

West Lothian Council

Candidate Recruitment Pack



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Post applying for

Job Title	Head of Service (Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration)
Ref No	509.01
Location	West Lothian Civic Centre
Hours	36 hours
Salary	£117,634 - £ 124,817
Status	Fixed Term until 31 July 2027

Thank you for your interest in this post, if you have any questions in relation to the recruitment process please contact our recruitment team on 01506 282222 or email recruitment@westlothian.gov.uk.

About the service

About Planning Economic Development and Regeneration

Planning Economic Development and Regeneration covers the functional areas of Economic Development & Regeneration, Environmental Health and Trading Standards, and Planning Services. Much of the work of the service is regulatory in nature, covering a range of statutory processes including planning applications, building warrants and various licence applications and preparation of the development plan for West Lothian. In addition these regulatory functions cover food safety, workplace safety, trading standards, metrology and a range of consumer and environmental protection activities.

One of the key roles of the service is increasing and supporting economic activity in West Lothian, through proactive engagement with the business sector and promoting and supporting West Lothian as an attractive place to invest and do business.

Economic Development & Regeneration

Economic Development & Regeneration has a key role in monitoring the West Lothian economy and delivering services to individuals and businesses to help deliver the conditions for economic growth in West Lothian. The Business and Enterprise team deliver support, advice and assistance to individuals starting up businesses in West Lothian, assist existing companies to safeguard jobs and grow and expand locally and help attract new firms to relocate to the area. The employability and Regeneration Team engage with individuals and communities to improve their life chances and promote regeneration. The service is also responsible for the community Planning Partnership.

Environmental Health and Trading Standards

The role of environmental health is to protect and enhance the application of statute, the health, welfare, environment, safety and trading market place of the people of West Lothian. Teams within the service deliver protection in relation to food quality, health and safety at work, pollution control, animal health, welfare and control, pest control, consumer protection and compliance with fair trading legislation.

Planning Services

Planning Services carries out the statutory planning and building standards functions of the council in addition to the Education Planning requirement which has a key role in ensuring that sufficient education capacity exists in West Lothian for predicted levels of demand in nurseries and schools across the area arising from new development. The service seeks to promote sustainable economic development and ensure protection of the environment.

Council Strategies

Planning Economic Development and Regeneration has responsibility for the development and implementation of the Strategic Development Plan, the West Lothian Local Development Plan, the Economic Strategy and the Climate Change Strategy.

Job outline

Post Title : Head of Service

Service : Planning Economic Development & Regeneration

Reports to : Depute Chief Executive

Location : West Lothian Civic Centre

Purpose of the Job

The main purpose of the job is to provide effective leadership and management of a portfolio of customer and community focused services, many of which are statutory, and to ensure delivery of agreed council objectives within these areas.

To ensure that managers within Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration Services provide clear operational leadership and management control in the areas assigned to them to enable the effective monitoring and delivery of services.

To contribute to the development of overall council policy through the Corporate Management Team.

Job Scope

Based in West Lothian Civic Centre, the post holder is directly responsible to the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration) and works with the Depute Chief Executive as part of the council's Corporate Management Team.

The postholder contributes to the strategic aims and objectives of the council through the Corporate Management Team and supports the Chief Executive and Depute Chief Executive as necessary to ensure that service delivery is effectively integrated and managed. Services are organised into five main groups:

- Planning Services
- Economic Development & Regeneration
- Environmental Health and Trading Standards
- Climate Change
- Education Planning

Whilst the postholder currently has general management responsibility for the above portfolio of services, this portfolio may be varied from time to time to suit the continuing strategic and operational management requirements of the council.

The portfolio of services represents the council's regulatory and planning services, ensuring close links between physical planning priorities and needs of businesses and employment. The postholder ensures that resources are effectively integrated and coordinated across all service areas to reflect the corporate priorities, values and business objectives of the council.

Heads of Service are accountable for the effective general management, service planning, monitoring and review and allocation and control of resources within respective service areas. The postholder works closely with other senior managers and with elected members, members of the community and external bodies and agencies as necessary. As a Head of Service, the postholder must be an innovative thinker, focused on effective outcomes and capable of delivering business objectives through effective people, resource and financial management and a continuous drive for Best Value.

