicate complex issues clearly and succinctly.
- To support in the preparation and presentation of key evidence and reports to relevant member and senior officer meetings and workshops.
- Providing supervision and support for colleagues to improve team performance and learning
- To undertake continuing professional development to keep up to date with changing national planning policy and legislation.
- Providing planning policy advice to internal and external customers
- Undertake site visits when required.
- Prepare key evidence for public inquiries and examinations and attend public inquiries to represent the Local Planning Authority.
- Drafting legal instructions and commissioning legal advice when required
- To provide support to neighbourhood plan groups with the statutory stages of the neighbourhood plan process.
- Attending planning meetings and consultation events out of office hours.

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Impact

- Plays a key role in the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities and Placemaking agenda, through the development of the new statutory Local Plan with key policies to meet the future sustainable growth requirements for Somerset.
- Provides professional advice to internal and external customers to ensure the Council is able to fulfil its statutory planning duty and complies with national and local planning policy and legislation.
- Works closely with and consults internal and external partners (including statutory consultees) in the preparation and implementation of the new Somerset Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans and other policy guidance.
- Plays a key role in supporting the delivery of an effective and efficient planning service.

Knowledge / Experience / Qualifications / Skills

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Good knowledge of the current national planning policy and legislation.	X	
Good knowledge of local development plan and planning policy guidance.	X	
Ability to provide detailed advice across a range of planning policy matters.	X	
Experience		
Experience of working at a senior level in Planning Policy.	X	
Producing technical reports and analysing evidence.	X	
Working under pressure to meet statutory targets.	X	
Experience of preparing and giving evidence at planning appeals or Local Plan examination.		X
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
A relevant planning/built environment degree.	X	
Full chartered membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute or considerable experience in a relevant planning role.	X	
Skills		
Demonstrate effective project management skills.	X	
Excellent written and verbal communication skills.	X	
Experience of a range of IT systems including digital mapping.	X	
Good negotiation skills and the ability to contribute positively to the resolution of issues.	X	
Working under pressure to strict deadlines, prioritising and managing own workload.	X	
To be able to attend planning meetings out of hours and to be able to access meetings by car (full driving license).	X	

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Supports mentoring of less experienced members of the team.	X	
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Working Conditions

- This role does involve occasional attendance at meetings or consultation events in person or online that will be out of office hours.
- This role does involve dealing with challenging and controversial planning matters with a high level of public scrutiny.

Working Arrangements

- This role does involve occasional attendance at meetings or consultation events in person or online, out of office hours.

Corporate Accountabilities

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