**Job Description**

**Main Purpose of Job:**

This is a career grade role that enables entry at either Trainee Planner, Assistant Planner or Planner level, subject to meeting the relevant attributes in the Person Specification. Where entry is at Trainee or Assistant level the role provides the opportunity to progress to becoming a fully chartered Planner, including with full Chartered Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute (MRTPI).

The **Trainee Planner** role (**Band 4**) is a training role, providing the required experience and competencies to become a fully professionally qualified Planner. Support will be given to studying for a Royal Town Planning Institute accredited degree allowing future progression onto Assistant Planner and Planner career grade levels. The post holder will manage and assess planning applications and pre-application submissions and appeals in accordance with planning law, national and local policy and guidance.

The post holder will be provided with some training and experience across all areas of the Council’s planning functions, and will work towards attaining the required competencies to make an effective contribution to the delivery of Planning Services within the different teams.

The post will require commitment and dedication for the whole period of study that is needed in order to become fully professionally qualified (indicatively this would involve around a day studying per week plus around 8 hours of study per week outside of work hours in your own time).

Entry at or progression to **Assistant Planner** level (**Band 5**), will be subject to meeting the entry requirements for an RTPI accredited Masters qualification (entry requirements will vary depending on the university). This will usually specify a geography, social science or related first degree (minimum 2:2 or equivalent), although a broad range of disciplinary backgrounds will often be considered.

At Assistant Planner level, the post holder will manage and assess planning applications and pre-application submissions and appeals in accordance with planning law, national and local policy and guidance. The post will require some planning enforcement duties, as assigned, taking account of relevant legislation, policies and procedures of the Council.

In studying for a Masters, the post will require commitment and dedication for the whole period of study that is needed in order to complete a Masters (indicatively this would involve around a day studying per week plus around 8 hours of study per week outside of work hours in your own time).

Entry at or progression to **Planner** (**Band 6/7**) will be subject to achievement of an RTPI accredited degree which enables access to full RTPI membership. At Planner level, the post holder will manage and assess planning applications and pre-application submissions and appeals in accordance with planning law, national and local policy and guidance. The post will require some planning enforcement duties, as assigned, taking account of relevant legislation, policies and procedures of the Council. These duties are the same as those at Assistant level although the scale, nature and complexity of cases will be greater.

**Our Values:**

You will be expected to work in line with our values which are:

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| **Proud** - Believing in who we are, what we do and where we live |
| **Dynamic** - Transforming the future with you in mind |
| **Truthful** - Honest and clear in all we do |
| **Good Value** - Delivering outstanding services, smartly & economically |
| **United** - Whoever we work with, we work as one team |

**Key Responsibilities:**

**Trainee Planner:**

1. To attend an RTPI accredited Planning degree course, leading to a recognised professional Planning qualification.
2. To receive and process planning applications as assigned to completion within East Suffolk. As part of this work the post holder will provide and record pre application advice to potential planning applicants. The post holder will engage in communication and negotiation in person, on site, by telephone and electronically with applicants, developers, statutory consultees, architects/agents and lawyers to resolve issues, improve development proposals, and to work proactively to make applications happen.
3. To carry out Planning site visits, site surveys and inspections as directed for the purpose of monitoring planning conditions.
4. To provide cover as duty officer as required.
5. To be responsible for the production of referral reports, delegated reports, committee reports and decision notices (incorporating specific legally sound conditions or reasons for refusal) and the issuing of the decisions. The post holder is expected to present their cases to Planning Committee.
6. To prepare written evidence and supporting information for planning appeals.
7. To investigate and resolve complaints regarding the breach of planning control and planning conditions on work allocated.
8. To ensure that all files and records, are kept up to date in accordance with agreed procedure.
9. To keep up to date with Planning Law, Planning Policy, and all other associated legislation and regulations.
10. To support the Assistant Planners and Planners in maintaining the efficient running of the service.
11. To provide administrative support, including the maintenance and co-ordinating of relevant administrative and data systems, to ensure an efficient service is provided.
12. To assist in dealing with enquiries/requests for information from members of the public, architects, developers and stakeholders on matters relating to Planning.
13. To offer advice to members of the public by telephone, email or in person as assigned.
14. To undertake specific tasks and set work as allocated across the service teams, commensurate with experience. This may include policy development work (including Neighbourhood Plans) and/or a caseload of applications, mainly in respect of householder and minor development, minor enforcement cases, tree work and heritage to gain a wide range of relevant planning experience.
15. To work flexibly and offer support to other teams within Planning Services as required.
16. To undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required compatible with and/or arising from those listed above.
17. To promote and adhere to the workplace values of our organisation.

