

Post title	Senior Planning Officer
Division / Section	Planning and Transport / Planning and Building Standards and City Wide
Department	Place
Responsible To	Team Manager
Number of post holders	33
Acting up/ Secondment	No

Purpose of Job

To lead and project manage the provision of professional planning services that enable the Council to fulfil statutory duties and deliver related services.

The post will operate in one or more of the following operational services within the Planning Service:

- Development Planning
- Development Management
- Policy and Projects
- Service Delivery

MAJOR TASKS/JOB ACTIVITIES

Obtain, analyse and interpret information and evidence to inform the preparation, monitoring and review of the development plan and planning or conservation policies.

Prepare development plan documents, planning or conservation policies and development briefs.

Maintain and review statutory designations and prepare management plans.

Manage the pre-application process for major applications including preparing project plans and/or processing agreements.

Assess and make recommendations on complex planning and related applications.

Manage legal agreements, monitor condition compliance, investigate possible breaches of planning control and take enforcement action.

Provide general advice on the planning process, including pre-application advice.

Undertake consultations with other Council services, key agencies, neighbouring Councils, community councils, amenity bodies and other external organisations.

Undertake public engagement and attend meetings with local community groups.

Represent the service on internal multidisciplinary working groups.

Prepare reports and deliver presentations to senior officers and Council Committees.

Prepare submissions for development plan examinations and planning appeals.

Represent the Council as a witness at public inquiries or hearings.

Prepare reports to the Procurator Fiscal on enforcement cases and manage direct action.

Manage the delivery of complex planning projects or planning applications by multidisciplinary teams.

Supervision and Management of People (Numbers and type of staff)

The post does not carry any line management responsibility.

However the post is required to supervise the work of junior professional staff and technical staff (GR5 and GR6) on specific projects.

In addition, the post is required to matrix manage up to 10 multidisciplinary staff on grades up to GR9 involved in particular projects or planning applications.

The post is also required to deputise for the Team Manager when required.

Creativity and Innovation

Devise innovative ways of gathering, analysing and presenting planning information.

Lead on the preparation of policies, guidance, frameworks and briefs that create attractive and successful places.

Use initiative to proactively develop and apply solutions to complex planning problems that comply with legislation and policy guidance.

Interpret the planning legislation, policies and guidance that apply to a proposal and use judgement to balance these with material considerations to arrive at a recommendation.

Lead on complex negotiations with applicants, consultees, key agencies and other bodies to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

Contacts and Relationships

Regular contact with other Council services, key agencies, neighbouring Councils, community councils, amenity bodies, developers, landowners, agents and other external organisations. Contacts will be at all levels up to Head of Service and Director. The purpose is to progress the preparation of the development

plan, planning policies and briefs and to determine planning applications. The outcome is to reach an agreed solution that can be reported to Committee for approval.

The post is regularly required to brief elected members, the Director and the Head of Service on particular issues, including attending and presenting at committee meetings in a supporting role to senior and team managers.

Decisions (Discretion)

Identify planning issues involved in complex proposals, assess impact on amenity, environment, infrastructure and conformity with Council policy. Prepare report of handling for Council committee or delegated decision with recommendations.

Identify complex planning issues requiring policy statements, develop policies and prepare reports for Council committee with recommendations.

Liaise with other agencies where issues overlap with other consent regimes and reallocate to other regimes where appropriate.

Use delegated authority to pursue informal enforcement action and, in courses of action following Committee decisions, to take formal action in the most appropriate way.

Primary responsibility for progressing own caseload and making decisions to ensure performance targets are achieved.

Has the discretion to jointly sign off reports to determine planning applications under delegated powers.

Responsible for managing the timeous delivery of complex planning projects or planning applications involving multidisciplinary teams.

Decisions (Consequences)

The decisions taken by the post will inform the Committee's decisions on the development plan, planning policy, large and complex planning applications, complex planning projects and enforcement. Decisions will also lead to the granting or refusal of planning permission under delegated powers, delegated enforcement action and the robustness of the Council's case in defending major appeals.

Resources

Responsible on a daily basis for Council property in the office and during site visits/meetings including ICT equipment, cameras, data and recording systems and vehicles.

In addition, the post will be responsible for the safe handling of commercially sensitive information submitted in support of a planning application.

Environment – Work Demands

Expected to work with minimum supervision and project manage a large number of applications or policy development issues concurrently which requires them to resolve conflicting priorities, programme their own workload and be flexible and adaptable to interruptions to that programme or the need for a fast response to ensure performance targets or political/management priorities are met.

In addition, to manage the delivery of planning projects or planning applications involving multidisciplinary teams who may themselves have conflicting priorities creating extra complexity.

Environment – Physical

Predominantly within the range of normal office-based activities but also required for approximately 20% of the week to undertake site visits and meetings which will require them to drive a council vehicle and access development sites on foot.

Environment – Working conditions

Predominantly within the range of normal office-based activities but the post may be exposed to some adverse working conditions when on site for approximately 20% of the week.

Environment – Work Context

The post has to be emotionally resilient in order to deal with challenging and confrontational behaviour from members of the public and others during community engagement events, site visits and in daily communications and/or meetings.

The requirement to deliver projects and planning applications through matrix management of multidisciplinary teams will occasionally be challenging.

Knowledge and Skills

Educated to degree level, or equivalent, with membership of an appropriate professional body in a relevant discipline, or extensive knowledge and skills in that professional discipline to the extent that they can deliver the operational services and projects within that relevant discipline.

Detailed and advanced knowledge of the specialist discipline of Planning.

Ability to communicate complex information both in writing and orally to elected members, senior managers and other staff.

Ability to relate well to other professional disciplines and foster strong working relationships.

Ability to be flexible, to work to strict deadlines and cope when priorities change.

Good interpersonal skills and able to relate well to customers and the general public.

Health and Safety

The Council must abide by relevant health & safety and employment law, as well as the common law duty of care. All members of staff are required take care for their personal health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or inactions. You are therefore required to carry out your duties in a safe manner in accordance with instructions and in compliance with safety rules/procedures, regulations and codes of practice. You are required to advise your line manager if you become aware of any unsafe practice or condition or if you have any other safety concerns and should comply with accident and near-miss reporting procedures.

If you supervise, manage or lead other staff, you are also responsible for ensuring that the Council's operations are carried out in such a way that ensures, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of those staff and that of any others who may be affected. You will therefore conduct relevant risk assessments and assign duties with appropriate instructions, in compliance with safety rules/procedures, regulations and codes of practice. You will address and/or escalate any issues of any unsafe practice, condition or any other safety concerns you identify or that are brought to your attention, taking appropriate advice as necessary and will ensure that accident and near-miss reporting procedures are understood and complied with.

Organisation Structure

(attach structure - specific to area of operation).