

LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

POST TITLE:	Planning Officer
DIRECTORATE:	Climate Homes and Economy
SERVICE:	Planning – Development Management & Enforcement/ Growth Team
GRADE:	SO1/PO1 (additional skills required for PO1 are identified)
LOCATION:	Within London Borough of Hackney
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Team Leader Development Management/Major Applications Team Leader

Purpose of the job

- The Planning Officer will be responsible for the processing of Development Management matters within a function-based team including responsibility for the handling of pre-application advice, major and minor planning applications, conditions, appeals including negotiations with developers and other interested parties, securing financial and other community benefits through legal agreements.
- The Planning Officer will ensure, in conjunction with colleagues, that statutory and legal obligations are delivered and communicated in a customer-focussed manner, optimising available resources, ensuring the best achievable outcome.
- The Planning Officer will be accountable to the Major Applications Team Leader and Deputy for achieving agreed Service outcomes and personal appraisal targets which uphold the Council's Core Values and meet the challenges of best practice.
- To provide advice and support to junior colleagues within the service as required (PO1)
- To represent the Council at appropriate Public Inquiries and Informal hearings (PO1)

Council Key Accountabilities

Learning, Creativity and Judgement

- To develop his/her skills base to enable him/her to undertake a wider range of duties and tasks, and where necessary, carry out appropriate training and/or academic qualifications.

Management of People

- Support and advise more junior members of staff as required, ensuring they are adequately monitored and assisted to develop their skills. (PO1)

Strategic thinking and planning

- Contribute to the development of the Service and its statutory functions.
- Responsible for ensuring, in consultation with colleagues, that advice given and recommendations made have full and proper regard for the Council's planning policies, standards and relevant Government legislation and guidance.
- Assist in adding value to the service delivered, in developing and implementing best practice and providing customer-focused standards in a regulatory environment.

Managing services and delivery

- In conjunction with the appropriate Managers, put into practical operation the key objectives of the service and Council in relation to Development Management, Positive Planning and related matters.
- To ensure that duties are carried out in accordance with the Council's policies and Code of Conduct, with full regard to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Ensure that the administrative and technical procedures required to deal with tasks under the Planning Acts, Orders and Regulations, are carried out and work outcomes are of sufficiently high standard to comply with any systems in place to demonstrate quality.
- Take responsibility, in conjunction with colleagues, for undertaking such correspondence and discussions with the public and Council officers or other appropriate people as required for the determination of applications.
- Ensure, in conjunction with colleagues, necessary and effective consultation and liaison is carried out to facilitate the effective involvement of local interest and statutory bodies and other Council services with regard to Development Management matters.
- Progress a range of applications under the Planning Acts and negotiate planning agreements as required.
- Undertake planning appeals as or when required.
- Represent the Council at Public Local Inquiries, Informal Hearings and Court Hearings as required (PO1)

Communication

- To assist in providing professional guidance, on the interpretation of the statutory and legislative requirements in a customer-focused and democratic framework. To attend public meetings and other working meetings as required.

Managing projects and resources

- Use IT equipment to input data and analyse and extract information in connection with specific duties.
- Such other minor and non-recurring duties appropriate to the post as may be directed.
- Manage a mixed caseload of major and minor applications effectively and efficiently.

Service Specific Accountabilities

- The Planning Officer will help to ensure that the work of the team is customer focussed, achieving appropriate changes and improvements within the context of best practice and parameters of the plan led system. .
- The Planning Officer will be accountable to the Team Leader and Deputy in their area for achieving agreed service outcomes and personal appraisal targets.
- Progression between Grade S01 and Grade S02 will be dependent on the level and complexity of the work carried out by the post holder and the extent to s/he leads on applications and projects as determined by the Team Leader in conjunction with the Head of the Service.
- Progression between Grade SO2 and Grade P01 will be dependent on the level and complexity of the work carried out by the post holder and the extent to which s/he leads on more complex cases or projects.

Particular regard will be paid to:

- **High level of autonomy and productivity in processing planning applications and appeals.**
- **Effective project management of more complex applications to a successful conclusion including successful negotiations to secure community benefits.**
- **Effectively representing the Council at Public Inquiries or Informal Hearings or other external fora.**
- This will be measured by performance appraisal and performance agreements. Performance management is the result of structured discussions and decisions made with their Team Leader.

The component parts of the agreement are:

- Key areas of the job
- Key tasks and targets for the year
- Performance measures and monitoring
- Competency profile
- Personal development plan.

LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Communication

- Ability to write complex planning reports and a wide range of correspondence relating to Development Management and other planning issues.
- Ability to communicate effectively with service users and stakeholders e.g. negotiations, presenting evidence or advice in a public forum within Hackney's diverse community.

Managing Projects and Resources

- Ability to handle an extensive workload, including ability to act on own initiative, prioritise and meet strict deadlines.
- Ability to use new technology to assist in improving service delivery and personal performance.
- Managing Services and Delivery
- Ability to contribute effectively to team working.

Knowledge

- Ability to promote and implement equal opportunities in accordance with Council guidelines.
- Ability to understand plans and drawings and other relevant technical information related to planning applications and projects.
- Ability to operate IT systems and equipment.
- A good understanding of planning legislation and the plan-led system.
- Knowledge of planning issues as they affect the inner city.
- Knowledge of Best Practice.

Work Related Experience

- Understanding of or experience of providing services to customers and being accountable for these services.
- Understanding of or experience of complex development management work (including major development) within an urban environment.
- Understanding of or experience of negotiating legal agreements on planning applications.
- Experience of responding to Member enquiries.

Qualifications

- For grade SO1/ 2 - Candidates will need to demonstrate through a test at interview sufficient knowledge of the town planning system and ability to produce written reports to a high standard and be committed to a career pathway for membership to the Royal Town Planning Institute to become a chartered town planner such as entry onto a RTPI course to become a Planning Assistant.
- For grade PO1 - Candidates will need to be eligible for membership to the RTPI - either through obtaining an RTPI accredited degree (minimum of a level 4 Town Planning Assistant <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/town-planning-assistant-v1-0>) or by demonstrating 10 years experience or more of working as a town planner.
- Able and willing to attend meetings or undertake work outside normal working hours e.g. evening meetings.