**Assistant Planner:**

1. To attend an RTPI accredited Planning masters degree course, leading to a recognised full professional Planning qualification.
2. To receive and process planning applications as assigned to completion within East Suffolk. In addition this will include the management of more complex cases as required. As part of this work the post holder will provide and record pre application advice to potential planning applicants and on occasions for more complex cases as part of a Development Team, including working in partnership with other planning divisions and departments within the Council. The post holder will engage in communication and negotiation in person, on site, by telephone and electronically with applicants, developers, statutory consultees, architects/agents and lawyers to resolve issues, improve development proposals, and to work proactively to make applications happen (including S106 agreements).
3. To provide professional planning advice to internal stakeholders on corporate projects and Council assets.
4. To carry out Planning and/or Enforcement site visits, site surveys and inspections as directed for the purpose of monitoring planning conditions.
5. To gather and produce evidence, witness statements etc where required as part of any enforcement action in accordance with procedures, guidelines and good practice.
6. To provide cover as duty officer as required.
7. To be responsible for the production of referral reports, delegated reports, committee reports and decision notices (incorporating specific legally sound conditions or reasons for refusal, plus S106 Agreements if appropriate), and the issuing of the decisions. The post holder is expected to present their cases to Planning Committee.
8. To prepare evidence and supporting information for appeals (both planning and enforcement) and, where required, attend hearings on behalf of the Council.
9. To investigate and resolve complaints regarding the breach of planning control, planning conditions on work allocated.
10. To support Member and other training initiatives in relation to the Planning Service.
11. To ensure that all files and records are kept up to date in accordance with agreed procedure.
12. To provide advice and guidance to other members of the service on planning and enforcement matters and, where appropriate, take the lead on particular more complex cases/issues.
13. To provide support and advice to the planning services support team, particularly in respect of validation and scrutiny of planning applications.
14. To answer enquiries from the public by letter, telephone, email and in person.
15. To undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required compatible with and/or arising from those listed above.
16. Whilst studying, to gain experience within Development Management including a caseload of applications, mainly in respect of householder and minor development, minor enforcement cases, tree work and heritage to gain a wide range of relevant planning experience.
17. To promote and adhere to the workplace values of our organisation.

**Planner:**

1. To provide advice and guidance to other members of the team on planning and enforcement matters and where appropriate take the lead on particular cases as agreed by senior officers.
2. To carry out Planning and/or Enforcement site visits, site surveys and inspections as directed within a geographic area for the purpose of monitoring planning conditions.
3. To carry out necessary consultations and provide advice to all interested parties concerning development management matters including planning enforcement.
4. To gather and produce evidence, witness statements etc. where required as part of any enforcement action in accordance with procedures, guidelines and good practice in conjunction with the Senior Enforcement Officer.
5. To provide cover as duty officer on a rota basis.
6. To liaise with Town and Parish Councils as required (this may involve evening meetings).
7. To assess planning applications of all types, including those for advertising and listed building consent, ensuring awareness of site histories, present policies and inspection of sites.
8. To prepare recommendations, in conjunction with the Planning Development Manager or Development Management Team Leader, (or Senior Planner) on applications for the approval of the Head of Service, and to arrange presentation material and reports for the Planning Committee.
9. To prepare evidence and supporting information for appeals and, where required, attend hearing and give evidence on behalf of the Council.
10. To prepare and give evidence as appropriate for enforcement appeals in defence of enforcement notices, including Informal Hearings.
11. To participate in benchmarking with other authorities and liaising with organisations such as the Planning Advisory Service to assist in the development of ideas and plans to improve the service.
12. To investigate and resolve complaints regarding the breach of planning control, planning conditions and legal agreements on work allocated.
13. To undertake screening and scoping assessments for Environmental Impact Assessments and prepare recommendations, in conjunction with the Planning Development Manager or Development Management Team Leader for the Head of Service.
14. To ensure that the statutory obligations of the Local Planning Authority are met with regard the placing of advertisements.
15. To ensure that senior officers, Members and customers are kept appraised of all planning issues as appropriate.
16. To attend the Planning Committee, and other Council Committees as necessary, and present details of the applications or other reports for decision as and when required (this may involve working evenings).
17. To negotiate with all interested parties concerning development management matters, including planning enforcement.
18. To ensure that all files and records, are kept up to date in accordance with agreed procedure.
19. To assist other officers / teams where necessary to deal with peaks in workload or to provide cover during periods of leave / sickness absence.
20. To provide support and advice to the planning services support team, particularly in respect of validation and scrutiny of planning applications.
21. To undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required compatible with and/or arising from those listed above.
22. To promote and adhere to the workplace values of our organisation.

