

Job Description



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| Job Title: Planner / Senior Planner | Directorate: Inclusive Economy and Housing | |
| Service Area: Planning and Development: (Planning applications, enforcement, and policy teams) | Post Number: Multiple | Job Evaluation: Scale 6 - 6465 SO1 - 6471 SO2 - 6472 PO1 - 6473 PO2 - 6474 PO3 - 6475 |
| Grade: SC6 – PO3 | Date last updated: August 2022 | |

Overall Purpose of Job

This Job Description relates to Planner roles across the planning applications, enforcement and policy teams within Newham's Planning and Development Service.

The postholder will work within Newham's Planning and Development Service contributing to the delivery of high quality, robust, cost effective, and customer oriented planning functions for Newham.

Job Context

The postholder will sit within one of the planning teams, though may be required to work across a range of planning disciplines, including planning applications, enforcement, policy, and related project work.

The postholder will report to a relevant Principal or Manager, and will have no line management or budget management responsibility.

The postholder may be required to work some evenings, weekends and occasional public holidays in order to meet service requirements.

Grading

A postholder's starting salary and grading will be based on both qualification and experience at the time of employment, in addition to an assessment of their competence against the job description including 'Person Specification'. The responsibilities and expectations pertaining to each grade are outlined below in the 'Key Tasks and Accountabilities' and 'Person Specification' sections. Officers will normally start at the bottom of the salary scale band within the grade that they qualify for.

Key Tasks and Accountabilities

Key tasks and accountabilities are intended to be a guide to the range and level of work expected of the postholder. This is not an exhaustive list of all tasks that may fall to the postholder and employees will be expected to carry out such other reasonable duties which may be required from time to time. The postholder will be given a portfolio of projects which may be within some or all of the planning functions.

SC6 - Planner

The postholder will undertake tasks relevant to the team within which they are based that will include some or all of the following:

1. To process a range of applications including (but not limited to) lawful development certificates, prior approvals, householder and other minor applications, advertisement consents, approval of details, and tree consents in line with relevant legislation and statutory and corporate targets and timeframes. Processing may involve the full end to end process being validation through to issuing of decisions.
2. To undertake investigations into potential breaches of planning legislation, responding to complaints, negotiating with stakeholders, and instigating enforcement action as necessary and appropriate and inline with relevant legislation.
3. To process planning appeals in line with relevant legislation and statutory and corporate targets and timeframes.
4. To provide quality and timely duty planning and pre-application advice in a professional manner in line with relevant legislation and policy, and in accordance with Council's expectations.
5. To negotiate on behalf of the Council on applications and enforcement casework with applicants, agents and/or other stakeholders in an appropriate and proportionate manner inline with expectations.
6. To assist in Section 106 planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy work as required, and in the consideration of infrastructure provision to deliver the key priorities set out in the Local Plan and to mitigate the impact of development.

7. To assist with the collection, compilation and analysis of information on town planning and development, land use, social, demographic, environmental and economic issues where necessary for applications, enforcement or policy work.
8. To support more senior planning colleagues in the preparation and presentation of evidence for planning appeal hearings and enquiries, court hearings, or planning policy matters.
9. To assist and contribute to the development of the Local Plan and other planning guidance, including on conservation and urban design related matters, in line with the appropriate statutory and legislative requirements. This will include research, monitoring, developing evidence, and drafting policy.
10. To take part in, and actively contribute to the preparation for public consultation and engagement exercises relating to the development and review of local planning policies and other guidance
11. To advise the public, other Council services, landowners, developers and external agencies and neighbouring planning authorities, on Newham planning issues, policies and standards, development infrastructure and other proposals for sites or local areas.
12. To assist with the preparation and implementation of public participation arrangements, and to work with local residents to ensure that the planning process is both accessible and responsive to their needs.
13. To liaise with public and private organisations and provide planning policy input to projects securing the redevelopment or improvement of land in the Borough.

SO1 - Planner

All duties above as relevant and at suitable level of complexity along with the following:

1. To manage a wider range of more complex and demanding applications and/or enforcement casework requiring greater responsibility, and professional and technical expertise.
2. To independently undertake monitoring and robust research to support the production and delivery of a wide range of planning policy work across a range of topic areas and spatial locations.
3. To liaise with other internal and external stakeholders to assess their needs and devise approaches to address these needs through planning policy creation.
4. To provide Development Management input into the preparation of spatial planning policy.
5. To provide training and mentoring to junior staff and / or other persons as required, and to deputise in the absence of more senior staff to ensure targets are met.

6. To provide technical and procedural advice and problem-solving to the public on site, in meetings, by phone or correspondence.

SO2 - Planner

All duties above as relevant and at suitable level of complexity along with the following:

1. To prepare and present evidence for planning hearings and enquiries, compulsory purchase orders, and spatial planning matters.
2. To give evidence at Magistrate's Court and Crown Court for prosecutions against breaches of planning legislation.

