



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title	Principal Planning Policy Officer M&W		
Directorate	Minerals and Waste		
Reporting to			
Grade	8		
Evaluation ref	RP034	Job Family Ref	
Role purpose			
<p>The Principal Planning Policy Officer at Somerset Council is responsible for leading the development and implementation of planning policies related to minerals and waste. This role involves managing the preparation, monitoring, and review of local plans and strategies to ensure they align with national and regional policies. The officer will provide expert advice on planning matters, conduct research and data analysis, and engage with stakeholders, including local communities, developers, and government agencies. Key responsibilities include overseeing public consultations, preparing reports and recommendations, and representing the council at public inquiries and appeals. The officer will also mentor and supervise junior staff, ensuring the effective delivery of planning services. This position requires strong analytical, communication, and project management skills to address complex planning issues and promote sustainable development within the county.</p>			



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Responsibilities

- Lead the preparation, monitoring, and review of the mineral plan and waste core strategy, as well as support development of the local plan for the wider Somerset area.
- Commission as necessary external consultants to support in the delivery of the evidence base for the mineral and waste plans, plus any supporting topic papers that may be required. This role also has responsibility for monitoring and overseeing the performance of the consultants. Also assist in the preparation, monitoring, and review of local plans and strategies for the wider Somerset Area
- Provide expert advice on planning policies and regulations related to minerals and waste developments. Also leads the Policy team in commenting on planning submissions to the wider service, from a mineral and waste safeguarding perspective.
- Conduct research and data analysis to support policy development and planning decisions.
- Has responsibility for the production, consultation and publication of annual statutory reports that the M&W planning authority is required to deliver (Local Aggregate Assessment, Authority Monitoring Report, etc) Undertake the role of Lead Officer for Somerset Council on Nuclear Legacy related business. Sit with Elected Members of Somerset Council on the Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum and other National fora.
- Liaise with the Economic Development service to ensure consistency of approach and complimentary practice in the interests of Somerset Council.
- Oversee public consultations and stakeholder engagement processes.
- Prepare and present reports and recommendations to planning committees.
- Represent the council at public inquiries, appeals, and other forums.
- Liaise with developers, local communities, and government agencies.
- Supervise and mentor junior staff, providing guidance and support.
- Monitor and review mineral and waste sites against planning permissions and legal agreements.
- Investigate and enforce planning breaches and take appropriate action.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of local planning policies and strategies, including those of external organisations such as the Marine Management Organisation, Exmoor National Park and those Authorities with which Somerset Council maintains Memorandum of Understanding, Statements of Common Ground or similar.
- Manage complaints and resolve issues related to mineral and waste operations from a Policy perspective
- Manage a caseload of complex and controversial planning consultations and ensure that they have the necessary sign-off according to the scheme of delegation.
- Take decisions with regard to planning responses in line with the scheme of delegation.
- Ensure that the team meet performance targets for response times.



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- 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 efficient and develop the potential and flexibility across the Council and its workforce including the motivation and development of employees within the Service.
- 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 Council's 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.



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Impact

Knowledge / Experience / Skills

Knowledge

- In-depth knowledge of planning legislation and policies related to minerals and waste (E).
- Understanding of environmental impacts and sustainable development principles (E).
- Familiarity with local, regional, and national planning frameworks (E).
- Knowledge of land use planning and development control processes (E).
- Awareness of health and safety regulations in relation to site inspections (D).
- Understanding of public consultation and stakeholder engagement processes (E).

Experience

- Proven experience in a planning role, preferably within minerals and waste (E).
- Experience in assessing and processing complex planning applications (E).
- Experience in conducting site inspections and monitoring compliance (E).
- Experience in preparing and presenting reports to planning committees (E).
- Experience in representing an organization at public inquiries and appeals (E).
- Experience in developing and implementing planning policies and strategies (E).



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Qualifications

- Degree in Town Planning, Environmental Science, or a related field (E).
- Membership of a relevant professional body, such as the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) (E).
- Postgraduate qualification in a related discipline (D).
- Certification in environmental impact assessment (D).
- Training in public inquiry and appeal processes (D).
- Continuous professional development in planning and related fields (D).

Skills

- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills (E).
- Excellent communication and negotiation skills (E).
- Ability to interpret and apply planning legislation and policies (E).
- Proficiency in using planning and mapping software (E).
- Strong organizational and time management skills (E).
- Ability to work effectively with a range of stakeholders (E).
- Good report writing and presentation skills (E).
- Ability to manage and resolve conflicts (E).

Working conditions

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Working Arrangements

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