

Job Description

JOB TITLE:	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Officer
GRADE:	Grade K – Grade L
POST NUMBER:	
DIRECTORATE:	Housing & Regeneration Directorate
SERVICE:	Development Management
RESPONSIBLE TO :	West Area Manager (Development Management)
	<p>This post does not require a DBS check</p> <p>This post is not politically restricted</p>
TRAVEL ALLOWANCE:	Zone 2-3 Travel Card allowance
JOB SUMMARY:	<p>To be the Council's specialist advisor on legislation and guidance for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) including sustainable development issues and provide high quality specialised development project services that meet the needs of Tower Hamlets' multi- cultural communities.</p> <p>To lead and take responsibility for the completion of EIA Screening and Scoping Opinions, within the statutory timescales.</p> <p>PO5 only - Staff supervision of EIA related work, including the review, and quality assurance of Screening and Scoping Opinions. advising and assisting of planning officers (e.g. Graduate Planner posts) on the production of EIA Screening/Scoping Opinions.</p> <p>To ensuring that Environmental Statements (ES) are processed with consistency and meet the requirements of the EIA Regulations and promote sustainable development.</p> <p>To commission, review and manage the EIA Review Contract including the relationship with external EIA specialist consultants.</p>

	<p>Assist in the development of service plans, team plans and work programmes.</p> <p>Promote the work and services of the Directorate through effective liaison with other internal and external services and bodies, and 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.</p>
ROLE REQUIREMENTS:	
1.	Provide specialist technical advice and guidance to all service users including Environmental Consultants, Developers, Council Officers, residents, customers, traders and businesses on all EIA and relevant planning matters.
2.	Ensure that EIA Screening and EIA Scoping Opinions are prepared to a high standard ensuring compliance with European, and national legislation while ensuring they are locally specific. Ensuring that the relevant statutory bodies, internal consultees, and others are engaged when required, in accordance with legislation. Ensuring the relevant quality assurance/sign off procedure is adhered to.
3.	<p>Ensuring that Environmental Statements (ESs) for planning applications are assessed and processed, in consultation with EIA consultants and internal/external consultees, with consistency and meet the requirements of the EIA Regulations. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making recommendations to Planning Officers on whether planning applications have met all the necessary legislative criteria and suitable mitigation/enhancement measures are proposed to deal with the significant effects that are identified. • Provide a response within prescribed time-scales and providing advice on legal and/or other remedies to address non-compliance when required. • Advise Planning Officers on the relevant consultees (internal and external) to be consulted as part of the planning application.
4.	Provide expert guidance and advice to members of the public, applicants and their professional advisors, clients and Members in relation to the Council's EIA and appropriate development planning responsibilities.
5.	Prepare and present detailed advice and reports, ensuring

	that the advice given is in accordance with the best professional standards.
6.	Examine, consider and provide professional observations on plans, consultation documents, reports and work relating to EIAs as required from other services within the Council or from other government departments or other organisations that may have implications to service delivery.
7.	To represent the Council as an expert witness on issues involving EIA at public enquires and in court. Have expert knowledge of all relevant legislation, make recommendations to the planning service on whether planning applications have met all the necessary criteria and suitable mitigation is proposed to deal with the significant impacts that are identified. Provide a response within prescribed time-scales using powers of enforcement and other legal measures as necessary.
8.	Respond to requests for observations, comments or advice on all the legislative and technical aspects of EIA and appropriate development planning, from Government and Public Bodies, private companies, consultants and other Council Departments as appropriate.
9.	Prepare correspondence and reports for, and represent the Corporate Director at Committees/Sub-Committees, or be a representative of the Council at Forums, Multi- Disciplinary working groups etc.
10.	Keep abreast of professional developments, legislative changes and best practice in all areas of EIAs, attending Continuing Professional Development Courses as appropriate and applying updated knowledge to present case load and sharing information gathered on courses, including providing training for other staff.
11.	To make decisions on the most appropriate courses of action, 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 Team Leader.
12.	Develop, monitor and lead on EIA initiatives as required, assuming project management responsibilities and ensuring all works are undertaken effectively, fulfilling the Core Values aims, policies and objectives of the Council.
13.	Visit sites alone to check 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.
14.	To ensure that the EIA text on the Council's website is up to date and helpful to stakeholders
15.	To maintain and keep up-to-date all EIA 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 allocated team to be undertaken, as required.
16.	To assist the Team Leader as appropriate in all national and local performance monitoring against key indicators for EIA ensuring that monitoring is undertaken to a high quality and that it properly and meaningfully captures the service performance.
17.	Provide observations on DCO applications (relevant to LBTH) and observations to adjoining local authorities on EIA related matters.
18.	To assist the team leader to establish, maintain, monitor and review the quality and performance of the EIA service using management procedures, including actively participating in regular team meetings, briefing staff on current issues, and receiving and acting on feedback and generally support the management of the team in an efficient and effective way.
19.	Attendance at meetings and Public Inquiries on the DCO application, presenting the Council's position with respect to the EIA.
ADDITIONAL DUTIES AT GRADE L:	
20.	<p>Additional responsibilities with respect to the EIA Screening/Scoping stages are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff supervision of EIA related work, including the review, and quality assurance of Screening and Scoping Opinions. Management of planning officers (e.g. Graduate Planner posts) on the production of EIA Screening/Scoping Opinions. • Quality Assurance to mitigate the risk of Judicial Review. Ensure formal sign off procedures are adhered to and the documentation produced, meets the requirements of the EIA Regulations. These responsibilities apply to formal and informal EIA

