

Northumberland County Council

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>Post Title:</b> Senior Planner		<b>Director/Service/Sector:</b> Planning & Economy - Planning Services		<b>Office Use</b>
<b>Band:</b> 8		<b>Workplace:</b> Area Office location in North, West or South East Areas or in Central Team		JE ref: 1894 HRMS ref:
<b>Responsible to:</b> Planning Manager/Principal Planning Officer		<b>Date:</b> July 2010	<b>Manager Lever:</b> - 2	
<b>Job Purpose:</b> The post will be responsible for a personal caseload comprising a high proportion of complex/controversial proposals and will be authorised and responsible for determining planning and related applications under the scheme of delegation. The postholder will be responsible for the management of Planning Officers, Assistants and Student Planners including the provision of professional advice and guidance, staff development, work allocation, quality control of officer decisions and recommendations and performance management. The postholder will ensure that the Development Management Team provides an efficient and effective service that is delivered to a high standard and in a manner which reflects the corporate aims and objectives of the Council and the needs of the various stakeholders				
<b>Resources</b>	Staff	Line management responsibility for Planning Officers, Planning Assistants, Student Planner, allocation and scheduling of work tasks, and for staff under external commission		
	Finance	Some responsibility for raising orders or processing invoices in a particular area of work and monitoring of fee income		
	Physical	Shared responsibility for the physical resources used by the area team including work stations, IT hardware and software, and equipment used on site inspections. Capture, input and maintain key spatial information relating to area development management		
	Clients	Shared responsibility for the general satisfaction of those who use the service and the safeguarding of public amenity. Assist with the application of development management policies, procedures and services.		
<b>Duties and key result areas:</b> <div>1. Plan, manage and prioritise work of the Planning Officers, Planning Assistants and Student Planners in a manner that reflects the needs of its many and varied stakeholders and ensures service delivery and the achievement of set quality and performance standards.</div> <div>2. Provide advice and support to the Planning Officers, Planning Assistants and Student Planners in the team in delivering service objectives</div> <div>3. Help to motivate, support and develop staff, assisting in identifying staff development needs and act as coach and mentor within agreed policies and procedures and through conducting appraisals, to maintain an effective workforce capable of meeting its objectives, and assist with staff recruitment.</div> <div>4. Support the Area / Central Development Managers and Principal Planning Officers with the evaluation and interpretation of new legislation, case law, regulations and policies affecting the service.</div> <div>5. Assist the Area/Central Development Managers and Principal Planning Officers to develop policy, procedures, delivery strategies (including service plan), promotional techniques and effective communication to bring the service's business plans and objectives into effect and secure continuous improvement.</div> <div>6. Ensure that the team deals with planning and other related applications in a manner that is consistent throughout Northumberland and complies with legislation, established procedures and policies.</div> <div>7. Assist professional staff with their caseload, including the provision of advice, supervision and mentoring, to develop their experience and confidence to assist in the delivery of service objectives. Assist technical support staff by providing advice, support and training to assist in the delivery of service objectives</div> <div>8. Maintain appropriate work records, write case notes and reports and answer correspondence relating to the work within the area to the required service standards, observing data protection and confidentiality rules and procedures.</div> <div>9. Work collaboratively with internal colleagues and external contacts on development management matters in order to promote effective partnership arrangements for the delivery of a quality service.</div>				