Principal accountabilities/key tasks

Corporate Accountabilities

1. Ensure that the council operates as a corporate entity and that the council's activities and services are integrated effectively with other government agencies and voluntary organisations, as appropriate, to provide best value and as seamless a service as possible to the council's customers;
2. Provide the necessary leadership, direction and motivation to ensure that the council's culture and values are directed towards generating and maintaining a shared vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community in West Lothian;
3. Promote and deliver transformational change initiatives and programmes to encourage and develop continuous improvement and innovation in service delivery and service outcomes;
4. Maintain open, transparent and non-discriminatory practices in all the council's dealings and to promote high standards of behaviour amongst officers and members;
5. Ensure that the council fulfils all statutory and legislative requirements timeously and in accordance with Best Value;
6. Ensure that the continuous development of employees and the application of equal opportunities throughout all council activities and services continue to receive a high priority.

Service accountabilities

7. Provide leadership, guidance and general management direction to managers within their service areas as appropriate;
8. Ensure that the best possible advice, guidance and support is given to elected members of the council at all times;
9. Ensure that managers have the necessary control and monitoring systems and working arrangements in place to deliver all service and council objectives and outcomes, including statutory and legislative requirements;
10. Ensure that managers have the necessary arrangements in place to enable the effective integration of services and to foster 'joined up' working with other service areas;
11. Ensure that managers have effective performance monitoring, output/outcome measurement and employee development processes in place;

12. Ensure that all services and activities are subject to rigorous performance review, outcome measurement and continuous improvement;

13. Continually challenge current practice and methods of service organisation and delivery, advocating and promoting innovative ways of improving and developing the role and the effectiveness of the council in the community.

Assignment and Work Review

Work is driven from Committees, Chief Executive and Depute Chief Executive.

The post holder reports to the Depute Chief Executive and is expected to operate autonomously at senior management level and to manage the services and resources to meet the agreed outcomes and targets.

Review of performance is undertaken through the agreement of performance objectives and individual appraisal by the Depute Chief Executive. The appraisal process is conducted on an annual basis.

Accountability

Responsibilities include:

- Risk Management
- Health and Safety
- Business Continuity and Resilience
- Staff Governance and Healthy Working Lives

Control the utilisation of an agreed financial budget framework that clarifies accountability for budgets, provides management teams with the necessary financial resources to deliver to agreed objectives / targets and ensure that they deliver value for money and control expenditure on an ongoing basis.

Develop and manage the budget in line with financial instructions and plans, ensuring appropriate controls are in place to achieve good financial management and best use of resources.

Competencies – Essential

Qualifications/Training

- Degree level qualification in related areas

Skills

- Proven leadership skills in a senior managerial post.
- Strong interpersonal, motivational and influencing skills.
- Effective management and professional skills and knowledge covering operations, policy development, corporate communications and finance.
- Proven ability to instigate and facilitate change in a form that promotes proactive visioning rather than reactive and delivers co-operative working towards innovative solutions.
- Proven ability to work corporately and contribute effectively to the senior management of the council.
- High level of interpersonal and successful negotiation skills are required due to the substantial focus on partnership working.

Experience

- Significant management experience at a senior level in a related service area.
- Substantial experience in people and resource management in a complex organisational structure.
- Significant experience of leading large-scale projects and modernisation schemes.
- Substantial experience in managing and monitoring budgets.
- Evidence of sound financial management and commercial awareness with the ability to interpret and understand complex financial and budgetary information.
- Experience of dealing with elected members and senior managers at policy/strategic level
- Experience of partnership working at a senior level

Competencies – Desirable

Qualifications/Training

- Qualification in Management at degree/professional level

Experience

- Significant in-depth experience of a senior management post in a large, complex local authority

Other Essential Information

The post is politically restricted in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Review

As the Council's management structure will continue to develop and meet new requirements, the post holder is expected to operate flexibly within this remit. If necessary, the post holder may be required to be responsible for a different range of service areas in the future.

How to apply

Application Process

- Our preferred method of receiving applications is on line. In the interests of equality we do not accept C.Vs.
- All applications must be received by the closing date stated on the advert and any late applications will not be accepted.
- Where there have been a high number of applications for a post, we may decide to close the post early.
- We do not keep copies of application forms on file for any future similar vacancies and therefore you will need to complete a separate application form for each post that you apply for. However, when applying on line the system will remember your core details.
- If you apply for a post on line we will contact you using the email address you have provided. If you do not have an email address you can sign up for a free account through internet providers such as Yahoo, Hotmail or Gmail.
- The information you provide in your application is used to determine whether or not you should be shortlisted for interview.
- Following consideration of your application you will be notified as to whether or not you have been selected for interview.
- If you are selected for interview you will receive an email from us confirming this and asking you to log in to the Myjobscotland website and select a suitable interview time. If you are not selected for interview you will receive an email confirming this.

