

Context statement

To accompany job description and person specification when required

Job title: Senior Planning Officer (G11) (Development Management)

Generic job description: ES 587 e-g (Senior Technical Officer Level 1/2/Supervisor), Dorset Council Grades 9-11.

Directorate/Service/Team: This post is within the Development Management and Enforcement Service, part of the Planning service within the Place directorate.

Organisation structure

Reporting to: Development Management Area Manager or Development Management Team Leader

Responsibility for: Dealing with either 'major' applications or 'minor and householder (fast track)' applications.

You will proactively facilitate suitable development through the planning process through building working relationships with internal and external partners in the planning process. This will include working with developers, communities, colleagues within the Council (e.g. planning policy and highways teams) and external bodies such as Natural England and the Environment Agency to facilitate appropriate new development.

The role will involve assessing and determining planning and other applications against local policy and national legislation and guidance. This will include:

- All work related to pre- and post-application stages including the use of a development team approach to pre-application advice.
- Responding to permitted development and lawful development enquiries, notifications, applications for telecoms and work by statutory undertakers and applications for advertisements.
- Developing and maintaining approaches to community engagement at all stages in the planning process.
- Identifying issues to be addressed via Section 106 Agreements.
- Dealing with applications to discharge conditions.
- Liaising with and advising the planning enforcement team in relation to subsequent compliance and enforcement action.
- Dealing with any subsequent post decision amendments.

For roles within one of the 'fast track' teams, you will manage a caseload of 'minor' applications of the most complex or contentious nature and will have a key role in assisting the Team Leader with the management of the team. This will include determining priorities and allocation of work between officers to meet changing circumstances through collaborative team working. You will provide support and supervision to other staff, including undertaking case reviews and signing off work under the Council's scheme of delegation. The role will include negotiating any necessary planning obligations, to ensure provision of appropriate social and physical infrastructure contributions. You will be expected to present applications to the relevant planning committee and represent the Council at hearings and public inquiries.

For roles within one of the 'majors' teams, you will manage a caseload of applications for major development, including sites of a complex or contentious nature. The role will include negotiating



any necessary planning obligations, to ensure provision of appropriate social and physical infrastructure contributions. You will also have a role in providing support and supervision to staff across the wider planning service, particularly those in the 'fast track' teams who are seeking to gain experience of dealing with major applications. The role may include signing off work under the Council's scheme of delegation. The post holder will be expected to present applications to the relevant planning committee and represent the Council at hearings and public inquiries.

Posts within either team will include providing general advice on development management issues to the public, Councillors, applicants and developers where necessary.

The roles will include review and assessment of technical information to prepare reports and recommendations on planning applications and other proposals for consideration by Committee and Senior Officers under the Council's scheme of delegation. As part of this it will be essential to ensure work is completed in a timely manner to agreed deadlines.

You will work in conjunction with the Council's enforcement team on enforcement matters.

You will have no formal line management responsibilities but will be expected to: lead on projects or particular areas of work; supervise contractors; and provide supervision and support to other staff.

Context of work

The Senior Planning Officer role will make a positive and professional contribution to the provision of a comprehensive and efficient planning service. You will deal with a varied caseload of applications, including those of a complex or challenging nature, helping to ensure that the Council achieves positive planning outcomes. Your knowledge of the planning system, and relevant policies and principles, will enable you to play an essential part in securing appropriate development for Dorset.

Dorset Council is a recently established unitary authority dealing with around 5,000 planning applications each year, and the planning service offers a varied and fast-paced working environment. Planning applications are determined in the context of current adopted local plans which were prepared by the predecessor district councils and the Council has an ambitious programme for the preparation of the first Dorset Council-wide plan. There are also a significant number of neighbourhood plans, both completed and in preparation.

The Dorset Council area has an outstanding natural and historic environment, with national and international designations including internationally protected heathland habitats, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the 'Jurassic Coast' World Heritage Site. Within this challenging context we also need to plan for the future of the local economy, and for meeting significant housing demand. This post offers the opportunity to be involved in a wide range of interesting and challenging planning issues.

Travel requirement

This position has a significant travel requirement. This means that there is a requirement for a vehicle (or transport deemed to be suitable by the council) to be available on most working days in order to carry out normal duties. Employees in positions with a significant travel requirement are required to provide a replacement vehicle if their usual vehicle is not available over an extended period. Travel expenses will be paid at the Council's standard rate.

Other information

The job description is for a career-graded post spanning three levels, grades 9, 10 and 11. This particular post is available at Grade 11.

You will hold a degree-level qualification in town planning or a related subject, as well as a postgraduate qualification in planning.

Significant previous planning experience and Chartered membership of the RTPI or eligibility to join are normally essential requirements for this role.

Undertaking continuous professional development in order to keep up with changes in national policy and case law is essential for this post.

You will be confident using Microsoft Office and have experience using Geographical Information Systems. Experience using Mastergov is desirable.

The ability to converse at ease with customers and provide advice in accurate spoken English is essential for the post.

Please note that Dorset Council uses generic job descriptions. AutoCAD ability is not a requirement for this role.

Context statement prepared by:			
Manager	Anna Lee	Date	12 March 2020
Minor amendments made for clarification, for job adverts in March 2023	Anna Lee		14 March 2023