	Screening/Scoping Requests – noting that there will be a fee associated with informal opinions.
21.	<p>Detailed EIA input into complex and large planning applications ensuring all work is undertaken reflecting the Council's strategic planning and renewal objectives and priorities and best professional standards for the benefit of the residents of the Borough. This is achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing advice to Planning Officers on the conclusions of the ES, with input from internal and external specialists – specifically in relation to mitigation/enhancement measures; • provide input to committee reports – specifically in relation to the mitigation measures identified in the ES, and how these will be secured through planning conditions (should the application be approved); • attendance at meetings with Planning Officers and applicants, to specifically discuss mitigation measures and enhancement (preferably at the pre-application stage); and • attendance, presentation and answering questions at Committee where necessary.
22.	Provide advice to the Plan Making Team on their statutory requirements in relation to The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (also known as Strategic Environmental Assessments).
CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES	
23.	Actively contribute to the council's priorities and outcomes in a way that promotes a 'one organisation' approach.
24.	Develop and maintain positive relationships with colleagues, stakeholders and communities to ensure the council and the directorate strategic priorities are effectively implemented.
25.	Promote equality among all staff and ensure that services are delivered in a non-discriminatory way, that is inclusive of all disadvantaged groups.
26.	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.
27.	Promote sustainability, including encouraging a culture of innovation and accountability amongst all council staff.

PEOPLE	
28.	To act as a point of contact and communication for EIA matters and liaise with internal and external stakeholders on all aspects associated with EIA, including the review and assessment of any relevant consultancy services.
29.	Maintain effective working relationships with officers within the Council and in relevant Central and London Government departments, agencies and other bodies, including neighbouring Borough's to ensure that the Council's interests are promoted and safeguarded in respect of all planning matters.
30.	To represent the Council's position relating to EIAs 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.
31.	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.
32.	Plan and prepare EIA projects and related consultation exercises including the preparation of all materials and other documentation ensuring that all relevant Council Directorates, community organisations, amenity and minority groups, external agencies and Government Bodies are consulted in accordance with the requirements of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).
ADDITIONAL DUTIES AT GRADE L:	
33.	To support the Team Leader in the supervision of the staff in the area team.
FINANCE	
34.	Lead on the commissioning, contract management, and periodic review of the EIA Review Contract to ensure that Council policies and financial regulations including all procurement regulations (including OJEU) are fully met and complied with. Specific responsibilities with respect to the EIA Review

	<p>Contract are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attendance at quarterly meetings with EIA consultant to ensure that the contract requirements are being met; liaising with EIA consultants regarding fees, additional spend, conflicts of interest (if any), community contributions and workload/capacity; and <p>leading on the procurement of the new EIA review contract prior to the expiration of the current contract – ensuring it remains within its budgetary/time constraints.</p>
ADDITIONAL DUTIES AT GRADE L:	
35.	Supervise the Apprentice regarding the recovery of EIA fees from applicants, in line with the planning performance agreements (PPA).
36.	To assist the Team Leader with the consistent review, assessment and evaluation of EIA service costs, benchmarking against relevant other organisations and bodies to ensure that the service continues to offer value for money.
SERVICE	
37.	Lead on the preparation of policies, procedures and guidance notes and the development of quality assurance and system manuals on good practice.
38.	Participate in the development and implementation of policies and procedures to ensure that all aspects of the P&BC Service Plan are delivered within corporate objectives.

