



SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Role Profile

Job Title: Senior Planning Policy Officer	Level: Q	Job Code: SC2610
Department: Planning	Job Family: Planning Policy	Date Prepared: 26 January 2006 (updated June 2020)
Role reports to (Job Title): Planning Policy Manager		
Job Purpose: To assist with, and if appropriate lead, projects in the development, justification and monitoring of planning policy and guidance at the strategic and local level.		
Key Accountabilities: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Assist (leading at the Senior Planner level) with the preparation, monitoring and review of the Borough's contribution to strategic and local planning policy development in the review of the Development Plan, including assisting on studies to inform the Borough's input into sub regional planning policy, the implementation of the Local Plan, the production of Local Development Documents, Minerals and Waste Development Documents, and associated documents for Swindon Borough (including Neighbourhood Plans).2. Assist in the preparation and analysis of technical studies contributing to the preparation, monitoring and review of the Council's strategic and regenerative policy initiatives.3. Answer queries regarding development planning and policy issues relating to local policy and community development issues, and participating as required in the presentation of such work to the general public.4. Assist in the engagement of local stakeholder and interest groups in the development of local policy and the management and analysis of information obtained from these.5. Collect and interpret evidence including statistical and other data that may be required to deliver projects, strategies or Plans of the Council or for use by the public and		

to interpret their findings, and to assist in the monitoring of land use change, including plotting, database management and site survey.

6. Prepare, evidence or presentations for use at public meetings, hearings, or other statutory tribunals as required to support the Council's policies, plans and strategies, presenting the evidence or information required where appropriate.

7. Prepare, or assist in the preparation of, reports on planning policy and to present the findings to member decision-making bodies of the Borough Council.

8. Develop and maintain appropriate service contacts and linkages throughout the Delivery Pillar, other Pillars of the Council, other planning authorities and external bodies.

9. Assist in the establishment, co-ordination and management of multi-disciplinary working parties or project teams, necessary to the successful fulfilment of a project.

10. Maintain and update web pages relating to the work of the Group or Team as necessary.

11. Maintain and enhance geographical data systems as they relate to the work of the group.

12. Represent the Council at meetings as directed by the Head of Planning or line manager.

Supplementary Accountabilities:

1. Lead technical officer on key aspects of policy development, advice and justification at the local level, including assisting and advising in the, commissioning of technical studies to inform and justify planning policy.

2. Design and manage relational databases in respect of responses to statutory consultations on local policy documents.

3. Lead technical officer on the production of certain Planning Guidance notes (in conjunction with both internal and external groups)

4. Lead and manage the distribution of planning documents to all stakeholders including the public

5. Ensure that legal requirements are met in the production of all planning documents

6. Ensure that the Planning pages of the Council's website are up to date and relevant.

Known Future changes to the Job:

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 places a statutory requirement on the Council to produce Local Development Documents. This process involves the establishment of community forums and a significantly increased emphasis on public involvement and consultation.

The postholder will be expected to contribute to facilitating stakeholder involvement in the planning system, including assisting in the organisation of, and presentation to public forum sessions, including reporting back and undertaking presentations to public groups.

The Act will also require the production of more, smaller planning documents, of which some minor documents will require project management by this member of staff.

Job Scope: No & type of jobs Managed:

None

Typical tasks supervised /allocated to others:

At the Senior Planner level this may include technical work required in the justification of policy and in bringing development or renewal areas forward, and in providing and presenting reasoned justification and evidence to Inquiries. This may involve supervising or overseeing the work of officers here or at Wiltshire Council, or consultants procured by Wiltshire. It will also involve delegation or instruction to Capita on administrative aspects of consultation.

