

Post Specification

Post Specification - Key Information

- **Post Title:** Development Management Planning Officer
- **Date:** November 2024
- **Post Group Number:** 8645
- **Job Family:** Regulation and Technical
- **Job Family Role Profile:** RT11
- **Final Grade:** 11

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 Officer is responsible for managing and accessing a range of planning applications, ensuring they comply with national and local planning policies and contribute positively to the community. Reporting to the Area Manager, this role involves handling a caseload of applications of varying complexity engaging with applicants, stakeholders, and the public to facilitate a clear, accessible planning process. The Planning Officer supports the Development Management team's objectives, promotes sustainable development, and assists senior colleagues in maintaining high standards of service.

Key Job Specific Accountabilities

1. **Application Review & Assessment:**
 - Process a caseload of planning applications, primarily small-scale, minor developments and occasionally major application types, ensuring each application complies with national and local planning policies using discretion and initiative over a range of frequent decisions.
 - Review plans, drawings, and supporting documents, preparing clear and concise reports and recommendations for decision-making, analysing and interpreting complex problems

- Ensure that applications are assessed within statutory deadlines and adhere to relevant planning regulations and standards.
- 2. Stakeholder Engagement & Consultation:**
 - Work with applicants, developers, architects, and members of the public to provide advice and guidance on the planning process, application requirements, and compliance, using influence and persuasion where necessary.
 - Participate in pre-application meetings to advise on planning guidelines and necessary documentation for application submissions.
 - Address public inquiries and concerns related to planning applications, ensuring clear communication and a responsive approach to community feedback.
 - 3. Preparation for Planning Committee & Appeals:**
 - Prepare reports and supporting documentation for planning committee meetings, presenting application details and recommendations as required.
 - Assist in preparing responses for planning appeals, working with the Development Management Manager and more senior officers to compile relevant information and policy references.
 - Support the Area Manager in defending planning decisions during appeal cases, including attending hearings if necessary.
 - 4. Collaboration & Support to Senior Officers:**
 - Work closely with Principal, Senior Planning Officers and the Area Manager to ensure high standards of planning assessments and service delivery.
 - Provide assistance on very complex cases managed by Senior and Principal Planning Officers, gaining experience in handling more challenging applications.
 - Participate in team meetings and training sessions, supporting continuous learning and skill development within the planning team.
 - 5. Quality Assurance & Compliance:**
 - Ensure all planning assessments, reports, and recommendations are accurate and comply with planning policies and legal requirements using your professional expertise and judgement to weight up the material planning considerations of each application and come to a view on a recommendation.
 - Follow established quality assurance processes to maintain consistency and high standards in application processing.
 - Identify areas for improvement within the application review process and contribute ideas for enhancing service efficiency and quality.
 - 6. Customer Service & Issue Resolution:**
 - Deliver excellent customer service by providing prompt, clear, and professional responses to applicants, stakeholders, and the public.
 - Promote transparency and accessibility within the planning process, ensuring applicants and the public have a positive experience.

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

Key Facts and Figures of the Post

- **Budget Responsibilities:** None.

- **Staff Management Responsibilities:** No direct reports but technical support to be provided to more junior planning officers.
- **Other:** None.

Essential Criteria

Qualifications:

- Degree in Town Planning, Urban Planning, Geography, or a related field or relevant period of experience.

Knowledge:

- Considerable experience and understanding of UK planning legislation, national and local planning policies, and development management processes.
- Analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to handle straightforward issues and make sound recommendations.

Experience:

- Considerable experience in planning, research, or policy development, either in a local authority or a related field.

Expertise:

- **Technical Competence:** Ability to interpret plans, drawings, and technical documents and apply planning policies accurately. **Communication:** Strong written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to convey planning information to a diverse audience often explaining complex or controversial issues to the applicants and wider public.
- Competent in using planning management software, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and standard office software.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

This post does not require a DBS check.

Job Working Circumstances

- **Emotional Demands:** Minimum exposure.
- **Physical Demands:** The post holder may be required to lift and carry equipment and walk across uneven ground.
- **Working Conditions:** Able to undertake site visits which can predominantly be outside which may include hazardous and difficult environments including working at height. Able to work in all adverse weather conditions.

Other Factors

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