Role profile

**Countryside Officer (GCN District Licensing)**

**Our values:**

**We are dedicated, respectful, collaborative. We are Milton Keynes City Council.**

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| **Service** | Environment & Waste |
| **Reports to** | Ecology Officer |
| **Job family** | Professional and Technical |
| **Grade** | G |
| **Political restricted?** | N |
| **DBS required?** | N |
| **Date** | November 2024 |
| **JE Code** | JE1677 |

Key deliverables

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| **1** | To provide clear, timely, accurate and relevant advice to Development Control and others frequently conveying complex information to non-specialists in the form of written and/or verbal reports within agreed timescales so that planning applications, conditions, obligations, and enforcement matters relating to ecology can be determined. |
| **2** | Act as responsible officer to issue GCN licences to developers on behalf of the LPA. |
| **3** | Effectively promote the District Great Crested Newt Licensing Scheme to developers, planners, and ecologists in partnership with NatureSpace as an alternative to traditional mitigation licensing. |
| **4** | To ensure that the Councils landholdings, including Country/District/Local parks, public open spaces, wildlife sites, nature reserves, woodlands and farms are protected, conserved, and managed to enable wide and inclusive use by the public. |
| **5** | To ensure environmental management schemes, events and projects are initiated, designed, resourced, managed, and monitored to completion as required. |
| **6** | To pursue funding and collaborative working opportunities for improvements to the service to further the Councils responsibilities to protect and enhance the natural environment. |

*Within reason these key deliverables may evolve to meet service need and it is expected that you will be flexible and adaptable in your delivery to meet both service and city council wide needs*

**Essential requirements** Key skills, expertise, and qualifications

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| **1** | A relevant degree in ecology or environmental management and a Natural England Great Crested Newt Class Level 1 Survey Licence (CL08) |
| **2** | Demonstrable and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the UK planning system, including ecological impact assessment and/or biodiversity in planning. |
| **3** | Demonstrable and comprehensive knowledge of European protected species legislation, licensing, planning, and licensing policies. |
| **4** | Practical experience of undertaking Great Crested Newt Survey Work using a range of survey techniques (eDNA, bottle trapping, torching, netting etc.) |
| **5** | Demonstrable experience of planning and undertaking Great Crested Newt conservation management or designing and implementing Great Crested Newt mitigation and compensation strategies. |
| **6** | A full driving licence with the ability to be able to undertake business travel. |
| **7** | Experience of using QGIS or other GIS software. |

Job family

**Professional and Technical (Grade G)**

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| **Colleague expectations**   * Be professional at all times * Work together for the good of the team, city council and local people * Promote a supportive culture * Challenge assumptions * Take ownership * Be willing to change and do things differently * Always work in a safe manner | **Manager expectations**   * Be a role model by displaying positive behaviours at all times * Make well-considered decisions * Support, coach and communicate with my team * Be accountable for my team’s performance |

Professional and Technical job holders rely upon their deep knowledge of the specialism or discipline in which they work to carry out vital tasks and provide authoritative advice to others. Often developing within recognised career paths, their evolving expertise sees them bear increasing responsibility for managing city council assets, the development of policies and procedures and the strategic direction of the functions they support.

This element of the profile, taken from the job family descriptor for this grade, provides a general understanding of the level of work and demands required.

**Role characteristics**

At this level roles require an in depth, theoretical understanding of their particular discipline to solve complex problems, offer evidence based, provide authoritative advice to colleagues / service users and manage teams and/or other resource assets.

**The knowledge and skills required**

The broad knowledge requirement needed to deal with the technical and business challenges of roles is usually underpinned by an appreciation of the theoretical basis of the particular discipline, such that job holders can fall back on the first principles of their specialism to make decisions and offer advice.

This level of knowledge is often indicated by the need for a degree level education in the relevant field, but for some roles this is substituted by a significant level of on-the-job training and focussed experience such that the level of expertise confers a similar level of authority.

Roles will have demands for manual dexterity in relation to typing and similar functions, other jobs will use a range of equipment requiring precision in their use and handling.

**Thinking, planning and communication**

The situations and problems dealt with at this level will be increasingly complex, involving several information streams where analytical and judgemental skills will be needed to interpret information correctly and determine optimum solutions.

Job holders will have plenty of day to day issues to contend with, they will also need to plan some months ahead to achieve medium-term objectives in such areas as project support or service development.

At this level, the information exchanged with internal and external colleagues, and members of the public will call for developed communication skills on the part of the job holders. Matters will be technically complicated, requiring careful explanation, or sensitive, requiring significant listening skills to interpret information and provide appropriate advice.

**Decision making and innovation**

Job holders will have the autonomy to adapt specific approaches to better meet medium term objectives. They will be bound by the recognised procedural framework of their specialism as it is managed by the city council but will decide when and precisely how duties are to be carried out. They will also deal with problems (often escalated to this level) for which there are no set-down routes to a solution other than broad service practice guidelines.

**Areas of responsibility**

With a diverse range of jobs being represented at this level, the precise blend of responsibilities for which the job holder is accountable will depend upon the service in which they operate.

External facing roles will focus on the needs of people whether external service users or partners and will be responsible for high impact decision making and the implementation of appropriate programmes on behalf of individuals or groups of people or enforcement of regulations which have direct and significant consequences upon those served. Such roles are likely to have only modest levels of responsibility for finance, information assets, equipment and/or premises.

Internal roles are likely to have this pattern reversed, with weightier responsibility for significant financial and non-financial assets, but less for the assessment of needs of individuals and groups.

Jobs will have supervisory responsibility for the work of others and will be accountable for the quality and timeliness of outputs, whether related to the work of internal teams or temporary external contractors, volunteers or others.

**Impacts and demands**

Tasks and duties will be generally carried out in a sedentary position but there will always be a requirement for standing and walking from time to time, and the occasional need to lift or carry items.

The problem solving and decision-making elements of these jobs mean that job holders require lengthy periods of enhanced mental attention to attend to duties, while also dealing with deadlines, interruptions and conflicting demands.

Duties of jobs at this level will not require job holders to develop and maintain working relationships with people who, through their circumstances or behaviour, place particular emotional demands on the job holder.

Many Professional and Technical job holders find themselves exposed to some disagreeable, unpleasant or hazardous working conditions. Particularly when the needs of their specialism require them to work on external sites exposed to the weather, in or around refuse and waste plant, close to particularly noisy machinery and in similar environments.

Other jobs, such as enforcement roles, may also see job holders exposed to verbal abuse and threatening environments. In all cases, job holders will minimise risk and conform to health and safety regulations to mitigate any negative effects of such exposure.