Principal Planning Officer (DM)

JE Code: JE0255



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| **Values – We are dedicated, respectful, collaborative, we are Milton Keynes City Council** |
| **Service:** | Planning |
| **Reports to:** | Development Management Team Leader  |
| **Job Family:** | Professional & Technical |
| **Grade:** | I |
| **Political restricted:** | N |
| **Date:** | May 2023 |

**Key Deliverables**

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| **1.** | **To ensure planning and other applications are professionally assessed and recommendations are made with due regard to all relevant legislation, guidance and policies in order to meet the key objectives of the Council. This will include managing a caseload of large-scale and/or complex major planning applications, and equivalent pre-application enquires.** |
| **2.** | **To provide high quality professional advice to Members of the Council, other Council Departments, developers, local residents, general public, the business community, Parish Councils, other statutory bodies and stakeholders on development issues. This includes leading and organising public meetings (including Parish/Town Council meetings), working groups and other external meetings.** |
| **3.** | **To manage planning appeals, including the preparation and submission of statements, and representing the Council to ensure the best possible case is put forward in support of the Council’s decision, including at hearings and inquiries, and liaising with legal officers and expert witnesses as required.**  |
| **4.** | **To analyse, negotiate and project manage major/complex development proposals and planning cases including Environmental Impact Assessments and negotiating Planning Performance Agreements and Section 106 contributions as necessary.** |
| **5.** | **Prepare and present reports to councillors and the public at Planning Committee Meetings.** |
| **6.** | **Provide support, guidance and mentoring to members of the Development Management Team, including the line-management responsibility of up to 4 Development Services Officers and/or Planning Officers.**  |
| **7.**  | **To contribute to the issuing of decision noticed through reviewing draft reports and recommendations to ensure high quality and consistent decision making.** |
| **8.**  | **Support the wider team in the development and implementation of improvement projects that would contribute towards delivery of an efficient and high-quality service.** |

*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 council wide needs*

**Essential Requirements (key skills & qualifications)**

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| **1.** | **A detailed and extensive knowledge of town planning legislation. Educated to degree level or equivalent in planning or a related subject with a postgraduate (or equivalent) qualification in planning (RTPI accredited) with MRTPI status.**  |
| **2.** | **Able to prioritise and manage a complex caseload of large-scale major planning applications, and appeals, including the ability to work towards meeting deadlines, with or without project management support, and use own initiative. Ability to interpret legislation and complex decisions to inform and support recommendations.**  |
| **3.** | **Able to communicate clearly and effectively, both verbally and in writing, and respond positively and constructively to complex and in-depth questions at Planning Committee, Hearings and Inquiries.**  |
| **4.** | **Able to support, develop and mentor other team members, including the provision of advice and support to apprentices, Development Services Officers, Planning Officers and Senior Planning Officers.** |
| **5.** | **Able to use a range of computer systems to manage case files and apply established processes, including high quality and effective record keeping.**  |
| **6.**  | **Able to develop effective working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders, including internal and external consultees, Parish Councils and Ward Councillors.** |
| **7.**  | **Ability to contribute proactively to continuous improvement and respond positively to changes and support others in coping with change.**  |



Job Family

Professional/Technical

Grade I

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| **Colleagues expectations*** Be professional at all times
* Work together for the good of the team, 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
 | **Managers 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
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Professional/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 Council assets, the development of policies and procedures and the strategic direction of the functions they support.

### Role characteristics

At this level job holders use their extensive experience and postgraduate level professional knowledge to take a lead in complex interactions with others, delivering change by evidence-based argument and persuasion. They exert professional influence on the organisational structures and procedures within their working area to enhance productivity, efficiency and customer satisfaction.

### The knowledge and skills required

The advanced theoretical knowledge required to make appropriate judgements and decisions at this level is augmented by ongoing professional development and awareness of external legislative and societal change. Also, by a deeper understanding of the Council operational structures which both support and depend upon the job holder’s actions and advice. Roles will be professional experts, providing guidance to those in earlier career stages.

While the majority of 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

Job holders will use their professional expertise to deal with complex, pressing issues on a day to day basis, but will also look well ahead and take a more strategic view of their project and service delivery objectives, shaping their teams’ composition, approach and operating procedures in accordance with wider service goals mandated by Service management.

The information exchanged at this level will be routinely complex and even contentious in nature. Job holders will, however, have additional demands placed upon them by the need to persuade others to adopt courses of action which they may not otherwise wish to take, based on evidence-based and reasoned argument. This will occur in written interactions but can also be the case in face-to-face verbal exchanges where job holders will advocate a position in response to opposing opinion in a formal or informal setting.

**Decision making and innovation**

Job holders will have the freedom to interpret policy and broad operating guidelines in order to shape their teams’ detailed approach to meeting their corporate objectives and targets. They will deal with escalated, multi-faceted problems independently and will tend to only consult their manager on fundamental policy or resource issues.

### 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 at least one other elevated level of responsibility for such elements as finance, information assets, equipment or premises.

Internal facing roles are likely to have this pattern reversed, with the weightiest responsibility for highly valuable or significant financial and non-financial assets, but somewhat less accountability for the assessment of needs of individuals and groups.

Jobs will generally have formal line management responsibility and will not only allocate and check work, but also be directly involved in assessment, recruitment, and other human resource related procedures. Posts that do not have this level of managerial responsibility are likely to have compensatory levels of accountability in relation to the users of Council services, finance or other major asset(s).

### 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 combination of both tactical and strategic matters that job holders deal with means that roles are inherently complex, demanding of lengthy periods of concentrated mental attention while also managing high levels of work-related pressure from deadlines, interruptions or 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.

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.