PO1 - Senior Planner

All duties above as relevant and at suitable level of complexity along with the following:

1. To effectively and independently manage a more demanding and complex workload of Development Management work, requiring greater responsibility, and professional and technical expertise.
2. To undertake assessments, manage priorities, make recommendations and resolve problems without always referring to senior officers.
3. To work strategically utilising strong negotiation skills throughout the processing of higher complexity pre-applications, applications and associated s106 planning obligations to secure significant service income.
4. To support the production of a wide range of planning policy work across a range of topic areas and spatial locations, including policy drafting.
5. To contribute to, and lead on the delivery of service improvements, and to exhibit self-motivation to achieve such improvements.
6. To prepare and present more complex evidence for planning appeals, enforcement action and compulsory purchase orders; and to represent the Council at public inquiries, examinations and other legal proceedings as appropriate.
7. To take a lead and work with senior staff within other professions both internal and external to the Council on planning related matters and to use discretion and professionalism to contribute to the decision making process.

PO2 - Senior Planner

All duties above as relevant and at suitable level of complexity along with the following:

1. On occasion to supervise, as delegated by the Principal Planner or Manager, other more junior staff within the team.

2. To lead the production of an element of planning policy work (defined by topic or geography), including monitoring, evidence development and policy drafting.
3. To identify gaps in or improvements needed in service provision and investigate solutions. Upon agreement with line management, take the lead on the delivery of service improvements and exhibit self motivation in leading on such.
4. To motivate and develop the performance of internal colleagues and other key internal and external consultees and stakeholders.
5. To provide day to day support and direction to technical support officers assisting them in their duties, as appropriate and necessary.
6. To develop and maintain effective communications, liaison and working relationships, both internally and externally, and with elected members, community and business partners, relevant organisations and individuals.

PO3 - Senior Planner

All duties above as relevant and at suitable level of complexity along with the following:

1. On occasion to supervise, as delegated by the Principal Planner or Manager, other staff within the team including the PO2 Senior Planner.
2. To give technical guidance and advice to other team members in the interpretation of complex developments, points of law, and technical developments in relation to planning work.
3. To motivate and develop the performance of internal colleagues and other key internal and external consultees and stakeholders, including the PO2 Senior Planner and more junior staff.

All Levels

1. To ensure flexibility, a positive attitude and ability to adapt to changes due to service needs.
2. To manage a caseload meeting statutory and corporate deadlines.
3. To meet all performance targets set nationally and locally.
4. To ensure the securing of the correct fees and any other income in planning applications and other certificates.
5. To make sound and robust assessments and recommendations on the planning merits of proposals or outcome of enforcement investigations the complexity of which will rise with progression through the career grade from simple to more complex proposals and projects.

6. To deal with people at all levels internal and external confidently, sensitively and diplomatically, building and sustaining effective relationships with all stakeholders.
7. To draft reports, briefing notes, evidence, discussion papers, etc. on Development Management and Planning Policy matters.
8. To attend meetings (including committees, public consultation and other public meetings, external and internal agency and partnership meetings, etc) as required from time to time both during and outside of normal working hours, and to give assistance and advice commensurate with the postholder's grade and level of responsibility.
9. To check records and undertake site inspections in order to support allocated work.
10. To assist with general planning routines including collation of information and updating of records.
11. To utilise IT as an aid to normal planning duties, after suitable training. To keep up to date on new software with potential to assist service delivery and efficiency.
12. To deal with planning correspondence and to respond to the public, Councillors, other Council services, applicants, and outside agencies in person, by letter, by email or by telephone, as appropriate.
13. To develop a strong evidenced-based approach and performance management analysis in regard to policy decisions and actions.
14. To keep up-to-date with current developments in the field of planning, performance management and review, local government and relevant legislation and policy advice and guidance.
15. To ensure that all work in own area of responsibility is in line with the service's business needs, the quality needs and expectations of internal and external customers, Council policies, regulations and procedures, current best practice in public service management, and legal requirements.
16. To work closely with line management to identify personal development needs in relation to job role and ensure own continuing professional development to meet those needs.
17. To continuously evaluate work in own area of responsibility, to identify, as appropriate, potential areas for improvement and consult on these improvements with line management in the service.
18. The postholder should expect to carry out any other reasonable duties within the overall Planning and Development Service function, commensurate with the level of the post.

19. To comply with mandatory Council policies and codes of conduct including policies concerning data protection and health and safety.
20. To adhere to security controls and requirements as mandated by the Council's policies, procedures and local risk assessments to maintain confidentiality, integrity, availability, and legal compliance of information and systems.
21. To promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, maintaining an awareness of the equality and diversity protocol/policy and working to create and maintain a safe, supportive and welcoming environment where all people are treated with dignity and their identity and culture are valued and respected.
22. To understand the Council's duties and responsibilities for safeguarding children, young people and adults as they apply to the role within the Council.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We are committed to and champion equality and diversity in all aspects of employment with the London Borough of Newham. All employees are expected to understand and promote our Equality and Diversity Policy in the course of their work.

PROTECTING OUR STAFF AND SERVICES

Adherence to Health and Safety requirements and proper risk management is required from all employees in so far as is relevant to their role. All employees are expected to understand and promote good Health and Safety practices and manage risks appropriately.