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.

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

Person Specification for the Post of		Essential (E) or Desirable (D) (if applicable)	Method of Assessment A= Application Form T= Test I= Interview
Knowledge	1. Demonstrable and comprehensive knowledge of all EIA legislation, guidance, procedures and case law.	E	A / I
	2. Understanding of the local government planning regime and consent processes more generally.	E	A / I
	3. Understanding of the role of Environmental Impact Assessments in the different stages of major project development.	E	A / I / T
	4. Knowledge of planning legislation and development management processes.	E	A / I
	5. Understanding of the role and need for service planning and performance management in the provision of services.	E	A / I
	6. Knowledge and awareness of the equal opportunities issues involved when working within a diverse community.	E	A / I
	7. Knowledge of the commissioning processes for securing consultancy support for the delivery of planning documents or services, preferably (but not essential) OJEU.	E	A / I

Qualifications & Experience	8. Recognised graduate level or post graduate qualification in Environmental Management, Planning or related discipline leading to IEMA membership (Associate or above) or RTPI membership.	E	A
	9. Eligible or working towards eligibility for chartered membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute and/or Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.	E	A
	10. Minimum of three years experience of working in environmental management or related area.	E	A
	11. Excellent organisational and project management skills including report and or brief writing.	E	A / I
	12. Ability to respond effectively, to tight deadlines, within a pressurised environment to maintain high quality outcomes.	E	A / I
	13. Experience of commissioning and contract managing external consultants.	D	A / I
	14. Experience of EIA process and procedure for major development proposals including assessing, evaluating and advising on such matters.	E	A / I
	15. Experience of IT systems, utilising and understanding financial spreadsheets and other budgetary management tools.	D	A / I

	16. Experience of corporate project working, taking day- to-day responsibility for the operation and delivery of a planning and / or EIA project across a number of service areas.	E	A / I
	17. Good communication skills in an EIA context and the ability to communicate with a variety of audiences.	E	A / I
	18. Experience of working with governmental bodies or local authorities.	E	A / I
	19. Takes responsibility for own learning and development.	E	A / I
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	20. Actively seeks opportunities to build positive relationships with people from other teams and partners.	E	A / I
We are OPEN and transparent	21. Approachable and actively seeks feedback from others to improve how they do things.	E	A / I
We are WILLING to challenge, innovate and be accountable	22. Takes full accountability for delivering own work and contributing to that of team.	E	A / I
	23. Seeks to grow from, both failures and successes, to improve how they do things where required.	E	A / I
	24. Looks for ways to continuously improve and develop within role.	E	A / I

We empower each other to be EXCELLENT and go the extra mile	25. Takes the initiative to improve outcomes because they can explain the difference they have made.	E	A / I
We RESPECT all communities, they are the heart of everything we do	26. Takes ownership of more complex issues, whilst keeping the customer informed.	E	A / I
	27. Open-minded and appreciates alternative cultural perspectives, taking it into account when delivering service.	E	A / I
Additional Requirements	28. Willing to travel to various sites and locations.	E	A / I
	29. Willing to work flexibly and outside of normal office hours.	D	A / I
Grade L Requirements	30. Ability to supervise staff to carry out EIA related work, including the review, and quality assurance of Screening and Scoping Opinions.	D	A / I
	31. Ability to provide expert advice to the Plan Making Team on their statutory requirements in relation to The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (also known as Strategic Environmental Assessments)	D	A / I
	32. Ability to provide expert and detailed EIA input into complex and large planning applications	D	A / I
	33. Provides effective support the team leader to identify and implement service improvement and team management functions	D	A / I