

Kent County Council

Job Description: *Principal Planning Officer - Planning Policy*

Directorate:	Growth Environment and Transport
Unit/Section:	Mineral and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) Team / Planning Applications Group
Grade:	KR12
Responsible to:	Head of Planning Applications Group

Purpose of the Job:

Provide expert professional planning policy advice relating to minerals and waste policy planning matters. Lead the minerals and waste local plan team and manage external suppliers to provide and update the County Council's statutory mineral and waste local plan, including in relation to the statutory duty to cooperate and provision of consultation responses to the District and Borough Councils. Ensure compliance with statutory, regulatory and guidance requirements in order to manage financial and reputational risk in relation to all aspects of the Authorities plan making functions, including in relation to the production and review of planning policy and evidence.

Contribute to the delivery of sustainable development across the County via planning policy to enable and safeguard mineral and waste management capacity in the County and ensuring a balance between the needs of development and wider environmental concerns.

Main duties and responsibilities:

- Lead, supervise and coach staff in the minerals and waste local plan team in order to provide an effective minerals and waste planning policy service for the County Council. Develop and promote the position of the County Council in relation to minerals and waste policy planning matters ensuring the production, review and reporting for mineral and waste development planning policy and consistent application of development plan policy in relation to safeguarding reserves and infrastructure in responses made on behalf of the County Council.
- Provide expert professional planning policy and plan making advice relating to minerals and waste development to elected Members, senior officers of the County and District Councils, businesses and public and represent the Planning Authority at public and Member meetings. Report, attend and present a range of items to the County Council in order to seek and obtain key decisions as required at key stages within the plan making process in order to ensure that the required plan making timescales are met.
- Line manage, supervise and coach staff in the production and review of the minerals and waste local plan and all associated documents and provide overall direction, delegation and line management of the team in order to meet service and performance standards as required by legislation and guidance. Provide direction to the team in meeting key milestones and process and legislative requirements, and make decisions as required in relation to this work. Quality check and sign off work in accordance with the scheme of delegation.
- Manage and commission work to be undertaken by Consultants and Suppliers to support the Plan making service. Ensure that work requirements are coordinated, quality checked

and integrated with other work undertaken by the Team in order to achieve project milestones and meet plan making requirements. Allocate work, monitor progress and make decisions as required relating to the work area, within the limits of delegated authority.

- Prepare, present and oversee consultation and the Examination in Public processes and Public Inquiry documentation including proofs of evidence, acting as instructing officer for legal, counsel and other expert witnesses and attend as a professional witness at Public Inquiries representing the County Council.
- Line manage, supervise and coach staff in order to share knowledge and expertise on the application of legislation, policy, guidance and decision making relating to a wide range of planning policy and plan making matters. Contribute to recruitment, training and development of Planning staff to ensure high performance standards and to contribute to the Divisional objectives for career progression, talent management and staff recruitment. Assist in the delivery of Member training programmes to assist elected members in understanding of planning policy matters and responsibilities.
- Review, develop and implement procedures, processes and systems for the effective and efficient discharging of the team's activities to meet changes to national legislation and guidance and planning policy practice and ensure the highest professional standards are maintained during implementation and adoption.
- Where appropriate, act as a deputy for the Head of Planning Applications Group in matters relating to the planning policy function and as primary advisor to the relevant County Council Committee and on national, regional, sub-regional and local planning policy matters. Assist the Group Head in support of regional/national work on County Council mineral and waste development plan matters and represent the Head of Planning Applications or other senior staff at meetings, presentations, site liaison and working groups, as required.

Footnote: This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what his/her main duties are. It may be amended from time to time without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of post.

This post is considered by KCC to be in a customer-facing position. The Council therefore has a statutory duty under Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016) to ensure that post holders have a command of spoken English sufficient for the effective performance of the job requirements.

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Person Specification: *Principal Planning Officer - Planning Policy*

The following outlines the criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the criteria will be shortlisted.

Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

	CRITERIA
QUALIFICATIONS	<p>A relevant degree (or equivalent) in planning or a similar related environmental or legal discipline.</p> <p>Hold or be eligible for Chartered Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute.</p>
EXPERIENCE	<p>Proven and demonstrable experience of development plan policy making in a wide range of stages, including evidence gathering, call for sites, policy drafting, consultation and publicity and examination in public, adoption and review and including in relation to the most complex plan making matters.</p> <p>Experience includes development policy planning and may include mineral and waste planning.</p> <p>Demonstrable experience in relation to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), EIA development and Appropriate Assessment Development in the plan making process.</p> <p>Experience includes acting as expert witness for Examination In Public, Planning Inquiries and other public examinations and hearings.</p> <p>Demonstrable experience of building up and fostering internal and external relationships in organisations at senior officer and Member level.</p> <p>Experience of performance and line management, project management, supervision and business planning processes and awareness of budget control and contract management.</p> <p>Experience in working in a Local Government environment (or similar related experience).</p> <p>Experience in working in a multi-disciplinary environment.</p>
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<p>Demonstrated ability of developing and implementing planning policy and of the key stages in the policy development process.</p> <p>Excellent written, oral and presentation communications skills including to a range of audiences and including report writing and presentations to Members and speaking in public, including under Examination in Public.</p> <p>Ability to lead, supervise, mentor, coach and manage project work, caseloads and people and work collaboratively in multi-disciplinary schemes.</p>

Ability to manage, plan, prioritise and organise a diverse workload and to coordinate and project manage work over a short, medium and longer term period.