Person Specification

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| Service Area: Planning and Development: (Planning applications, enforcement, and policy teams) | <table> <tr> <td> Post Number: Multiple </td><td> Job Evaluation: Scale 6 - 6465 SO1 - 6471 SO2 - 6472 PO1 - 6473 PO2 - 6474 PO3 - 6475 </td></tr> </table> | Post Number: Multiple | Job Evaluation: Scale 6 - 6465 SO1 - 6471 SO2 - 6472 PO1 - 6473 PO2 - 6474 PO3 - 6475 |
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Important information for applicants

The criteria listed in this Person Specification are all essential to the job. Where the 'Method of Assessment' is stated to be the 'Application Documentation', your application needs to demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria, even if other methods of assessment are also shown. If you do not address these criteria fully, or if we do not consider that you meet them, you will not be shortlisted. Please give specific examples wherever possible.

| Criteria | Method Of Assessment |
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| Qualifications: <u>Scale 6, SO1, SO2, PO1:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of numeracy, literacy, professional skills and knowledge needed to carry out the duties of the post through either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a recognised degree in Town Planning; | Application Documentation |

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| <p>Or</p> <p>b) a related degree and ability to gain entry to course leading to a professional Town Planning qualification (e.g. post graduate diploma/Masters)</p> <p><u>PO2, PO3:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of numeracy, literacy, professional skills and knowledge needed to carry out the duties of the post through: <p>A recognised degree or post graduate qualification in Town Planning; and/or MRTPI (chartered member of the Royal Town Planning Institute) or eligible for membership.</p> | |
| <p>Knowledge:</p> <p><u>SC6</u></p> <p>A basic knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning legislation and related guidance. Local government, the communities it serves, and the services it provides. Political awareness about the issues facing local government. The local planning authority's responsibilities and functions. Town planning and urban regeneration issues in a major city context and how development management can contribute to this. Design, heritage and conservation, environmental quality, and design issues and the local planning authority's role in addressing these. Public participation in planning processes. The preparation of statutory and non statutory plans. The importance of customer satisfaction with a strong | <p>Application Documentation and Interview / Test</p> |

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| <p>customer focused attitude.</p> <p><u>SO1, SO2</u></p> <p>Greater depth of knowledge and understanding of the points above.</p> <p><u>PO1, PO2, PO3</u></p> <p>Deep and thorough knowledge and understanding of the points above.</p> <p>Understanding of management concepts, practices and principles gained through experience.</p> <p>Understanding of the issues and financial constraints facing local government and how this impacts on the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Understanding of how to negotiate and secure revenue and cost savings measures through planning processes.</p> | |
| <p>Experience:</p> <p><u>Scale 6:</u></p> <p>Education providing knowledge of the points above.</p> <p><u>SO1, SO2:</u></p> <p>As above, but also with formal working experience.</p> <p><u>PO1, PO2, PO3:</u></p> <p>Greater working experience as a Planner and including in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experience of working in an urban planning context. • experience of managing a varied, high and complex caseload of Development Management work (including major applications) or Policy work. • experience of representing the Local Planning Authority at committee, hearings, enquiries, examinations as pertinent to expected relevant role. • experience in negotiating S106, scheme viability (as a town planner), affordable housing and other relevant | <p>Application Documentation and Interview / Test</p> |

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| <p>mitigation negotiations as pertinent to expected relevant role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experience of analysing complex information in order to develop and achieve local strategic objectives. • experience of / involvement in multi-agency partnership projects or programmes. • experience in project work such as service improvement projects. • experience of mainstreaming equalities issues. • experience of staff supervision, training and/or mentorship. • experience of providing high quality advice to Councillors and other stakeholders. | |
| <p>Skills and Abilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good report writing skills and the ability to prepare briefing notes and other documents or research reports, in clear and concise English. • Proven organisational skills with ability to effectively manage workloads and prioritise tasks to meet strict deadlines and respond flexibly to frequently changing needs and priorities. • Excellent communication and inter-personal skills (verbal and written). • Ability to use effective means of communication in order to resolve problems and conflicts and negotiate. • Ability to work collaboratively with a range of internal services, external agencies, and community organisations in a facilitating, enabling and advisory capacity. • Ability to use initiative to identify solutions to problem solving and demonstrating a 'can-do' attitude to improvements in service delivery. • Ability to assist in identifying need for change and to | <p>Application Documentation and Interview / Test</p> |

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| <p>introduce and manage changes designed to improve service delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good understanding of own strengths and development needs together with a commitment to self-improvement. • Proficient in the use of information technology, including generating written reports, use of databases and spreadsheets, and use of internet, email and virtual platforms such as MS Teams, Zoom and/or Skype. • Ability to demonstrate an understanding and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. | |
| <p>Personal Style and Behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative and innovative in solving complex problems • Polite, helpful and professional in approach to communicating with people • Persuasive and able to manage and resolve conflict • Probity and honesty • Politically aware • Have resilience and ability to work effectively when under pressure • Logical thinker with attention to detail • Committed to the achievement of equal opportunities | <p>Application Documentation and Interview / Test</p> |