



Cumberland Council

Post Specification

Date	July 2025
PG Number	8719
Post Title	Development Management Manager
Job Family	Organisational Support
Job Family Role Profile	OS18i
Final Grade	18

To be read in conjunction with the job family role profile

Service Area description

The Thriving Place service focuses on the planning and delivery of places and an economy that can transform the health, well-being and prosperity of our communities. It seeks to achieve this through the creation of a quality built and natural environment, vibrant and accessible places, business growth and inward investment, the delivery of housing and essential infrastructure and the provision of attractive and engaging public facilities.

The Development Management service area seeks to directly support this objective by delivering a high quality and efficient planning service and by supporting the delivery of major projects and programmes.

Purpose of this post

The post holder will act as strategic lead for development management across a region of Cumberland. In this capacity, the Development Management Service Manager will play a critical role in ensuring consistent, high-quality decision-making and fostering a collaborative approach to growth.

They will be responsible for leading and managing a team of planning professionals, working closely with stakeholders, developers, and the public to ensure that development proposals contribute positively to local communities and align with strategic planning goals. They will also have a key role in shaping the creation of or places and project pipelines working closely with regeneration, economic development and property colleagues.

They will be required to work effectively with communities, partners and institutions, with a clear focus on innovation, best practice and sustainability.

Key job specific accountabilities

Leadership

1. Provide strategic leadership and support to planning team and service leads, ensuring they have the resources and guidance to lead effectively.
2. Oversee the recruitment, training, and development of officers and service leads, setting clear objectives and managing performance.
3. Conduct regular meetings with teams to review progress, address operational challenges, and ensure that each team's workload is managed effectively.
4. Promote a culture of collaboration, accountability, and high standards across all levels of the Development Management team.
5. Use experience and expertise to assess operational implications of change ensuring continuous effectiveness of the team

Technical Oversight:

6. Oversee the full range of planning application processes within Development Management, ensuring timely and effective processing across all case types, including complex and high-profile applications.
7. Provide strategic oversight and leadership on strategic projects or issues high complexity.
8. Work closely with teams to ensure that all applications comply with UK planning policies, legislation, and local development plans.
9. Review and approve major or high-impact decisions and recommendations, ensuring alignment with policy and strategic goals.
10. Oversee overall team performance against key performance indicators (KPIs) and quality standards, identifying areas for improvement and ensuring consistency across all service areas.
11. Lead and manage the planning enforcement function and / or minerals and waste planning service for the Council
12. Take a key role in the planning of major developments and regeneration projects

Stakeholder Engagement & Public Consultation:

13. Serve as a key point of contact for senior stakeholders, including developers, councillors, and community representatives, providing guidance on complex planning matters and policy interpretation.
14. Work with Management to ensure that their teams conduct effective public consultations and address community feedback in planning decisions.
15. Represent the planning department at council meetings, planning committees, and public forums, presenting major cases and providing professional advice.
16. Oversee and manage the relationship with the planning committee's and relevant Chairs ensuring trust is maintained in the process and guiding Members on decision making

Strategic Development & Policy Implementation:

17. Collaborate with senior management to align development management activities with local planning frameworks and national policy priorities.
18. Support the implementation of new policies and changes to planning legislation with Development Management, working with Managers to ensure seamless integration.
19. Identify opportunities to improve processes and procedures within Development Management to enhance service delivery, efficiency, and customer satisfaction.

Project & Risk Management:

20. Oversee a portfolio of complex and high-impact planning projects, ensuring risks related to development impacts, legal compliance, and political sensitivities are managed effectively. Using your discretion and initiative over broad areas of legislation, guidance and best practice when resolving problems.
21. Provide guidance to planning officers on complex cases, ensuring consistent application of planning policy and regulatory standards using your skills to analyse and interpret very diverse and complex problems that major developments present.
22. Collaborate with the senior management to escalate and resolve significant compliance issues or high-risk applications as necessary.

Decision-Making & Quality Assurance:

23. Lead the review of committee reports, recommendations, and decision-making documents, ensuring accuracy, clarity, and adherence to planning policy.
24. Participate in planning committees and other decision-making panels, presenting high-profile cases and providing expert recommendations as required
25. Implement quality assurance measures across the Development Management function, ensuring that all processes, assessments, and decisions meet the highest standards.

