



Role Profile

Principal Planning Officer
Inclusive Economy & Sustainability



SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Role Profile: Principal Planning Officer	Role Profile Number: SBC_11275
Grade: CFL 11	Salary:
Directorate/Group: Inclusive Economy & Sustainability	Reporting to: Senior Principal Planning Officer / Planning Policy Lead Officer
Date Prepared: 1 st July 2024	Structure Chart attached: Yes

Job Purpose

To provide senior level planning expertise to deliver the council’s planning functions in a customer focused and solutions led way creating the right conditions for accelerating high-quality development and supporting sustainable growth in Swindon.

To build trust and be visible to key development partners, major housebuilders and residents ensuring that planning services provide earlier confidence of good growth opportunities which actively support the delivery of the council’s inclusive economy & sustainability priorities.

The postholder will ordinarily focus in either planning policy or the development management areas, to be determined on the operational needs of the service.

Through your Manager, support the Chief Planning Officer to unlock planning barriers and provide the appropriate policy context to support key regeneration projects, transform the town centre and support the council’s emerging new ways of localities working.

Key Accountabilities

- Through the completion of your day-to-day activities, you will strive to position planning services as the ‘growth engine’ to unlock activity that contributes to the local economy through the delivery of new housing and strategically important economic development initiatives, including liaison with external agencies.
- Coordinate and manage external consultants, partners and expert consultees who input into the service so that each organisation or group is able to do so in the most effective and cost efficient manner and understands their roles and responsibilities.
- Build progressive relationships with strategic delivery partners and local industries to achieve strategic objectives relating to place-making, and delivery of customer-focused value for money service solutions for all aspects of the service.
- A demonstrable ability to project manage planning projects and to deal with complex major proposals for policy creation and/or development, and to negotiate on such proposals to improve the quality of development and delivery of infrastructure in Swindon.

- Ensure that the culture, behaviours and shared values that make the Council successful are embedded across the service and create an effective and efficient working environment to deliver Council priorities and pledges.
- To supervise junior planning officers, which will entail undertaking appraisals and regular 121s, to ensure that best value is achieved and performance targets are attained, including assisting in the identification of training needs.

Main Activity Focus:

Planning Policy	Development Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be the lead professional in planning policy formation, strategically planning for the future needs to Swindon as a borough, managing cross-council conversations on infrastructure and effectively managing external consultants. • To liaise with neighbourhood plan groups, adjoining and higher tier authorities, and other borough council services in relation to planning proposals and to develop planning policy and other cross-cutting strategies; to achieve multi-disciplinary action • To attend and present reports to Members’ Working Groups, Committees, Cabinet, Members’ site inspections/site meetings and to other organisations as required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess (including undertaking site visits) and to prepare detailed reports on a full suite of planning applications with a focus on major, complex or controversial proposals for consideration by planning committee or to be determined under delegated powers. • Work will be accurate and completed in accordance with set deadlines and the quality of development and delivery of infrastructure secured through robust negotiation will ensure better outcomes for new and existing residents of Swindon. • As operationally required, to make decisions under delegated powers in accordance with the agreed process and the Council’s scheme of delegation

Supplementary Accountabilities

- To provide guidance to elected members enabling them to take strategic planning decisions in line with relevant legislation and the direction of the Local Plan.
- To be a senior lead technical officer on all aspects of planning and infrastructure.
- To be commercially aware and recognise the impacts of your day to day work in unlocking and supporting development.
- Embedding and maintain rigour of key service performance indicators and planning outputs which exceed national and local targets.
- Through your visibility as a senior lead, provide clear direction and a motivational and inspirational environment for teams and individuals to develop.
- To respond to queries from internal or external sources regarding development management and policy issues relating to local and/or neighbourhood policies about individual sites, including an assessment of development potential.
- To promote the Council’s policies and procedures for good records management; ensure that all information related to the post and functional responsibilities is created, maintained, stored

and retrieved in accordance with the Councils procedures and policies and legislative requirements

Knowledge & Experience

Candidates must have substantial knowledge and experience in the following areas of business and will be required to provide evidence of this:

