



## Job description

**Job title: Senior / Principal Planning Policy Officer**

**Post No: N/A**

**Grade: Career Grade 10 - 12**

**Directorate: Place & Prosperity**

**Reports to: Local Plans Manager**

**Contract: Permanent, Full Time**

**Hours: 37 (1FTE)**

### **Purpose of the job**

To play a leading professional role in the preparation, examination, adoption, implementation and review of the Council's Local Plan and other planning policy documents. The postholder will manage complex areas of planning policy work, prepare and commission a robust evidence base, provide clear professional advice and represent the Council in engagement, examinations, hearings and other public forums.

This is a career-graded role. The breadth, complexity and autonomy of the work allocated will reflect the postholder's knowledge, experience and demonstrated performance. ‘

At Principal level, the postholder will also provide day-to-day professional leadership, line management and development support to other members of the Planning Policy team, and deputise for the Local Plans Manager when required.

### **Main areas of responsibility**

- Lead and deliver allocated workstreams associated with the preparation, examination, adoption, implementation and review of the Local Plan and other statutory and non-statutory planning policy documents.
- Provide high-quality professional planning policy advice to elected members, senior managers, colleagues, developers, agents, communities and other stakeholders, clearly explaining relevant legislation, policy, evidence and options.

- Lead the preparation, commissioning, management and review of proportionate evidence studies, including preparing briefs, supporting procurement, managing consultants, monitoring budgets and ensuring outputs are robust and fit for purpose.
- Prepare clear and accurate reports, briefings, consultation material, policy documents, statements and recommendations for senior management, working groups, Cabinet, Council and other decision-making forums.
- Represent the Council at Local Plan examinations, hearings, public inquiries, meetings and consultation events, presenting evidence and responding confidently to questions and challenge.
- Plan and deliver effective consultation and engagement with elected members, statutory consultees, neighbouring authorities, parish councils, community groups, residents, businesses, developers and other interested parties.
- Lead or contribute to strategic and cross-boundary planning work, including the duty to co-operate or any successor arrangements, and prepare responses to national, regional and neighbouring authority consultations.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of planning policies and contribute to statutory and corporate monitoring, including housing land supply, the Authority Monitoring Report, infrastructure and development delivery information.
- Maintain current knowledge of planning legislation, national policy, guidance, case law and good practice, assessing implications and helping the service respond effectively to change.
- Work collaboratively across the Council and with external partners to align planning policy with infrastructure, housing, economic development, climate, environmental and corporate priorities.
- Contribute to service planning, project and risk management, performance improvement and the review of systems and processes to support an efficient, responsive and customer-focused service.
- At Principal level, provide day-to-day professional leadership and line management for allocated staff, including setting priorities, quality assuring work, supporting development, undertaking one-to-ones and performance reviews, and addressing performance issues appropriately.
- At Principal level, support the Local Plans Manager in managing the service and deputise when required, including at strategic planning meetings, member briefings, developer forums and partnership meetings.
- Attend occasional meetings, hearings and consultation events outside normal working hours and undertake travel where reasonably required to fulfil the responsibilities of the role.

## Values

To promote and ensure our values are embedded in all aspects of service delivery and partnership working:

- **We Care:** Valuing others and developing ourselves; committed and passionate about what we do.
- **We Innovate:** Ambitious, creative and resourceful; putting customers first and learning from feedback.

- **We Achieve:** Taking responsibility and seeking excellence; always proud to serve.

## **Health and Safety**

To take reasonable care for the health, safety and well-being of yourself and others who may be affected by acts or omissions at work.

## **Equality**

Melton Borough Council has a moral and legal duty to demonstrate fairness to our community, service users and staff. We aim to ensure our services are accessible to everyone and that our employment practices are barrier free and provide equal opportunities for prospective and current employees.

## **Responsibilities & Duties**

The responsibilities and duties listed above will vary from time to time without changing the character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed. You will be expected to adopt a flexible approach to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of relevant projects, programmes, policies and procedures.

## Person specification

The successful candidate will be appointed at Senior or Principal level according to their qualifications, knowledge, experience and demonstrated ability to undertake the role at the relevant level. Requirements identified as Principal level are additional requirements for appointment or progression to that level.

### **Professional skills and expertise**

- Developed professional skills and expertise in spatial planning, local plan preparation and planning policy development.
- Ability to analyse complex evidence, legislation, policy and representations, exercise sound professional judgement and provide clear, defensible recommendations.
- Ability to produce high-quality policy documents, technical reports, committee reports, briefings, statements and presentations for a range of audiences.
- Effective project management skills, including the ability to plan programmes of work, manage competing priorities, meet statutory or corporate deadlines and manage risks.
- Excellent written and verbal communication, consultation, negotiation and presentation skills, with the confidence to represent the Council in public and professional settings.
- Political awareness, tact and diplomacy, together with the ability to build constructive working relationships across organisational and professional boundaries.
- At Principal level: developed leadership and people management skills, including the ability to allocate and quality assure work, support development and address performance issues appropriately.

### **Experience**

- Substantial relevant experience of planning policy, local plan or strategic planning work, with the breadth and depth appropriate to appointment at Senior or Principal level.
- Experience of leading complex planning policy projects or workstreams and taking responsibility for delivery and outcomes.
- Experience of preparing, commissioning, reviewing or using planning evidence and translating it into policy or professional advice.
- Experience of consultation and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including elected members, communities, statutory bodies, developers and other local authorities.
- Experience of preparing and presenting evidence, reports or professional advice at examinations, hearings, inquiries, committees, working groups or comparable formal settings.
- Experience of securing improved outcomes through constructive

negotiation, collaboration and professional challenge.

- At Principal level: experience of leading and developing professional staff and contributing to the management and delivery of a planning policy service.

### **Knowledge and understanding**

- Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the English planning system, including the legislation, national policy and guidance relevant to plan-making and planning policy.
- Understanding of the local government context, democratic decision-making and the relationship between planning policy, development delivery, infrastructure and wider corporate priorities.
- Knowledge of evidence, monitoring and delivery requirements associated with local plans and planning policy.
- Understanding of equality, data protection and health and safety requirements relevant to the role.
- Commitment to continuing professional development and maintaining up-to-date knowledge of changes in legislation, policy, guidance and good practice.

### **Personal approach**

- A collaborative and team-oriented approach, with the ability to work independently and take ownership of complex work.
- A flexible, organised and resilient approach, with the ability to prioritise effectively and maintain quality when managing competing demands.
- A customer-focused approach and commitment to providing a professional, responsive and accessible service.
- Commitment to the Council's values of We Care, We Innovate and We Achieve.

### **Digital skills**

- Excellent working knowledge of Microsoft Office applications, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook.
- Ability to use digital systems and data effectively for research, analysis, consultation, project management and presentation.
- Experience of GIS mapping software and a local authority planning system such as IDOX Uniform is desirable.

### **Qualifications**

- A degree or postgraduate qualification in town planning or a closely related discipline, or equivalent relevant professional experience.
- Chartered Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute is desirable at Senior level and required at Principal level, or the ability to demonstrate an equivalent level of professional competence and secure Chartered Membership within an agreed period.
- Evidence of relevant continuing professional development.