

Post Specification

Post Specification - Key Information

- **Post Title:** Senior Planning Policy Officer
- **Date:** January 2025
- **Post Group Number:** 8637
- **Job Family:** Regulation and Technical
- **Job Family Role Profile:** RT13
- **Final Grade:** 13

To be read in conjunction with the job family role profile.

Service Area Description

The Planning Policy Service is responsible for developing and maintaining the Council's planning policy framework, including the Local Plan and supplementary planning documents, to guide sustainable development and growth across the area. The service ensures that policies are evidence-based, align with national legislation, and reflect the Council's strategic priorities for housing, economic development, environmental sustainability, and infrastructure delivery. Through extensive engagement with stakeholders, including residents, businesses, developers, and government agencies, the Planning Policy Service plays a vital role in shaping the future of the local area, supporting inclusive growth and protecting the environment while delivering on the Council's vision for sustainable and resilient communities.

Purpose of this Post

The Senior Planning Policy Officer supports the development, implementation, and monitoring of the Council's planning policies, including the Local Plan and supplementary planning documents. Reporting to the Planning Policy Manager, the role involves managing a varied workload of planning policy projects, contributing to evidence gathering, and engaging with stakeholders to ensure policies reflect local priorities and statutory requirements. As a senior member of the team, the Senior Planning Policy Officer provides technical expertise and guidance, playing a key role in shaping sustainable development and supporting the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives.

Key Job Specific Accountabilities

1. **Policy Development and Implementation:**

- Assist in the preparation and review of planning policies, including the Local Plan, supplementary planning documents, and other strategies, taking a lead role in the development of some policies as required.
- Ensure that planning policies are informed by robust evidence and align with national legislation and the Council's objectives.
- Draft policy documents and provide input into the development of strategies to address housing, economic growth, and environmental priorities.

2. **Project Management:**

- Manage specific planning policy projects, ensuring they are delivered on time, within scope, and in compliance with statutory requirements.
- Coordinate activities across departments and external partners to deliver key evidence base studies and policy documents.
- Monitor project milestones, addressing any issues and reporting progress to the Planning Policy Manager.

3. Evidence Gathering and Analysis:

- Conduct research and data analysis to inform planning policy development and decision-making recognising the diverse and complex nature of the evidence required to inform a new Local Plan.
- Prepare evidence and reports to support the Local Plan and other policy documents, ensuring accuracy and relevance.
- Monitor trends and emerging issues in housing, employment, infrastructure, and environmental policy to inform future planning work.

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation:

- Support the organisation and delivery of public consultations, workshops, and engagement events, ensuring stakeholder feedback is captured and considered.
- Respond to enquiries and comments from residents, developers, and community groups about planning policy matters.
- Work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders, including elected members, government agencies, and neighbouring authorities, to achieve shared objectives.

5. Policy Monitoring and Reporting:

- Assist in monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the Local Plan and other planning policies.
- Prepare reports, including annual monitoring reports, to demonstrate compliance with statutory requirements and Council objectives.
- Provide updates and briefings on planning policy matters for senior management and elected members.

6. Team Collaboration and Mentoring:

- Work closely with colleagues across the Planning Policy team to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach to policy development.
- Provide technical advice and guidance to Planning Policy Officers, supporting their development and contributing to a collaborative team environment.
- Participate in team meetings and training, sharing knowledge and best practices to improve service delivery.

7. Compliance and Best Practice:

- Ensure all planning policy work complies with national planning guidance, statutory requirements, and Council policies.
- Stay informed of changes in planning legislation, policy, and best practices, adapting work to maintain compliance and relevance.
- Promote innovation and continuous improvement in planning policy processes and outputs.

Please note: Annual targets will be discussed during the appraisal process.

Key Facts and Figures of the Post

- **Budget Responsibilities:** None

- **Staff Management Responsibilities:** None
- **Other:** None

Essential Criteria

Experience:

- Considerable experience in planning policy or a related planning field, with a proven ability to manage projects and deliver high-quality work.
- Experience managing small to medium-sized projects within agreed timelines and budgets.

Qualifications:

- Working towards or holding chartered membership of a recognised planning body (e.g., Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)).
- Degree in Town Planning, Urban Planning, Geography, or a related field.

Knowledge:

- Strong understanding of planning legislation, Local Plan preparation, and policy development processes.

Expertise:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to engage with a variety of stakeholders.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- This post does not require a DBS check.

Job Working Circumstances

- **Emotional Demands:** Minimum exposure
- **Physical Demands:** Minimum exposure
- **Working Conditions:** No additional demands

Other Factors:

- Ability to travel throughout Westmorland & Furness and occasionally beyond.
- To model and display the corporate standards of behaviour.