Creative approach to problem solving including a solution focused approach and strong analytical skills.

Well-developed negotiation and inter-personal skills with proven ability to develop strategies, liaise and negotiate effectively with representatives of development industry, community and environmental interests and other local authorities and with elected Members and senior managers, businesses, and interest groups.

Strong analytical, site and policy appraisal skills.

Ability to work both independently, collaboratively and constructively with internal and external partners and an aptitude for developing internal and external relationships in organisations at senior level.

Self-confidence and political awareness within the role and in representing the County Council. Ability to influence a diverse range of audiences and ability to establish strong positive relationships including partnership working, across the organisation at all levels including establishing professional credibility and trust with Elected Members and key stakeholders.

Ability to provide expert witness evidence for the plan making process including for Examination in Public and in responding to challenge including legal challenge.

The position may on occasions require the working of non-standard office hours to enable effective public engagement activities.

The ability to travel across a wide geographical area in a timely and flexible manner at various times of the day, often to rural locations with limited public transport access, at short notice. Driving is intrinsic to much of the work and therefore a full UK Driving Licence is required – the Council is committed to making reasonable adjustments so whilst this job requires the jobholder to drive your application will still be considered if you are unable to drive due to a disability.

The ability to visit and inspect sites where the physical environment may present challenges such as uneven ground surfaces in a range of weather conditions, including at construction, quarry, landfill and waste sites.

Fluent in spoken English to the extent necessary to perform the role effectively, so that a high quality service can be provided to the public.

The post holder will be required to undertake our Kent Manager standard programme if not already held.

<p>KNOWLEDGE</p>	<p>Thorough understanding of the role and responsibilities of the County Council in the plan making process for mineral and waste development and in the contribution of plan making to sustainable development in Kent.</p> <p>Thorough understanding of current and emerging planning policy legislation and guidance, and the implications for the County Council’s strategic objectives and working practices and demonstrate an aptitude for developing enhanced working practices to reflect changing legislation and guidance and interpreting policy and practice applying it to solve complex problems.</p> <p>Thorough knowledge of procedural/corporate and statutory frameworks relating to the mineral and waste policy planning function.</p> <p>Knowledge of minerals and/or waste development</p> <p>Knowledge of processes and expectations with regard to managing staff and Management Guidelines and an ability to apply to everyday situations.</p>
<p>KENT VALUES AND CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES</p>	<p>Kent Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are brave. We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge • We are curious to innovate and improve • We are compassionate, understanding and respectful to all • We are strong together by sharing knowledge • We are all responsible for the difference we make <p>Our values enable us to build a culture that is:</p> <p>Flexible/agile - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile</p> <p>Curious - constantly learning and evolving</p> <p>Compassionate and Inclusive - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all</p> <p>Working Together - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent</p> <p>Empowering - Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions</p> <p>Externally Focused - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making</p> <p>(If this document is being used for recruitment purposes, examples of Behaviours which support the Kent Values will need to be demonstrated within the context of this post)</p>

All corporate directors, directors and senior managers have an explicit responsibility to deliver the collective agenda of the Council. These are fundamental elements of their role not an addition and are summarised as follows:

Whole Council

- Seek to improve the lives of all residents in Kent and economy of Kent
- Act as corporate parent to the Council's looked after children
- Take an active role in promoting and ensuring the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding are met.
- Understand, communicate and contribute to the delivery of KCC's strategic aims
- Meet statutory obligations and promote and ensure compliance with policies and procedures and the Council's Code of Conduct (Kent Code).
- Advise elected members and support the democratic process
- Promote the Council brand and enhance the overall reputation of the Council
- Understand and monitor the measures of performance, including customer insight, which define successful outcomes for KCC services
- Maintain and ensure a relentless focus on the customer
- Act to support the Council-wide need to deliver services within budget, thereby avoiding an overspend that could damage the financial viability of the Council
- Overcome professional and service silos to achieve the County Council's objectives.

Integration of Services

- Focus resources where they have the biggest impact
- Deliver services that are flexible and adaptable
- Integrate services within KCC and work with partner agencies to ensure a seamless customer experience
- Fully and inclusively engage all staff in the delivery of services, demonstrating the Council's leadership values and competencies.

Embedding Commissioning and Engaging relevant markets

- Establish an outcome focused organisation
- Meet the financial regulations and standing orders of KCC
- Challenge the status quo and engage with the market to constantly improve
- Ensure all services are delivered effectively and efficiently
- Proactively and continuously seek to improve service delivery
- Proactively manage risk to avoid inertia whilst not exposing the Council to needless and avoidable challenge or loss

Managing Change

- Understand and support the Authority's overall change agenda
- Deliver required outcomes of service specific change on time and to budget
- Understand the quality of staff, support their development, nurture those with talent
- Identify the skills for the future and the level of staff through robust workforce planning
- Identify and deal with underperformance.
- Deliver to agreed budget and income targets.