Job Scope:

Budget:

None

Assets:

None

Knowledge & Experience:

- A postgraduate MA or Diploma in Planning or a related discipline (required to ensure an appropriate degree of technical knowledge) leading to Membership (or eligibility for membership) of the RTPI (required to prepare and present evidence at planning inquiries if appointed at the Planner level)
- Experience in the preparation and review of Development Plans (required to ensure that the postholder has an appropriate level of experience)
- Computer literacy in word processing, database, spreadsheet and presentation packages (required for day to day undertakings of the job)
- Experience of Geographical Information Systems and web development (to ensure that the postholder is able to use MapInfo and update web pages)
- Ability to make site visits (although the job is based in an office, site visits are necessary when policy is developed or advice on applications is sought)
- Experience of report writing (necessary to undertake a fundamental aspect of

the job)

- Experience of directly involving the community in the planning process and in the presentation of information to Members of the Council and the public
- Experience in the preparation and presentation of evidence in the public arena, (to ensure that the postholder has experience of public engagement, and that the Council are adequately represented at Planning Inquiries, if appointed at the Planner level)
- Experience of joint or corporate working (as the post requires joint working with external organisations and consultants' and corporate liaison on planning projects)
- Out of hours working is required particularly concerning stakeholder engagement and preparation for Inquiries
- The postholder is also required to engage in flexible working arrangements such as working from home
- Experience of presentations \ communication skills (to present and disseminate information to stakeholders and decision makers in a clear manner)

Decision Making:

- Policy formulation – judgemental recommendations Service Manager – Planning Policy, Project Leader or Senior Planner on land use allocations and planning policies at all levels with implementation of Policy being up to 20 years, and planned developments lasting for hundreds of years once built.
- Inquiries – Delegated responsibility for certain minor policy formulation and amendment at Inquiries
- Policy response on planning applications – judgemental recommendations to Development Control \ Development Management colleagues as to the acceptability of a proposal in planning terms (the development plan is a starting point, but professional judgement is also required). Outcomes of policy input can last for hundreds of years in terms of built development.
- Database Development – relational databases must be developed for statutory consultation that are comprehensive, but can be used by the Planning Inspectorate. Using experience and technical knowledge, judgements must be made on how the databases should be set up and manipulated and on the basis of data to be held and required outputs
- Judgement required in when and how to update the Council's website.

Contacts and Relationships:

- Development Management – day to day contact in providing professional judgements on planning applications and enquiries from the public and developers
- Conservation Officers, external statutory groups – development of built and

natural environment policy

- Legal – regular contact in terms of drafting and circulation of cabinet \ committee reports and in preparing cases for Inquiries and tribunals
- Members of the public, key stakeholders and community organisations – ongoing engagement throughout the statutory planning process, formalised through the Statement of Community Involvement, and regular presentations to Parish liaison groups, Parish Council meetings, public and/or community meetings (monthly) and day to day liaison with the Urban Regeneration Company. Also daily contact with members of the public responding to telephone, e-mailed or written enquiries.
- Members of the Council – Formal contact through written and oral presentation to working parties and committees and regular informal liaison as appropriate
- Directorate of Customer Communications – day to day contact in terms of ensuring that the media are provided with accurate information regarding development planning issues.
- Wiltshire Council – Day to day contact through joint working
- Corporate IT \ Capita IT – In updating the Council’s web site and in administrative duties associated with consultation exercises

Creativity & Innovation:

The postholder will assist the Planning Policy manager in producing a Development Plan that is geared to Swindon’s unique requirements.

Job Specific Competencies:

- Innovative in delivering services – assist in using the planning process as a vehicle for service delivery and the delivery of corporate projects and priorities.
- Appreciation of customer needs – able to engage with customers on their own level.
- Technical competence – broad based experience of policy development and its application, with a particular understanding of Minerals and Waste planning issues
- Verbal and presentation skills – to present ideas to stakeholders.

All Jobs have the responsibility to comply with the Directorate Health & Safety Policy and with Swindon Borough Council's Corporate Policies on Equalities, Diversity, Investors In People and Freedom of Information.

The postholder will be expected to treat customers fairly and courteously and deal with any complaints promptly and effectively.

In addition the postholder is required to assist in the implementation and or monitoring of quality assurance initiatives and standards for the effective and efficient provision of services within the team and to provide a quality service to all customers taking every opportunity to enhance the image and reputation of the Council.

Employee Signature:

Print Name:

Date:

Line Manager Signature:

Print Name:

Date: