

Job Description

JOB TITLE:	Principal Planning Officer (Plan Making)
GRADE:	Grade K-L
POST NUMBER:	G010100018 G020100321
DIRECTORATE:	Housing and Regeneration
SERVICE:	Planning and Building Control
RESPONSIBLE TO :	Plan-making manager
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	Supporting the Plan Making Plan-making manager including deputising, supervising and allocation of tasks. Managing and/or supervising up to 4 team members at any one time.
	This post does not require a DBS check This post is not politically restricted This post does not attract essential/ casual car user/ travel allowance
JOB SUMMARY:	• To provide support and supervisory assistance to the Plan-Making manager in the management of a high-quality, specialised plan making service that meets the needs of Tower Hamlets' multicultural communities, • To ensure coordinated service delivery and to promote the services of the Directorate, building working relationships at a senior level with the Government, other Local Authorities and agencies, businesses and the local community. • To assist the plan-making manager in developing the team's work programmes and provide supervisory assistance to the Plan Making manager • To assist the team to contribute to the regeneration of the borough through the effective application of all planning powers, as relevant to the post and partnership working with regeneration agencies within and outside of the Council. Grade L • To manage the provision of a high-quality specialised plan making service that meets the needs of Tower Hamlets' multi-cultural community.

	To support the manager in team planning, service planning, managing staff, providing day-to-day support, guidance and decision-making in relation to projects and staffing issues.
ROLE REQUIREMENTS:	This is a career graded post and the job description has been set out to reflect the two levels and the linked career grades.
1.	To provide high-quality, specialist professional expertise and technical advice relating to complex plan-making documents and initiatives, carrying a work programme, ensuring that all work is undertaken reflecting the Council's strategic planning and renewal objectives and priorities and best professional standards for the benefit of the Borough's residents.
2.	To provide supervisory support to the Team manager in the organisation and delivery of all the teams work including: - all documents and associated evidence base that make up the Local Plan in accordance with all requirements and the council's procedures and performance standards; - preparation for Examination in Public; - all other planning strategies, masterplans and development briefs and frameworks including their associated evidence base; - the Statement of Community Involvement; - the Annual Monitoring Report; - comments relating to strategic planning policy matters as relevant to Planning and Building Control.
3.	To lead and undertake all the technical analysis work including quality control reviews involved with the data compilation on housing completions as part of the submission to the London Development Database
4.	To represent the Council as an expert witness on issues involving Plan Making at Examinations as well as related Public Inquiries and in court where necessary.
5.	Undertake under own initiative a variety of advanced tasks relating to complex projects and work programmes, carrying a case load relating to Plan Making matters.
6.	Develop extensive personal skills and technical knowledge base necessary to undertake this post.
CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES	

7.	Actively contribute to the council's priorities and outcomes in a way that promotes a 'one organisation' approach.
8.	Develop and maintain positive relationships with colleagues, stakeholders and communities to ensure the council and the directorate strategic priorities are effectively implemented.
9.	Promote equality among all staff and ensure that services are delivered in a non-discriminatory way, that is inclusive of all disadvantaged groups.
10.	Support organisational change and learning, following and implementing appropriate systems of self-development, communication and engagement, quality measures, monitoring and review in delivering the functions of the role.
11.	Promote sustainability, including encouraging a culture of innovation and accountability amongst all council staff.
12.	Adherence to the council's commitment to the health, safety and welfare at work policy
13.	Deputising for plan-making managers Health and safety responsibilities when required, which include: • being familiar with health and safety policies and procedures • setting a positive example • communicate health and safety policies and procedures to staff • carry out, review and share risk assessments • consider work-related violence, abusive or threatening behaviour in the planning and development of safe working systems and procedures • ensure adequate first aid provision • holding staff accountable • ensuring staff receive adequate information, instruction, training and supervision • cooperate with trade union/safety representatives and attend relevant meetings • ensure work-related accidents/incidents are reported and investigated in line with procedures.
PEOPLE	
14.	Supervise and assist other staff as required and represent the Team in the absence of the Plan Making manager including assisting the manager with the recruitment and development of staff in the team.

15.	To lead on the delivery of effective public consultation in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement on all Plan Making initiatives and projects using varied and innovative methods of consultation to encourage maximum involvement of the community in strategic planning and Plan Making matters.
16.	Promote the work and services of the Directorate and Plan-Making team, liaising with other services within the Council, elected Members and their advisors, external bodies and statutory authorities including the provision of information, advice, guidance and assistance to residents of the Borough and businesses, and co-ordinating the input of other Council directorates to proposals and projects being progressed by the Plan Making team.
17.	Assist the plan-making manager in the promotion of a culture of continuous improvement by adapting skills, knowledge and team systems to cope effectively with regular and often complex changes to national and regional planning and the regeneration policy / legislative context.
18.	Assist the plan-making manager with the appraisal and development of staff and ensure that objectives are met in accordance with the Council's Leadership and Management Framework and Core Values as appropriate and stated at the time.
19.	Assist with advising Members on matters within the scope of the teams' work and assist in formulating Directorate policies and objectives in this area.
FINANCE	
20.	To lead, with minimal supervision, the procurement, appointment and management of consultants undertaking plan-making and related commissions for the directorate to ensure that all relevant council policies and procurement and financial regulations are fully met and complied with.
21.	To work with the plan-making manager to develop and evaluate best practice approaches to the use of consultant services in the delivery of initiatives and projects promoted by documents and other relevant schemes produced and/or delivered by the Plan Making team.
SERVICE	
22.	Assist the plan-making manager to design, consult on and implement changes to improve the service. They may include

	setting out new procedures and standards to ensure continual effectiveness and efficiency in delivering a quality service including value for money initiatives.
23.	To participate with the plan-making manager in the development and implementation of policies and procedures to ensure that the strategic aspects of the Directorate Service Plan are delivered within corporate objectives.
PERFORMANCE	
24.	To maintain and keep up-to-date all plan making files and documents on-line and hard copy (where relevant) in an clear ordered system with all material discussions/meetings/paperwork recorded and material documents properly filed and provide administrative support including ensuring working files get scanned, as part of any process, to enable the work of the team to be undertaken, as required.
GRADE L (Additional Duties)	
25.	Assist with the management on aspects of the team's workload and leading on some technical aspects, as agreed with the Plan-making manager, to ensure the provision of a high quality, cost effective service, which fully integrates equality issues in to all aspects of service delivery and complies with statutory and other codes of practice.
26.	To lead, with assistance from plan-making manager as appropriate, on allocated major, complex Plan Making projects and initiatives, taking responsibility for ensuring everything is reasonably done to secure their delivery.
27.	To undertake, as required by the plan-making manager, 1-2-1s on day to day work, work programming activities for the team and ensure that objectives are met
28.	Represent the team as appropriate at Member level meetings, and prepare all necessary correspondence and/or presentation material.
29.	Provide high-quality specialist technical advice and guidance to all service users, including Consultants, Developers, Council Officers in the Service and in other Council departments, residents, customers, traders, and businesses, on all Plan Making matters.
30.	To produce and/or, where appropriate, present reports and documents on all Plan Making matters, including consultation and engagement, to Council Members as required from time to time.

31.	To assist the plan-making manager with the prioritisation of the team's work programme in accordance with the P&BC Service Plan, the team's resources, the Leadership and Management Framework and the Council's Core Values as appropriate and legislative requirements to ensure that targets and objectives are met.
32.	Maintain effective working relationships with officers in relevant Central and London Government departments, neighbouring borough's, agencies and other bodies to ensure that the borough's interests are promoted and safeguarded in respect of the delivery of major planning strategies including transport strategies in the borough.
33.	Develop, monitor and lead on major complex Plan Making matters, with assistance from Plan-making manager as appropriate, assuming project management responsibilities and ensuring all works are undertaken effectively, fulfilling the aims, policies and objectives of the Council.
34.	To lead on the commissioning and periodical review of consultancy services in connection with the discharge of the Plan Making process.
35.	To represent the Council and participate in multi-disciplinary teams on major complex Plan Making projects and initiatives, specifically on planning policy matters. Prepare and present detailed advice and reports, ensuring that the advice given is in accordance with the best professional standards.
36.	Examine, consider and provide professional observations on plans, consultation documents, reports, projects and work relating to all plan making including consultation and engagement matters as required from other services within the Council or from other government departments or other organisations that may have implications to service delivery.
37.	Represent the Council at external meetings, including governmental department meetings and other governmental professional settings, examinations in public, court hearings and public inquiries, as the Council's expert witness, and to prepare and present detailed advice and reports ensuring that the advice given is in accordance with the best professional standards.
38.	Respond to requests for advice on all the legislative and technical aspects of plan making including consultation and engagement, advising Government Bodies, private companies, consultants and other Council Departments as appropriate.
39.	To represent the Council's position relating to Plan Making matters on liaison and multi-disciplinary working groups both within and outside the borough and ensure appropriate liaison with all interested parties on issues including the public, elected members, other Council Departments and other Local Authorities.