Completing your Application – Shared Competencies and behaviours

There are questions within the application form that specifically relate to the competencies and behaviours related to this post. These are worded as follows:

Having considered the competencies and behaviours related to this post please describe an achievement which demonstrates evidence of these behaviours?

When completing these questions on the application form please describe how you have displayed these behaviours, what you did, how did you do it, why did you do it and what was the result. This will demonstrate to the recruiting manager assessing your application that you understand what is required and that you are capable of doing it.

Further Information on Behavioural based selection and interviews can be found in this pack

Successful Candidate

The successful candidate will receive a conditional offer of employment, pending completion of the following checks, as appropriate.

- Pre-employment health check
- References
- PVG
- Eligibility to work in the UK

A formal offer of employment will be issued only when all checks have been satisfactorily completed.

If you have any questions please email: recruitment@westlothian.gov.uk

Candidate guidance on behavioural based selection

Introduction

West Lothian Council has a Core Competency Framework which details the desired behaviours at all levels from senior managers to frontline employees. All employees should demonstrate these behaviours and they are at the 'heart' of the council's performance management process. Within the recruitment process these behaviours are explored at both the application form and interview stages.

Information on competencies and relevant behaviours for the post you are applying are included in this application pack. As part of the application process there are sections of the online form that will ask you to provide examples of when you have demonstrated the desired behaviours. These examples and relevant desired behaviours will be also be explored further at interview.

Evidencing Desired Behaviours

When completing the relevant sections on your application form you should reflect on the competencies and desired behaviours for the post. Aim to demonstrate each of the behaviours under each of the competency themes. Your answer should not simply list the behaviours that are under each competency area but think of a strong example where you previously demonstrated as many of the behaviours as possible.

Candidates need to be specific in providing information about their role in the examples provided. You should avoid providing information which is too general or broad based to understand your particular role. You should describe the reasoning behind your decisions and how you implemented them.

You should use a structured approach when providing evidence both in writing during the application process and orally at interview. The STAR technique is one method which is widely used:

Situation – Describe the Situation, background set the scene

Task - Specifics of what's required of you, when, where, who

Action - Action, what you did, skills used, behaviours, characteristics

Result - Outcome, what happened?

When providing this evidence, examples will preferably be from previous work experience but it could also be from your personal life. You should prepare as wide a variety of examples as possible for use in both completing your application and for answering questions at the interview.

Interview Questions

To prepare for your interview you should review the job outline and role profile in detail to determine the context for demonstrating desired behaviours. Then reflect on your previous work experience or wider examples from your personal life that best demonstrate how you have displayed the relevant behaviours under the competency themes.

Don't go into too much background detail when answering behavioural questions. Your interviewer only wants to know about your past behaviours. A brief outline of the situation will suffice with the

bulk of your answer focusing on the task, what you did, the decisions you took and how you implemented them.

Try to provide answers that are most relevant to the questions asked and if you can't provide an example from your previous experience be honest in saying that you are having difficulty.

Prompts for Interview

If it would help you at interview, you can bring the following with you to interview:

- Brief notes/ bullet points relating to the examples you wish to cover
- A copy of your application form
- A copy of the job outline and role profile for the post you are applying for.

These should only be used for brief reference if necessary during the interview process.

Privacy Notice – HR Services - Recruitment

Information held about you.

West Lothian Council will hold the following personal information:

- Full name
- Home address
- Email address
- Employment history
- Training/qualifications
- Registration with professional bodies
- Equal opportunities monitoring information (gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion and disability)
- Criminal convictions (if applicable)
- Pre-employment checks (health screening, references and PVG check if applicable)

Who is processing my information?

All personal information is held and processed by West Lothian Council in accordance with data protection law.

How will we use information we hold about you?

Personal information held by West Lothian Council will be used in the following ways:

- To assess the suitability of applicants for the job they have applied for
- Equal opportunities monitoring information will be used to monitor the council's compliance with equality legislation
- To populate the HR Payroll system for successful candidates (see privacy notices on performance of contract of employment for further details)

Who we will share your information with?

We will not share your information with any external bodies.

How long do we keep your records?

