

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                       |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| <b>Role title</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Conservation Officer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                       |       |
| <b>Directorate</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Climate and Place                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                       |       |
| <b>Reporting to</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Placemaking Team Manager                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                       |       |
| <b>Grade</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 10                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                       |       |
| <b>Evaluation ref</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | SCG1307                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Job Family Ref</b> | RPG10 |
| <b>Role purpose</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                       |       |
| To support the Council's delivery of the development management service through the effective handling of planning and heritage casework, provide technical advice to customers and the Council in all aspects of the conservation of the historic environment, encompassing historic buildings and conservation areas, archaeology and the wider historic environment. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                       |       |
| <b>Key results area</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Accountability</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                       |       |
| Corporate responsibilities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, organisational policy, and professional codes of conduct to uphold standards of best practise.</p> <p>Deliver the aims of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do, ensuring team members are also aware of their responsibilities and maintaining their understanding that Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.</p> |                       |       |
| Application of specialist knowledge                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | To evaluate and make recommendations on applications relating to planning and historic buildings and/or affecting conservation areas, parks and gardens and other applications, provide specialist advice to professional colleagues, contribute to in-house education and training events, appeals, enforcement cases/complaints and other work as may be allocated.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                       |       |
| Knowledge and application of Legislation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>To provide planning and heritage advice to those visiting, writing to or telephoning the team efficiently and courteously on planning matters, historic building repair and maintenance. Provide advice in relation to enquiries from Members, various interest groups and individuals on planning and heritage proposals, whilst always having regard to the implications of advice given.</p> <p>To provide evidence for appeals and attend Hearings and Public Inquiries as the Council's professional witness.</p>                                                                                                                     |                       |       |

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p>To review conservation areas and produce proposals for their designation and amendment, to include the production of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.</p> <p>To assist with the promotion and administration of the production of a register of locally listed buildings for Somerset.</p> <p>To work with Somerset's communities on projects related to the conservation of the historic environment, for example, Village Design Statements, Parish Surveys etc</p>                                                                    |
| Enforcement responsibilities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>Under the guidance of the Team Leader – Development Management, assist and advise the Enforcement Officers in dealing with unauthorised breaches of planning and listed building control, and negotiate where appropriate mutually acceptable solutions. In other cases and under the same guidance, assist in the drafting of enforcement and other notices.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Stakeholder engagement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p>To attend such Committees, Sub-Committees and other meetings as may be required, outside office hours as necessary. Guide and advise the Planning Committee and respond to any questions arising from Members in order to ensure full awareness of the many varied aspects of the proposal.</p> <p>Foster the development of a high level of customer care and good working relationships with Councillors and Parish Councils and other representative bodies.</p>                                                                                        |
| Knowledge development and sharing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>To maintain awareness of developments in planning and heritage legislation, policies and other guidance and implement the Council's own policies, procedures and offer advice to partners and customers as to the suitability of retro fit and greener technologies that can be placed into both listed and non-listed solid wall structures.</p> <p>To be familiar with the Council's information technology systems in the areas of application handling, message transfer, word processing, geographic information and assist in their development.</p> |
| <b>Qualification/Knowledge/Experience/Skills</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p><b><i>All requirements are essential unless otherwise stated.</i></b></p> <p>Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant degree or experience</li> <li>• Eligibility for Chartered Membership of the RTPI or IHBC</li> <li>• Corporate Membership of the RTPI (desirable)</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

### Experience

- Experience of dealing with all aspects of planning applications and/or listed building consents in a local government planning environment
- Experience of dealing with schemes to alter and repair buildings and be able to demonstrate involvement in dealing with issues of new design in historic areas (desirable)
- Experience of interpreting and applying up to date planning policy and legislation
- Experience of discussing and explaining proposals with a wide variety of individuals and representative bodies eg Members, Parish Councils etc
- Experience of appeals process through written representations and/or informal hearings
- Experience in the use of IT programs, including Word, Excel, Access, Powerpoint and Outlook
- Writing reports and making presentations to committees
- Assessing the planning merits of alleged breaches of planning control and providing advice to planning enforcement colleagues (desirable)
- Preparing and presenting Local Planning Authority evidence for written representations and informal hearing planning appeals (desirable)
- Use of Microsoft Office and internet explorer
- Use of specialised planning software (desirable)

### Knowledge

- Extensive knowledge of overall planning process, policy, legislation, guidance and regulation
- Knowledge and understanding of technical matters, policy and legislation relating to Planning and the wider historic environment, archaeology, listed buildings and conservation areas.
- Awareness of the democratic process

### Skills

- Effective oral and written communication skills
- Customer care, including an ability to deal with difficult or frustrated customers
- Ability to handle difficult negotiations successfully
- Ability to influence and persuade others
- Ability to resolve problems creatively
- Report writing
- Presenting to committees
- Good IT skills
- Team working
- Working with initiative
- Effectively managing time and priority setting

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

- A need to possess a driving license or be able to demonstrate an ability to travel to sites throughout the district in an efficient manner.

### Dimensions of role

Somerset Council's area benefits from a rich pool of heritage assets including nearly over 11,000 listed buildings, 181 conservation areas, 467 scheduled monuments, 41 Registered Parks & Gardens and 2 Registered Battlefields; these range from medieval market towns to country house estates to former Industrial Mills. The area is varied in character and stretches from the Exmoor National Park and the Bristol Channel to the border of Devon and Dorset, Mendip Hills and the National Landscape of Cranborne Chase.

The Placemaking & Projects Section sits in the Community, Place & Economy Directorate and comprises of a range of specialist officers that deal with large scale infrastructure projects (e.g. Hinkley, Gravity), Taunton Garden and Placemaking. The specialist officers primarily give advice to the wider Planning Team (Development Management and Strategic Policy ) but this can also include other areas of the Council, such as Economic Development, Housing and Environmental Health.

The Placemaking specialists include the disciplines of conservation, design, arboriculture and landscape. The conservation officers are a small team that primarily are responsible for the consideration of applications for planning permission and Listed Building Consent.

The conservation team has an enviable record of partnership working in relation to the production of village design statements, neighbourhood plans, the establishment of a list of locally listed buildings and working with town and parish councils to meet their heritage aspirations.

The Area Planning Committee's meets every 4 weeks, and the post holder is likely to attend a number of these meetings during a financial year. Committee meetings are held during working hours.

### Notes

## ROLE DESCRIPTION

|                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Competencies / attributes | <p>The post holder will need to respond to complex and difficult proposals, and negotiating skills are crucial. The post holder will be subject to high volumes of work and many competing demands on time as well as conflicting priorities and frequent problem solving.</p> <p>Difficult issues arise on a daily basis where the post holder is required to utilise initiative and time management techniques in a wide variety of situations and circumstances.</p> <p>In particular finding acceptable solutions to proposals concerning listed buildings or development within conservation areas requires a high degree of problem solving and creativity; this is a constant requirement.</p> <p>Balancing the needs or demands of developers, members of the public and community groups with available resources can be challenging, and is something which occurs frequently.</p> |
| Working conditions:       | <p>The post will require site visits before during and after building works. There is likely to be the need to climb scaffolds and to enter restricted spaces. Sites can be dusty and unventilated and outside site visits can often be conducted in adverse weather conditions.</p> <p>A need for personal awareness of safety and security when working alone on site visits.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Working arrangements:     | <p>The post will be based at one of Somerset Council area offices (which are in Bridgwater, Taunton, Shepton Mallet and Yeovil) although there is flexible in terms of office/home working, with an expectation of office attendance approximately two days per week.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |