Senior Planning Officer

JE Code: JE2069

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| **Values – We are dedicated, respectful, collaborative, we are Milton Keynes Council** |
| **Service** | Planning |
| **Reports to:** | Development Management Team Leader |
| **Job Family** | PT |
| **Grade:** | H |
| **Political restricted** | N |
| **Date:** | March 2022 |

**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 comprising both minor and major planning applications, and 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 representing the Council at 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.** |
| **4.** | **To analyse, negotiate and project manage sometimes 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 and guidance to Development Services Officers, Planning Officers and apprentices. This includes reviewing draft reports and recommendations to ensure high quality and consistent decision making.** |
| **7.** | **Support the Development Management Improvements Manager 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 good working knowledge of town planning legislation and educated to degree level or equivalent in planning or a related subject. Ideally working towards MRTPI status, and direct experience of Development Management and dealing with planning applications and appeals.** |
| **2.** | **Able to prioritise and manage a complex caseload of planning applications, and appeals, including the ability to work towards meeting deadlines, with or without project management support, and use own initiative.** |
| **3.** | **Able to communicate clearly and effectively, both verbally and in writing, as well as respond positively and constructively to questions at Planning Committee.** |
| **4.** | **Able to support the work of other team members, including the provision of advice to apprentices, Development Services Officers and 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 consultees, Parish Councils and Ward Councillors.** |

Job Family

Professional/Technical

Grade H

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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 roles will have many day to day professional, technical and management issues to deal with but must also take a longer-term view of the service sector they support, assessing its changing needs and demands and making significant contributions to resource planning. This will see job holders dealing with serious issues without recourse to managers and making autonomous decisions based upon their specialist knowledge and dedicated experience.

### 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.

While the majority of roles will have demands for manual dexterity in relation to typing and similar functions, other jobs at this level 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.

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 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 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

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.