



Cumberland Council

Post Specification

Date	April 2025
Post Group Number	8600
Post Title	Planning Policy Officer
Job Family	Organisational Support
Job Family Role Profile	OS12
Final Grade	12

To be read in conjunction with the job family role profile

Service Area description

Planning Policy sits within the Strategy and Policy section alongside the corporate Strategy and Policy and Performance and Insight services. The planning policy team is responsible for producing the local plan and associated planning policy documents. These form the statutory policy framework for determining planning decisions and the delivery of Cumberland's strategic objectives relating to health, housing, the economy, environment and infrastructure.

Purpose of this post

To provide professional planning advice, expertise and support across all aspects of the planning policy function of the Council with particular emphasis on the production of the Cumberland Local Plan. In particular to take responsibility for, drafting policy, site assessments and supporting the procurement and management of external commissions.

To support and mentor less experienced members of the team to facilitate their professional development

Key job specific accountabilities

- The post holder will be expected to act in a professional capacity over the whole range of planning work undertaken by the planning policy team. The range of work encompasses:-
- Drafting text, policies, developing site allocations and site profiles/development briefs, carrying out necessary consultations, surveys and appraisals and preparing background papers for Members and for Examination. This will include preparing and providing professional evidence at Public Examination hearing sessions.
- Contribute to the preparation of the evidence base for the Local Plan, technical assessments such as Sustainability Appraisal, and the Annual Monitoring Report each year. This may be either by producing the work directly, or being the client officer working with external consultants.
- Work corporately and with external partners to ensure that the Council's planning policies contribute to the priorities of the community and the Council.
- Represent the interests of the Council with outside bodies. This will include responding to consultations on neighbouring authority's planning policy documents and supporting the development and delivery of key strategies and projects.
- Prepare professional responses to national planning consultations.
- Provide support to communities that wish to produce a neighbourhood plan.

- Provide professional planning advice both within the Council and externally to the public, businesses, developers and investors.
- Support in the procurement and management of multiple externally commissioned elements of the local plan evidence base.
- Contribute to the preparation of promotional material, exhibitions and press statements and represent the Council at public meetings.
- Create and maintain databases and spreadsheets to support the production, monitoring and delivery of the local plan.
- Undertake any other duties required by the line manager appropriate to the level of responsibility of the post and deputise for other members of the team if required.
- Undertake continuous professional development as prescribed by the post holder's professional bodies

Please note annual targets will be discussed during the appraisal process

Key facts and figures of the post

Budget Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No direct budget control but the postholder may be involved in procurement of studies and evidence base work
Staff Management Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting and mentoring less experienced colleagues
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

Essential Criteria - Qualifications, knowledge, experience and expertise

Qualifications

- Graduate with a related degree or recognised equivalent providing eligibility for RTPI membership

Knowledge and experience

- Demonstrable significant knowledge and understanding of contemporary planning policy, legislation, regulations and practice.
- Demonstrable sound knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the planning system, including the role of local government in developing places
- Demonstrable experience of working in planning policy or strategic planning
- Proven ability to give sound professional planning policy advice and guidance on a range of topics or issues.
- Experience dealing with complex and/or contentious planning matters
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and external stakeholders
- Ability to understand, interpret and analyse new legislation and regulations
- Able to organise and prioritise workload working unsupervised on own initiative at times as well as part of team.
- Good communicator in written and oral forms, with good interpersonal skills.
- Computer literate with experience of MS Office products
- Evidence of continuing professional updating and development.
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Desirable

Experience of working in local government

Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS Checks

This post does not require a DBS check

Job working circumstances

Emotional Demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with objectors and awkward customers and handling sensitive situations can be emotionally demanding. • Must have the ability to say no • Must be diplomatic and possess active listening skills • Must be able to deal with confidential information in a sensitive way • Must be able to operate in a political environment and deal with the demands of Elected Members • High work loads also increase stress levels
Physical Demands	The role is predominately office based, although site visits are required as part of the role.
Working Conditions	Whilst the role is mainly home/office based, there is a requirement to carry out site visits which could include visiting operational construction sites which raises health and safety implications
Other Factors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be able to travel independently and extensively both within and outside Cumberland to undertake duties if required including carrying out site visits. 	