10. Capture, record and apply service and caseload data, using ICT systems, in accordance with service procedures, to assist in the production of timely and accurate information about the DM service.
11. Active involvement, in accordance with service standards, in undertaking research, investigations, assignments and assessments in connection with complaints relating to the caseload.
12. Assist in monitoring relevant budget headings to ensure effective spend against established targets and in particular to ensure the correct application of planning fees in respect of incoming submissions for pre-application advice, planning applications and discharge of conditions in the allotted area.
13. Deputise for the Area/Central Development Manager and Principal Planning Officer in the day to day running of the section in their absence and during these periods supervise all professional and administrative staff involved in the area Development Management function.
14. Monitor team performance against national and local PI's taking appropriate corrective action if performance is failing to meet requirements.
15. Take responsibility for own caseload of complex applications, including taking part in consultations and negotiations with applicants and/or their agents and with other bodies, pre-application enquiries, and/or other enquiries as appropriate and preparing reports, including recommendations, for the consideration of the Area/Central Planning Committees.
16. Determine planning and related applications under the scheme of delegation, manage and co-ordinate the preparation of Area/Central Committee reports in conjunction with the Area/Central Team Manager, present applications to the Area /Central Planning Committees and attend Committees, Working Groups and Committee Site Investigation Panels to advise elected Members on DM issues as required.
17. Prepare Proofs of Evidence and written statements in connection with appeals and attend and represent the Council at Public Inquiries, hearings, in Court and in such other meetings as required.
18. Provide professional pre-application and other advice and respond to correspondence and queries from Elected Members, members of the public, developers, agents, community groups and statutory and other consultees on planning matters relating to the DM service.
19. Ensure effective joint working with other departments of the Council, Planning Authorities, Highway Authorities, Town and Parish Councils, statutory consultees and other internal and external bodies and attend meetings, to maximise the influence of the service in delivering corporate priorities.
20. Conduct risk assessments and ensure that staff understand and follow healthy and safe working practices.
21. Manage and co-ordinate enforcement and monitoring activity, including the undertaking of duties and services of notices in connection with the Council's powers of enforcement as local planning authority and the instruction, making and confirmation (where no objections) of Tree Preservation Orders.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

#### **Work Arrangements**

Transport requirements:	The work involves the need to visit other area and County offices, development sites throughout the area on a regular basis and occasionally further a-field
Working patterns:	Flexi hours. Some evening working will be required in terms of committee attendance and public meetings
Working conditions:	The work is office based but involves working out on site on a regular basis and which could be in a lone working situation

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<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Assess by</b>
<b>Knowledge and Qualifications</b>		
<p>A good standard of general education demonstrating numeracy and literacy.</p> <p>A degree in Town Planning or a relevant subject or equivalent vocational qualification.</p> <p>A relevant professional qualification such as MRTPI</p> <p>Knowledge of the main operational, procedural and practical issues relating to the DM service.</p> <p>Good knowledge of current inter/national laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and developments relating to development management</p> <p>Demonstrates an awareness and commitment to proactive customer care and services.</p> <p>Evidence of CPD and on-going personal development.</p>		
<b>Experience</b>		
<p>Experience in development management at a senior level</p> <p>Experience in working collaboratively with service users.</p> <p>Experience in engaging effectively with others and building productive partnerships.</p>	<p>Experience in using GIS and DM Software applications</p> <p>Experience of mentoring staff</p>	
<b>Skills and competencies</b>		
<p>Effective ICT skills and able to use ICT to achieve work objectives.</p> <p>Able to apply own initiative to overcome day-to-day operational problems.</p> <p>Prepares written material – reports, letters, site notes etc that are accurate, rational, convincing and coherent.</p> <p>Can communicate effectively with Members, professionals and public</p> <p>Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to speak convincingly in public</p> <p>Good analytical and judgmental skills (to assess the varied and complex range sometimes complex information associated with the assessment of planning proposals).</p> <p>Numerate, able to reason with statistics and able to understand building plans.</p> <p>Remains calm and logical in stressful and difficult situations.</p> <p>Demonstrates high standards of honesty, integrity, openness, and respect for others.</p> <p>Proactive, well-organised and achievement orientated.</p>	<p>Negotiation skills and able to persuade others to an alternative point of view.</p> <p>Competent in helping train staff through work experience</p>	
<b>Physical, mental and emotional demands</b>		
<p>Normally works from a seated position when in the office but with regular need to travel to other work locations and work on development sites</p> <p>Need to maintain general awareness with significant periods of enhanced concentration.</p> <p>Extensive contact with public/clients/Members on complex and often contentious issues.</p>		
<b>Other</b>		
A current UK driving licence.		