



# 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

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Essential (E) or Desirable (D)</b>	<b>Application (A), Interview (I) or Assessment (As)</b>
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

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Essential or Desirable</b>	<b>Application, Interview or Assessment</b>
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



<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Essential or Desirable</b>	<b>Application, Interview or Assessment</b>
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

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Essential or Desirable</b>	<b>Application, Interview or Assessment</b>
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

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Essential or Desirable</b>	<b>Application, Interview or Assessment</b>
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

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Essential or Desirable</b>	<b>Application, Interview or Assessment</b>
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

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Essential or Desirable</b>	<b>Application, Interview or Assessment</b>
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