**Line Manager: Principal Planner**

**Responsible for: N/A**

**Political Restriction:**

This post is politically restricted under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and postholders are prohibited from seeking public election, holding political office, writing, or speaking publicly on matters of political controversy.

Note: This is a description of the job as it is constituted at (**September 2023**) but, as the organisation develops, it may be necessary to vary the duties and responsibilities from time to time. It is the practice of the Council to periodically review Job Descriptions to ensure that they relate to the job as being performed or to incorporate whatever changes may be necessary. It is the Council’s aim to reach agreement to such reasonable changes with the postholder but if agreement is not possible the Council reserves the right to insist on changes to the Job Description after consultation with the postholder.

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|  | **Person Specification** | **Band 4 Essential (E) or Desirable (D)** | **Band 5** | **Band 6** | **Band 7** |
| **Essential (E) or Desirable (D)** | **Essential (E) or Desirable (D)** | **Essential (E) or Desirable** |
|   |   | **(D)** |
| **Knowledge and Experience:** | * Some experience of working in a planning related environment, in either public or private sector.
 | D | D | D | E |
| * Relevant planning experience, that includes work recognised by the RTPI for chartered membership.
 | N/A | D | D | E |
| * A working knowledge of Uniform, IDOX, planning modules, Document Management Systems.
 | D | D | D | E |
| * Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office including Word, Excel and PowerPoint, and knowledge of GIS.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * A good grounding in a wide range of planning issues.
 | N/A | D | E | E |
| * Experience of planning appeals
 | N/A | D | D | E |
| * Knowledge of Planning Law, Planning Policy and associated legislation and regulations.
 | D | D | E | E |
| * Experience and knowledge of enforcement issues
 | N/A | D | D | E |
| * Experience of screening, scoping and consideration for Environmental Impact Assessments
 | N/A | D | D | D |
| **Skills and Abilities:** | * An ability to analyse information and prepare and present accurate and concise reports
 | D | D | E | E |
| * Ability to think logically and analytically
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Good problem-solving and creative skills
 | D | E | E | E |
| * Ability to work independently with minimum supervision as well as work effectively as part of a team.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Ability to meet deadlines and to work effectively under pressure.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Ability to prioritise workloads and demonstrate time and project management skills.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing with different and often competing audiences.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Ability to relate effectively with other officials, external agencies, elected members, and the public.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Computer literacy
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Confidence in reporting and giving of formal evidence.
 | D | D | E | E |
| * An understanding and sensitivity to issues affecting urban and rural areas, villages, historic towns, and protected landscapes.
 | D | E | E | E |
| * Confidence in influencing and negotiating.
 | D | D | E | E |
| * Ability to identify areas for service development and improvement.
 | D | D | D | E |
| **Education and Training:** | * Qualifications necessary to gain access to an RTPI accredited degree course (see Job Description above)
 | E | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| * An undergraduate degree or equivalent in a related or relevant discipline, that provides access to an RTPI accredited course or professional qualification recognised by the RTPI for membership.
 | N/A | E | N/A | N/A |
| * Masters or equivalent, providing access to full Membership of the RTPI
 | N/A | N/A | E | E |
| * Licentiate or student RTPI Membership.
 | D | E | E | N/A |
| * Full Membership of RTPI (MRTPI)
 | N/A | N/A | D | E |
| **Other Requirements:** | * A commitment to own development and to supporting training and development initiatives.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Must be mobile / have access to a car to attend meetings at sites / locations within the district on a regular basis, including in rural areas.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * A capability of visiting premises/sites given normal/approved means of access on a regular basis.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Reasonable sensory abilities required to inspect premises and sites.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Flexible and willing to work outside normal working hours when required.
 | E | E | E | E |
| * Must be able to work from both East Suffolk House, Melton and Riverside, Lowestoft offices.
 | E | E | E | E |