- Proven ability of managing major planning applications or senior level policy creation to achieve successful outcomes within a Local Authority environment or private planning practice of the functions covered by the role.
- A thorough knowledge of UK planning legislation, policy and guidance with an ability to apply this practically and progressively to deliver tangible planning gains.
- Experience of the preparation and presentation of evidence at Planning Appeals
- An ability to manage high profile planning projects and have an appreciation of the value of place and place-making skills.
- Experience of supporting decision makers, including Councillors and statutory consultees and strategic partner organisations to achieve positive outcomes
- Experience of working with existing, new and emerging statute and using statutory processes innovatively to deliver proactive and good growth outcomes for our residents
- Experience of contract management and major scheme delivery in a development context

Qualifications

- Educated to degree level or equivalent qualification with considerable relevant planning experience. (*Postgraduate MA or Diploma in Town Planning is desirable*)
- Membership (or eligibility for membership) of the RTPI

Decision Making

- The postholder has delegation of powers to sign off decisions on a range of planning application types and responsibility for agreeing amendments at Public Inquiries and Hearings.
- The postholder must take effective decisions quickly and act on their own initiative in order to resolve problems.
- The postholder must be able to quickly get to the heart of issues and accurately assess and manage risk commensurate to the scope of their post.
- Through developing, reviewing and implementing the Local Plan (and its evidence base) the postholder must ensure decisions taken are logical and based on the defined needs of the community ensuring both short and long term needs are planned for.

Creativity and Innovation

- The post-holder is expected to contribute to the continual review of the planning function and promote innovative methods of solving existing problems and creating new opportunities to improve the service.
- Supports creative solutions to Council-wide issues and takes action to implement them

- Shows creativity in using resources to deliver cost effective services, engaging external experts where relevant, and looking beyond the boundary of current service delivery

<p><u>Job Scope</u></p> <p>Number and types of jobs managed The post holder will be expected to carry out appraisals, monitor performance and provide regular 121's with (c. 3-5 FTE) junior officers within the planning team.</p> <p>Typical tasks supervised/allocated to others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination of Planning Applications Responses to planning and infrastructure matters Support to chair of planning committee and the lead member for planning & placemaking. 	<p>Budget Holder:</p> <p>Asset Responsibility:</p>	<p>Yes - £200k</p> <p>Various operational assets and equipment</p>
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Contacts and Relationships

The Postholder will work in a collaborative manner with Members, Corporate Boards, other directorates, external and internal stakeholders, community members and other bodies that interact with this role to deliver solutions led positive outcomes.

Values and Behaviours

We strive to underpin our culture of being 'At our Best' through strong management and authentic leadership. This means getting the management basics right. We own and demonstrate accountability, both individually and collectively, and aim to get things right first time. Building on this we also expect everyone at SBC to demonstrate and live our organisational values and behaviours, by displaying:

- Accountability at all levels
- Customer care and pride in what we do
- Continuous learning and evaluation
- Valuing one another and the contribution each of us makes

The postholder will be required to observe and fulfill the seven principles of public life (also known as the Nolan Principles):

- Selflessness - *Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.*
- Integrity - *Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any citation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.*
- Objectivity - *Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.*
- Accountability - *Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.*

- Openness - *Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.*
- Honesty - *Holders of public office should be truthful.*
- Leadership - *Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.*

Other key requirements of the role

The post holder will:

- be required to operate within any relevant delegations as detailed in the council’s scheme of delegation of the council’s constitution.
- be required to work some evenings, weekends and occasional public holidays in order to meet service requirements and to ensure appropriate representation of the council with residents, the Leader and Cabinet and all elected Members and external bodies.
- Team player capable of influencing and working within cross-functional teams at all levels
- Ability to make site visits throughout the Borough and attend meetings outside the Borough

This is a politically restricted post under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990. The individual holding this post cannot have any active political role.

Politically restricted employees are prohibited from:

- standing for office as local councillors, MPs, MEPs, Members of the Welsh Assembly or Members of the Scottish Parliament,
- canvassing on behalf of a political party or a person who is, or seeks to be, a candidate, and
- speaking to the public at large or publishing any written or artistic work that could give the impression of advocating support for a political party.

Employee Name: Enter name here	Employee Signature:
Date: Enter date here	<i>Sign here</i>
Line Manager: James Coulstock, Corporate Director of Inclusive Economy & Sustainability	Line Manager Signature:
Date: Enter date here	

