

Hertfordshire County Council Job Outline



JOB TITLE: Principal Planning Officer
GRADE: M1-M2
REPORTS TO: Team Leader, Strategic Land Use
TEAM: Spatial Planning & Economy
DEPARTMENT: Environment & Infrastructure

Purpose of the Job

To contribute to the County Council's engagement with regional and sub-regional partnerships, the emerging Hertfordshire Growth Deal, aviation issues and any matters generally of strategic significance.

The job sits within the Strategic Land Use Team of the Spatial Planning and Economy Unit of the Environment and Infrastructure Department. The Team is comprised of 7 posts engaged in the Department's strategic planning activities and monitoring of development activity in the County. The wider work of the Unit includes development management in relation to minerals and waste development and the County Council's own development, minerals and waste planning and strategic transport policy matters.

Main Areas of Responsibility

1. Attend meetings and contribute to the work, as necessary, of regional, inter-regional and sub-regional partnerships, including Wider South East Officers Group, East of England Strategic Planning Officers Group, Hertfordshire Planning Group, South and West Herts Strategic Planning Partnership, East and North Herts strategic Planning Partnership, London Stansted Cambridge Consortium (The Innovation Corridor) etc.
2. Attend meetings and contribute to the work, as necessary, of aviation/airport matters, including growth proposals and airspace change processes at London Heathrow, Stansted, City and Luton airports and wider aviation issues generally, such as the Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group.
3. Undertake the main liaison role with the Hertfordshire LEP on economic research and also provide a key strategic link between economic development matters and spatial planning.
4. Attend meetings and contribute to the work, as necessary, of the Hertfordshire Growth Board.

5. Prepare and present reports and briefing papers to senior officers and elected Members.
6. Commission and project manage consultancy advice/studies on planning and other matters.
7. To mentor and supervise, as required, the Senior Planner post within the Strategic Land Use Team.
8. Generally contribute, as necessary, to the wider work of the unit, the Department and the County Council insofar as it relates to planning matters.

The duties and responsibilities listed above describe the post as it is at present. The post holder is expected to accept any reasonable alterations that may from time to time be necessary.

Person Specification

Please provide a supporting statement which includes examples and evidence of when you have demonstrated the attributes listed below.

You will be expected to address each point separately and in the order listed.

If you do not complete a full supporting statement in the requested format, your application may be rejected.

Qualifications and Experience

- Degree/Masters with eligibility for RTPI accreditation or similar professional body
- Extensive relevant experience in Planning and experience of supervising/mentoring.

Professional Skills and Knowledge

All planning professionals within the Department are expected to demonstrate the following **15** professional competencies.

Some competencies may be more relevant to an individual's role than others and these will be determined through the Department's performance management processes.

The extent to which an individual will need to demonstrate these competencies will vary according to the table below depending on the level and grade the individual is working at within the Scheme.

The expectation is that the postholder applies their knowledge or skill and mentors' others in their application.

- at M1 demonstrates some aspects some of the time
- at M2 demonstrates all relevant aspects consistently

1. Focusing on Outcomes and Results

- Understand planning's contribution to creating vibrant successful places
- Identify and promote the ways in which planning makes a difference and adds value
- Adopt an integrated approach to identifying solutions
- Have a can-do and entrepreneurial mentality
- Adopt a positive and visionary approach to securing agreed outcomes
- Focus on problem solving
- Identify client needs and provide a client focused service
- Work to inform both policy development and its implementation.

2. Being Professional

- Work within legal, ethical and professional guidelines
- Understand and work within the aims, values and objectives of your employer
- Have clear spatial awareness and focus
- Understand the political, economic, social and geographical contexts in which your council operates
- Understand the consequences of decisions
- Generate a shared vision
- Work collaboratively and without discrimination
- Keep up to date with current issues and practice
- Apply lessons from practice elsewhere to your own work.

3. Showing Leadership

- Take ownership appropriate to the task
- Be inclusive
- Inspire and be open to inspiration
- Influence the behaviours of others - and be open to influence
- Work co-operatively.

4. Having a Positive Attitude

- Demonstrate a commitment to improvement
- Employ creative thinking
- Demonstrate critical reflection
- Be decisive
- Be proactive and purposeful
- Bring passion to your work
- Challenge assumptions
- Employ effective, efficient self-management - and work with minimal supervision
- Establish good working relationships based on mutual respect
- Demonstrate you can handle and defuse conflict
- Be resilient but be open to scrutiny and constructive feedback.

5. Professional Approach

- Understand and uphold the RTPI Code of Professional Conduct (or similar professional code)
- Uphold and contribute to probity in local government

- Be sensitive to, and work within, political and institutional frameworks, including reconciling possible tensions between local and authority-wide aspirations
- Be up-to-date with, and understand the impacts of, planning and other relevant legislation and guidance
- Identify and apply effective practice from within and outside your organisation
- Understand influences beyond administrative boundaries
- Understand and apply the principles of good design in creating high quality places
- Maintain the highest standards of personal probity and ethical behaviour
- Reflect honestly on your own practice and be prepared to alter your approaches.

