

Post Specification

Post Specification - Key Information

- **Post Title:** Planning Enforcement Officer
- **Date:** November 2024
- **Post Group Number:** 8652
- **Job Family:** Regulation and Technical
- **Job Family Role Profile:** RT9
- **Final Grade:** 10

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

Service Area Description

The Development Management service is responsible for overseeing and managing the planning process to ensure that all new development proposals align with local and national planning policies. This service reviews planning applications, providing guidance to developers, residents, and stakeholders on compliance with regulations related to land use, design, sustainability, and environmental impact. The service conduct assessments, facilitate public consultations, and collaborate with various departments to address concerns such as transport, infrastructure, and heritage conservation. Additionally, the service enforces planning conditions, monitors ongoing developments, and addresses breaches in planning laws to support sustainable growth and maintain the character of the local area, balancing economic, environmental, and social considerations.

Purpose of this Post

The Planning Enforcement Officer is responsible for managing a caseload of straightforward planning enforcement cases, ensuring compliance with planning legislation and local policies. Reporting to the Planning Enforcement Manager, this role plays a key part in maintaining the integrity of the planning system by addressing breaches of planning control. The Planning Enforcement Officer works collaboratively with internal departments and external stakeholders to investigate, resolve, and document planning enforcement cases effectively and professionally.

Key Job Specific Accountabilities

1. **Management of Straightforward Planning Enforcement Cases:**

- Investigate and manage a caseload of straightforward planning enforcement cases, such as minor unauthorised developments and breaches of planning conditions.
- Conduct site visits to gather evidence, take photographs, and assess the nature and impact of breaches of planning control.

- Prepare detailed reports, case files, and recommendations to support enforcement actions in compliance with legal and procedural requirements.

2. Resolution & Compliance:

- Communicate with landowners, developers, and other parties to negotiate resolutions to breaches of planning control, seeking informal resolutions where appropriate.
- Assist in the preparation and issue of enforcement notices, planning contravention notices, and breach of condition notices for more routine cases.
- Monitor compliance with enforcement notices, conducting follow-up site visits and escalating issues to the Senior Planning Enforcement Officer or Service Manager as necessary.

3. Stakeholder Engagement & Public Interaction:

- Respond to inquiries and complaints from the public, councillors, and community groups regarding potential breaches of planning control.
- Explain the enforcement process to stakeholders, ensuring clarity and managing expectations.
- Liaise with other council departments, including Planning Policy and Building Control, to gather information and coordinate responses to enforcement cases.

4. Policy Compliance & Best Practices:

- Ensure all enforcement actions comply with national and local planning policies, as well as relevant case law.
- Maintain an up-to-date understanding of planning legislation, enforcement procedures, and best practices to inform case management and decision-making.
- Follow established enforcement policies and procedures, contributing to a consistent and transparent approach to planning enforcement.

5. Data Management & Reporting:

- Accurately record case details, evidence, and actions in the council's planning enforcement database, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations.
- Produce regular updates and summaries of case progress for the Planning Obligations and Enforcement Service Manager and other stakeholders.
- Assist in preparing reports for planning committees or public meetings as required.

6. Team Collaboration & Development:

- Work closely with the Senior Planning Enforcement Officer and Service Manager to support the resolution of enforcement cases.
- Seek guidance and advice from senior colleagues on more complex or contentious cases, learning from their expertise.
- Contribute to team meetings and training sessions, sharing insights and supporting a collaborative work environment.

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

- **Qualifications:** Degree or equivalent qualification in Town Planning, Urban Planning, Geography, or a related field, or relevant professional experience.
- **Knowledge:** Basic understanding of UK planning enforcement legislation, policies, and procedures, with a willingness to learn and develop. Competent in using planning enforcement software, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and standard office applications.
- **Experience:** Extended period experience in planning enforcement, planning, or a related regulatory or investigative role is desirable but not essential.
- **Expertise:** Strong verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to prepare reports and communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders. Analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to assess breaches and determine appropriate courses of action.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- This post does not require a DBS check.

Job Working Circumstances

- **Emotional Demands:** The post holder will be involved frequently in challenging situations including confrontation with developers, complainants, and other members of the public.
- **Physical Demands:** The post holder will occasionally be required to safely negotiate rough ground and differing building levels, which may include the use of ladders and scaffolding.
- **Working Conditions:** There is a requirement to carry out site visits and external meetings in varying weather conditions, also some out of office hour's work may be involved, dependent upon the nature and level of caseload.

Other Factors:

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