If your application is successful we will keep your information for a period of 6 years after you leave employment with the council. Information stored on the Myjobscotland website will be retained for 7 years from the date of your application.

If your application is unsuccessful, all information will be kept for a period of 6 months, following which it will be securely destroyed. Information stored on the Myjobscotland website will be retained for 5 years from the date of your application.

Your rights

You have a number of rights under data protection law, including the right to request your information and to request that the information be amended or, in some circumstances, erased if incorrect.

To request your records, you will need to put your request in writing to HR Services, West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, West Lothian, EH54 6FF

Email – hrsupport@westlothian.gov.uk

You also have a right to make a complaint about our handling of your personal information to the [Information Commissioner's Office](#).

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns about how your information is used, please contact Data Protection Officer, West Lothian Council, West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, West Lothian, EH54 6FF or email DataProtectionOfficer@westlothian.gov.uk

More information about data protection and how it applies to you is available from the [Information Commissioner's Office](#).

Equality and Diversity

Equality is relevant to us all. Addressing discrimination and promoting equality are everyone's core business.

We want a West Lothian in which all people and communities have a say in their future and an equal opportunity for health, safety, education, fulfilling work, and a high quality of life. West Lothian Council has published equality outcomes, equality information on our workforce and our progress on mainstreaming equality. This reflects our commitment to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination as well as fulfilling our statutory duties under legislation.

The council recognises and values the diverse range of talents, skills, experience and perspectives that exist within society and believes that those qualities and attributes should also be reflected within the composition of its workforce, its employment practices and in the planning and delivery of its services.

Central to the council's Equality and Diversity agenda, is the prevention of discrimination, victimisation and harassment against service users and employees on any grounds, but particularly in relation to the following protected characteristics:

- age;
- disability;
- sex (gender)
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation

In addition, prevention of discrimination, victimisation and harassment in relation to gender identity, gender expression, non-binary identities, language, social origin, employment status, political belief, trade union membership or activity, or responsibility for dependants is key to ensuring we have a diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects the communities we serve

West Lothian Council is a Stonewall Diversity Champion and is committed to advancing LGBT equality and this is reflective in all our policies which are inclusive of all protected characteristics.

Terms and Conditions of Employment for Employees

Conditions of Service	Conditions of Service are those of the Scottish Joint Council for Local Government employees as adopted and amended by West Lothian Council
Hours of Work	Hours of work for a full time post are 36 hours per week. The standard working hours are Monday – Thursday 8.30 – 5.00, Friday 8.30 – 4.00. School based staff are employed on sessional contracts of either 38, 39 or 40 weeks.
Pay	Employees are paid by bank transfer on the last Thursday of the month. Where appropriate you will receive an annual increment on the 1 st April each year, until you reach the top of the grade.
Annual Leave	Depending on length of service you will be entitled to either 26 (187.2 hours) or 31 (223.2 hours) days annual leave, this will be pro-rated for part time employees. The leave year is 1st January to 31st December. School based sessional staff will receive additional pay, depending on their length of service, to reflect their annual leave entitlement.
Public Holidays	There are 7 paid public holidays. Part time employees will be given a pro -rated entitlement to reflect their particular working arrangements.
Sickness Absence	Your entitlement to sickness allowance will be in accordance with the Scheme of Sickness Absence set out within the National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service for Scottish Local Government employees.
Pension	You are legally required to make provision for your pension. Employees with permanent contracts, or temporary contracts for 3 months or more, will automatically become members of the Local Government Pension Fund, unless they apply to opt out. Pension contributions are based on your salary.
Appraisal Development Review	All employees are entitled to an annual review with their manager, to identify any development needs and set objectives for the coming year.

Employee Benefits	The council has negotiated discounts for employees with over 90 local businesses and over 1,000 businesses nationally. Childcare vouchers are offered and employees can take advantage of 20% off membership and free joining fees with West Lothian Leisure. As part of its commitment to having a healthy workforce the council offers physiotherapy, counselling and an Employee Assistance Programme
Pool Cars	The council provides access to pool cars for employees who need to drive as part of their job.
Trade Union	The council supports collective bargaining and you have the right to join a trade union and take part in its activities and are encouraged to do so.
Health and Safety	The council is committed to ensuring a healthy and safe working environment for all employees. Health and safety responsibilities are set out in the Occupational Health and Safety Supplementary Policy and Safety Arrangements booklet for your workplace.