40.	To supervise the team, as directed by the plan-making manager, on the preparation of policies, procedures and guidance notes and the development of quality assurance and system manuals on Plan Making good practice.
41.	Prepare correspondence and reports for the Plan-making manager, Strategic Planning Manager, Divisional Director, the Corporate Director at Committees/Sub-Committees, or be a representative of the Council at Forums, Multi-Disciplinary working groups etc.
42.	Co-ordinate and represent the Borough's position acting as the nominated professional officer at external meetings and on other bodies, including government department meetings and other governmental, professional and judicial settings as required.
43.	Maintain excellent and specialist, up to date knowledge of National and European legislation, policy and current best practice in all areas of relevance to the service area, attending Continuing Professional Development Courses as appropriate and applying updated knowledge to the work of the team and sharing information gathered on courses, including the provision of training for other staff.
44.	To make decisions on the most appropriate courses of action on Plan Making within guidelines where they are available, professional standards and using professional judgement, offering advice and assistance, issuing instructions or initiating enforcement action with reference to the Plan-making manager.
45.	Visit sites alone to check planning proposals and determine whether the scheme is in accordance with agreed proposals, such visits will involve attending locations and encountering situations which may involve personal risk.
46.	Deputise for the Plan-making manager during absences and provide support where required.
47.	To manage any number of staff, at any one time, on any number of projects or programmes in relation to plan making's work.
48.	To assist the Plan-making manager in the scoping, procurement, organisation and delivery of project/programme based activities, which contribute to service delivery and/or service improvement.

OTHER CONDITIONS:

To maintain personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the job and participate in appropriate training/development activities including the council's 'My Annual Review' scheme.

To engage and develop all staff in the team to ensure they have clear personal development plans.

Ensure that all duties and responsibilities are discharged in accordance with the council's policies and procedures, Code of Conduct and relevant regulations and legislation.

To comply with the council's equal opportunities and diversity policies ensuring anti-discriminatory practice within the service area.

To undertake additional duties that may arise from time to time commensurate with the grade of the post.

Person Specification for the Post of Principal Officer (Grade K to L) (Plan Making Team)			
		Essential or Desirable	Assessment (Application, Testing or Interview)
Knowledge	1. Detailed, specific and comprehensive knowledge of key issues relating to strategic planning and regeneration within inner London.	E	A I T
	2. Comprehensive understanding of planning legislation and policy at national, London and local planning authority level.	E	A I
	3. General level of political awareness & comprehensive knowledge of the operation of local government.	E	A I
Qualifications & Experience	4. Eligibility for chartered membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute.	E	A
	5. Demonstrable experience of leading the preparation of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and supporting evidence base.	E	AIT
	6. Experience of supervising staff on initiatives including experience of workload programming on one or more projects.	E	AI

	7. Demonstrable experience of commissioning and contract managing external consultants.	E	AI
	8. Experience of working across other Planning disciplines, including Development Management.	D	AI
Living the TOWER Values sets out the essential behaviours required of all staff. They are aligned to the organisation's five TOWER Values			
We work TOGETHER across boundaries and with partners to achieve the best outcomes for Tower Hamlets.	8. Detailed and relevant experience of partnership working, including leading initiatives with other governmental bodies and local authorities.	E	AI
	9. Detailed and comprehensive knowledge and use of public consultation techniques.	E	AI
We are OPEN and transparent.	10. Demonstrable ability to communicate technical information effectively, both in writing and in public presentations with Councillors, members of the public and partner organisations.	E	AI
We are WILLING to challenge, innovate and be accountable.	11. Ability of a high level of organisational and project management skills including programme management experience.	E	AIT
	12. Consistently able to demonstrate that can respond effectively, to tight deadlines, within a pressurised environment.	E	AI