6. Planning for Sustainable Development

- Planning for sustainable development
- Understand the role and place of planning in delivering sustainable development
- Understand and apply the fundamental principles of sustainable development
- Understand and communicate the impacts and benefits of development
- Work to achieve all the elements of sustainable development to generate positive outcomes
- Understand and communicate the contribution of positive planning to achieving sustainable economic growth
- Understand and work with business and commercial development
- Understand development economics, finance, costs, viability and market signals and business practices.

7. Planning for the Climate and Environment Change

- Understand the nature of climate change as it impacts on planning policy and decisions
- Plan for climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Understand biodiversity planning and ecological networks
- Implement measures to conserve and enhance the natural environment
- Understand carbon neutral and reduction technologies/ low carbon futures
- Implement flood risk management measures
- Use spatial planning as a tool in resource management.

8. Planning for Communities and Neighbourhoods

- Achieve and maintain equality through planning
- Create healthy communities through planning
- Understand the historical context of a place and learn from the past
- Plan to strengthen local cultures
- Recognise, understand and foster individual and community rights
- Plan for social well-being
- Be sensitive to the differing needs and aspirations of the communities with which you work.

9. Plan for Services and Infrastructure

- Understand finance and mechanisms for provision of communications infrastructure
- Understand and provide for sustainable transport
- Understand financing and mechanisms for provision of utilities
- Exploit the potential of planning for creating a healthier population
- Integrate planning for education into spatial plans
- Reflect the need for community services in spatial plans
- Integrate planning for recreation and culture into spatial plans.

10. Core Planning Skills

- Work on one's own initiative
- Ability to prepare, read, interpret and visualise plans and drawings
- Make connections and think laterally
- Generation of an inclusive vision for an area; working proactively with local communities to develop this
- Strategic thinking in a spatial framework, including at and across national regional and sub-regional and local spatial scales
- Able to define problems
- Able to define realistic objectives
- Appraise options
- Understand and apply the range of tools available including compulsory purchase and financial instruments
- Solution based policy drafting and appraisal
- Source and understand community and stakeholder objectives
- Work within teams and across professional boundaries.

11. Plan Making Skills

- Work with local community to understand its needs and aspirations
- Understand and apply the principles of good design
- Embed design quality in all policies and proposals
- Apply urban design approaches to ensure the creation of quality public spaces
- Understand the method and application of design appraisal
- Influence and negotiate to improve design quality
- Develop particular skills such as design coding.

12. Development Management Skills

- Development appraisal and valuation
- Engage in proactive negotiation and communication at all stages of an application to ensure delivery of the best outcome
- Negotiate appropriate developer contributions (via S106)
- Ensure effective analysis of environmental assessment
- Be able to visualise and evaluate the potential impacts of proposals expressed in 2D and see beyond the individual application
- Understand and effectively apply the council's and national policies and legal framework
- Understand the role of enforcement in the development management process.

13. Evidence and Evaluation Skills

- Identify and provide proportionate substantive and testable evidence required for decision making
- Be able to commission/undertake the research required to create a robust evidence base
- Carry out qualitative, statistical and other quantitative analysis
- Evaluate options and alternatives
- Understand, interpret and comment on specialist data and assessments including on: environmental impact, energy, economic development, housing and infrastructure
- Undertake effective monitoring and feedback
- Undertake effective appraisal, scrutiny and judgement regarding value for money.

14. Communication and Engagement Skills

- Advocacy
- Negotiation, facilitation, mediation and brokering
- Conflict resolution
- Written graphic and verbal communication and presenting
- Involve, assist and work with communities and build effective relationships
- Effective communication, using timely and appropriate techniques
- Evaluation of methodologies for consultation
- Understand and be sensitive to cultural diversity
- Present evidence, options and recommendations to committees, meetings and hearing.

15. Transferable Skills

- Change leadership and management
- Commissioning and contract management - 'intelligent clienting'
- Managing and strengthening officer/member relations
- Teamwork and involving others
- Motivation
- Partnership and joint working
- Performance management
- Project Management
- Interpersonal skills - listening and supporting
- Decision making
- Individual responsibility for updating professional and technical skills, CPD
- IT skills for spatial planning.

Diversity and Inclusion

Hertfordshire County Council is committed to making inclusion part of our DNA, both as a large employer of people and as a provider and commissioner of services.

We strive to positively promote diversity and inclusion across the delivery of services and within our workforce. We want everyone at work, regardless of their background, identity or circumstances to have a sense of belonging to the organisation. We want

all employees to feel valued, accepted and supported to succeed at work and reach their full potential. Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is available on the internal intranet or from your line manager.

Health and Safety

It will be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the Health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.

Additional Information: Code of Practice on the English Language Requirements for Public Sector Workers

Public Authorities must ensure that all members of staff in customer facing roles, whatever their nationality or origins, are able to communicate the English language fluently with the general public, verbally and in written format (access needs will be met for those with a disability).