Continuous Improvement

26. Ensure that Development Management Managers and their teams deliver excellent customer service to applicants, stakeholders, and the public.
27. Handle escalated queries, appeals, and complaints related to planning decisions to provide clear, timely responses.
28. Work with other managers to identify and implement process improvements within Development Management, including the use of new technology, streamlined workflows, and enhanced public engagement practices.

Staff Development

29. Provide professional guidance and support to Development Management Managers, fostering a supportive and collaborative work environment.
30. Promote ongoing professional development, encouraging Managers and their teams to pursue relevant training and professional qualifications.
31. Conduct regular appraisals, set development objectives, and support Managers in achieving departmental and organisational goals.

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">• To manage service budgets of up to £1m and the use of project and programme expenditure.• To also secure developer funding contributions as part of the development process and the management of grant funding.• To work within the agreed scheme of delegation to ensure services work within agreed budgets.•
Staff Management Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leading teams made up of number of specialist teams and officers.• Provide line management, supervision, appraisal, mentoring, advice, coaching and support.• To work closely with colleagues and partners in the public, private and third sector.• Overall management responsibility of teams across Cumberland.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To represent the Council as required

Essential Criteria - Qualifications, knowledge, experience and expertise

- Professional Qualification: Chartered membership of a recognised planning body (e.g., Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)).
- Experience: Substantial experience in development management or a related planning role, with significant experience in team leadership, management and operational oversight.
- Education: Degree in Town Planning, Urban Planning, or a related field.
- Knowledge: In-depth understanding of UK planning legislation, national and local planning policy, and development management processes.
- Leadership: Proven experience managing experienced staff, with strong leadership, coaching, and mentoring skills.
- Technical Expertise: Advanced knowledge of development management processes, planning policy interpretation, and regulatory frameworks.
- Project Management: Strong project management skills, with the ability to oversee multiple projects, prioritise tasks, and meet deadlines.
- Communication: Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to explain complex policy matters to diverse audiences.
- Problem-Solving: Strong analytical and problem-solving skills, with experience handling contentious applications and appeals.
- IT Proficiency: Proficient in planning management software, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and other relevant IT systems.

Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS Checks

- This post does not require a DBS check.

Job working circumstances

Emotional Demands

- The ability to deal with stressful or emotive issues and including with members of the public.

Physical Demands

- Normal office demands (agile working) but there will be a requirement to travel to different operational sites and meetings as required, potentially outside of the Cumberland area

Working Conditions

- Work will be predominately office based with flexibility surrounding office location and homeworking. Some site visits will be required.

Other Factors

- Will be under pressure to work to extremely tight deadlines on a frequent basis in order to react to the changing business environment
- Conflicting priorities and managing tight timeframes for implementing change may prove stressful for direct reports and the role holder will need to manage this and effectively lead and motivate numbers of staff in order to ensure the service is delivered effectively and that business targets and objectives are consistently met
- Will be required to be involved in challenging negotiations where there is pressure on the role holder to achieve a successful outcome for the organisation.
- Has visibility within the organisation and is expected to be an exemplary role model to others within the organisation in terms of required behaviours and approaches
- Will use analytical, judgmental, creative and developmental skills to analyse and interpret very varied and highly complex information or situations and to produce solutions.
- Requirement to keep up to date with professional/legal developments and market trends relating to own service area and the organisation as a whole and interpret the effects on the organisation including shaping and ensuring delivery of any required changes as a result
- This role will require high levels of mental agility in order to fully understand the needs of the business to create creative and innovative solutions within own service area.
- The job requires high levels of awareness and prolonged periods of concentration requiring mental attention
- The role holder will be expected to habitually switch between tasks during the course of the working day and it is likely there will be frequent interruptions from other staff, colleagues, internal and external suppliers and stakeholders
- There is a general requirement to manage many different requirements at the same time which calls for high levels of prioritisation, time management and planning skills to ensure that all business needs are met in accordance with agreed timescales and operational service/performance levels.
- There will be periods of work-related pressure from the need to meet tight deadlines and/or respond to conflicting operational and business demands