	13. Understanding of the role and need for service planning and performance management in the provision of high quality planning services.	E	A I
	14. Detailed and relevant experience of project working, taking day-to-day responsibility for the operation and delivery of planning projects.	E	A I T
We empower each other to be EXCELLENT and go the extra mile.	15. Commitment to continuous improvement in the performance of the Strategic Planning Section in contributing to the achievement of the Council's key priorities.	E	A I
	16. Experience of mentoring staff and identifying ways staff can be empowered to learn effectively to ensure they have the opportunity to realise professional goals and positive career progressions.	E	A I
We RESPECT all communities, they are the heart of everything we do.	17. Knowledge and awareness of the equal opportunities issues involved when working within a diverse inner London community.	E	A I
Other	18. To be prepared to attend evening meetings (e.g. Committees and Public Forums).	E	A

GUIDANCE ON APPOINTMENT AND MOVEMENT WITH THE CAREER GRADE

The academic qualification, competencies and level of experience criteria are set out below:

Any progress is subject to review through the annual review (MAR), manager's support and recommendation and possibly by way of formal interview with Strategic Planning Manager and relevant Team Leader.	
K	• RTPI or relevant post graduate degree or equivalent local planning authority service experience (seniority, length of service and relevant technical expertise). • 4 years or more post qualification experience. • Managing team members on multiple projects, tasks and or programmes; as well as managing own workload. • Offering detailed expert advice and guidance to colleagues and external partners. • Managing own project and/or programme budgets. • High level of managing relationships, for project outcomes, with internal and external partners. • Past performance against targets and manager assessment.
L	• RTPI or RICS accredited post graduate degree. • More than 4 years post qualification experience. • Supporting Team Leader with team and service planning. • Offering expert advice to assist Team Leader in organisation and delivery of work programming. • Ability to deputise for Team Leader whenever required. • Managing a number of staff at once across a range of projects / programmes. • Limited reliance upon managers for decision making. • Thinks outside of the box and delivers solutions to issues. • Engagement in service improvement, with managers and colleagues and leading service improvement in some areas • Wide ranging management of staff members, supporting development of junior staff and resolution of staffing issues. • Past performance against targets and manager assessment.

Entry criteria

1. An officer's starting salary scale entry point will be based on both qualification and experience at the time of employment, in addition to an assessment of their competence against the appropriate level of person specification and job description. Basic entry requirements are defined in the table above for each salary scale band – Grades K and L. Officers will normally start at the bottom of the salary scale band that they qualify for.

Movement each year

2. Decisions on annual progression up the salary scale points within a salary scale band takes place in the normal manner through the Council's annual development review (My Annual Review) process. Subject to satisfactory evidence of progress against the criteria

listed above, during the previous 12 months (up to 31 March) and the outcome of any internal interviews (if required), any promotion that is awarded will be backdated to 1 April.

3. An officer who starts employment with the Council between 1 April and 30 September in any year can apply for progression through the career grade to commence on 1 April, the following year, i.e. between 6 and 12 months from their start date. An officer who starts employment with the Council between 1 October in one year and 31 March in the following year can apply for progression through the career grade in April the following year, i.e. between 12 and 18 months from their start date.

4. Officers should only apply to move when they are confident that they have achieved the appropriate criteria for the next band (as set out above) as only one application to move to the next salary scale band can be made in any 12-month period.

5. Progression will be based on confirmation that they have reached the necessary level of qualification and experience plus an explicit assessment, by their line manager, of continued progress towards the requirements of the relevant person specification and that a satisfactory level and quality of work has been produced over the previous year. This assessment has to be agreed in writing by the relevant Service Manager. Any appeal against these decisions will be to the Service Head of Planning and Building Control, whose decision will be final.