

Role Description

Role title	Principal Planning Officer
Directorate	Climate & Place
Reporting to	Service Manager – Development Management
Grade	8
Evaluation ref	LGR0102
Role Purpose Responsible for a range of complex planning casework to deliver strategic outcomes for the Council. Accountable for negotiating on proposals to deliver high quality development in Somerset in accordance with national guidance, planning law and adopted local plans/other guidance.	
Key results area	Accountability
Corporate responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear leadership to deliver the Council's strategic priorities and meet the Council's financial targets, as a member of the Directorates Senior Leadership Team. • Update and advise Elected Members in respect of operational and policy issues in relation to the Service. • Lead with a clear identity in terms of flexible and responsive ways of working, inclusive and diverse culture, and high level of employee engagement and wellbeing. • Undertake representational and communication duties on behalf of the Council to promote and protect the Council's interests in matters concerning their specialist areas. • Create, monitor, and review frameworks of performance measures and quality standards to be applied in the delivery of services. • Function as an ambassador for the Council promoting, both internally and externally, the Council's vision, strategic aims, and values. • Value the diversity of Somerset's communities ensuring equality of access and treatment in service delivery and employment. • Function as a role model for Somerset's vision and values. Promotes a culture of continuous improvement that encourages creativity and innovation to ensure services are

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	<p>efficient and develop the potential and flexibility across the Council and its workforce including the motivation and development of employees within the Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the Service places a high value on customer responsiveness by demonstrating a commitment to meeting and involving the broadest range of direct and indirect service users, citizens, customers, communities, and businesses. • Support the delivery of the Councils' key strategic aims and objectives ensuring understanding and commitment from staff from across the Service. • Support Corporate and Directorate and service specific transformational change programmes with the aim of maximising efficiency, modernising services, and achieving better outcomes and opportunities for service users and customers. • Ensure flexibility in reacting to the needs of the Council, its' customers and partners supporting a culture of continuous improvement. • Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, the Council's standards of conduct, organisational policy, and professional codes of conduct to uphold standards of best practise. • Accountable for compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation and Somerset Council H&S policies.
Service Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for decision taking under the officer scheme of delegation for planning and other related applications. • Provide clear direction to deliver the Council's strategic priorities and meet the Council's financial targets, as a member of the Development Management Service Team. • Support senior colleagues at Area Planning and Strategic Planning Committees and present applications for decision. • Update and advise elected members in respect of strategic sites and associated matters including briefings and training. • Using professional knowledge analyse and evaluate complex technical information to provide professional advice to statutory consultees, other departments of the Council, developers/applicants, members and communities to ensure high quality outputs which support the delivery of the Council's objectives. • Balance the competing demands of other council services and the viability of the development to make

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	<p>recommendations/determine priorities and negotiate complex S106 agreements to ensure high quality development is brought forward meeting the requirements of adopted planning policy and the delivery of infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support and guidance to officers dealing with the processing of planning applications, undertaking monitoring and compliance functions and other planning functions to meet agreed timescales/targets and make robust decisions. • Act as lead officer at public meetings, Quality Review Panel and as witness at planning inquiries/examinations, respond to Ombudsman and complaints
Performance Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertakes the processing of applications for a wide range of development schemes including major planning applications, strategic and inward investment sites and those of a more complex nature. • Project manage proposals through from pre-application stage, through determination and implementation, including the preparation of masterplans and design codes as appropriate, drafting reports/recommendations and presenting to Committee. • Prepare appeal statements and attend hearings and public inquiries as expert witness in connection with planning and enforcement appeals, to represent the Local Planning Authority and defend its decisions. • Manages and commissions external planning consultancy support where required e.g. viability, legal; using professional knowledge and experience to act as lead client where appropriate to support the determination of applications.
Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work with technical specialists, partner organisations, negotiate with applicants/agents and the local community in accordance with procedures, good practice, and performance targets to deliver the strategic sites allocated in the adopted and emerging Local Plans through a development team approach. • Within the Planning Service provide professional support and guidance to Senior and Planning officers including supporting monitoring and compliance activities, carrying out of site inspections, negotiating on S106/CIL requirements and viability, drafting reports and justifying recommendations.



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Developer and Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with developers and the local communities (including elected members, town/parish councils and other groups) to ensure high quality development through regular dialogue.• Ensure appropriate stewardship arrangements are in place to ensure long term management and maintenance of community facilities and assets arising from the sites development.
Line Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All roles will be expected to be responsible for managing, developing, and mentoring Junior colleagues.

Dimensions of role

- The postholder will deal with major planning applications, strategic and inward investment sites and those of a more complex nature and/or lead a team of officers (between 5-8 officers for an area of Somerset).
- Within the next 5 years Somerset will be working jointly to provide one local adopted plan for Somerset which will include allocation of major sites – the officer will feed into the policy requirements for the allocated sites to ensure delivery of the Councils objectives.

Qualification/ Knowledge / skills / experience (describe what would be needed by anyone to deliver the accountabilities to a competent or fully acceptable level, please also state Essential/Desirable against each one)

Qualifications:

- Degree in Town Planning or related subject. (Essential)
- Membership of (or be eligible to join) the RTPI (Essential)
- Project Management qualification (Desirable)

Knowledge

- Knowledge of the statutory, regulatory and policy frameworks of the planning system and associated regimes – (Essential)
- Knowledge of planning legislation and case law in respect of issues arising from pre-application enquiries, applications, appeals and planning enforcement (Essential)
- Familiar with IT systems used for data input, report writing and presentations. (Essential)

Skills:

- negotiation skills – Essential
- Ability to manage complex projects (Essential)
- Ability to develop and maintain relationships with elected Members.
- Advanced communication skills, including the ability to influence, negotiate and problem solve.

Experience:



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant experience of working at a Senior level in Development Management/Placemaking• Demonstrate the ability to manage a caseload or competing workloads to deliver strategic sites and maintain performance (Essential)• Experience of providing advice across a range of planning issues in a development management/planning environment, including process and procedural matters (Essential)• Experience of managing wide ranging caseloads (Essential),• Experience of supervising junior staff – (Essential) | | |
| <table border="1"><tr><td>Working arrangements:</td><td>Full-time – 37 hours with dynamic working arrangements and flexibility to meet the needs of the service</td></tr></table> | Working arrangements: | Full-time – 37 hours with dynamic working arrangements and flexibility to meet the needs of the service |
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