**Job Profile comprising Job Description and Person Specification**

**Job Description**

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|  **Job Title:** Senior Planner (Policy) | **Grade**: PO2– PO4 |
| **Section:** Spatial Planning | **Directorate:** Place Division, Chief Executive |
| **Responsible to following manager:**Spatial Planning and Design Team Manager | **Responsible for following staff:**n/a |
| **Post Number/s:** | **Last review date:** July 2021 |

**Working for the Richmond & Wandsworth Better Service Partnership**

This role is employed under the Richmond & Wandsworth Better Service Partnership. The overall purpose of Richmond & Wandsworth is to provide the highest quality of service at the lowest attainable cost.

Staff are expected to deliver high quality and responsive services wherever they are based, as well as having the ability to adapt to sometimes differing processes and expectations.

Richmond & Wandsworth Better Service Partnership aims to be at the forefront of innovation in local government and the organisation will invest in the development of its staff and ensure the opportunities for progression that only a large organisation can provide.

**Job Purpose**

To deliver a high quality, robust and transparent Planning Policy service ensuring decision making within tight time frames and to ensure that the Place Division is recognised as delivering an excellent planning service for all of our customers. The Senior Planner (Policy) will independently manage an area of planning policy, leading on the development and review of planning policy and guidance documents, providing comprehensive and detailed policy advice on planning applications, pre-application advice requests and correspondence to agreed and identifiable timescales. To independently manage key specialist projects related to planning policy and its broader implementation within the borough, as allocated by the Spatial Planning and Design Team Manager. To coach and supervise junior planning officers to help them acquire the skills and knowledge so that they can become self-reliant in dealing with technical and people issues as required.

**Specific Duties and Responsibilities**

1. To be responsible to the Spatial Planning and Design Team Manager and work under the supervision of a Principal Policy and Information Planner.

1. To work independently and take personal responsibility for a full range of planning policy work including the development and review of planning specialist policy areas, including associated evidence and research, pre-application advice, the input of policy advice to complex and high-profile planning applications, working to identifiable deadlines in a manner that is consistent with meeting corporate targets and objectives.
2. To work independently to assess, engage and set out clear and robust policy formulation in an accurate, well written officer report based on an up-to-date and relevant evidence base.
3. To maintain an up-to-date knowledge of national and regional planning policy and relevant legislation and to take a proactive approach to relevant changes in legislation and updating colleagues and junior staff on those changes.
4. To be proactive in identifying issues and proposing improvements and creative solutions within the context of current and future service requirements in order to continually deliver high quality, customer focused planning services to managers and our full range of customers.
5. To ensure that all policy formulation is undertaken with due regard to the evidence base, national as well as regional planning policy and guidance, and to contribute to meeting the milestones set out in the Councils’ Local Development Schemes.
6. To take a key role in the preparation for, and attendance of, public consultation exercises relating to the development and review of local planning policies and guidance, including associated research and information, in line with the appropriate statutory and legislative requirements and the Councils’ Statements of Community Involvement.
7. To implement self-contained projects or components of larger projects in order to deliver organisational objectives as well as enabling agreed changes in planning practice and processes to take place, taking personal responsibility for detailed project management as required.
8. On occasion to present your own recommendations to the Wandsworth Transport Committee, the Richmond Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Committee or other appropriate committees, and other internal and public meetings on complex and/or controversial planning issues in a clear and concise manner including providing expert professional advice to Members and the public.
9. Provide advice and guidance in response to planning best practice, procedure or policy within a legal/organisational policy framework.
10. To ensure that you meet service-wide and corporate performance indicators, targets and customer service standards for the full range of your own workload, also any work of junior officers that you are supervising.
11. To lead on the preparation of specialist evidence in respect of appeals including presenting evidence at Public Inquiries, Examinations in Public, Hearings and written representations.
12. To initiate and participate in policy matters, interpretation of policies and compliance, utilising effective negotiation and conflict resolution to ensure high quality innovative outcomes that reflect Council-wide objectives and policies.
13. To deputise for the Principal Policy and Information Planner when required including attendance at evening meetings.
14. Coach and facilitate the acquisition of skills and knowledge in others so that they are better equipped to be self-reliant in dealing with technical and people issues.

CRITERIA FOR PROGRESSION TO PO3 (as for PO2 plus the following)

1. To take the lead on a full range of complex policy areas, including leading on the development and review of planning policies and associated research and evidence base.
2. To work independently to assess, negotiate and set out clear and robust recommendations in an accurate, well written officer report based on relevant planning policies and other material considerations that require minimal input or correction from the Principal Policy and Information Planner or Spatial Planning and Design Team Manager.
3. To maintain an up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislation and to take a proactive approach to relevant changes in legislation and updating colleagues, within policy and other teams, on those changes and also recommending revised procedures and practices to the Principal Policy and Information Planner, and/or Spatial Planning and Design Team Manager.
4. To lead and implement self-contained projects or components of larger projects in order to deliver organisational objectives as well as enabling agreed changes in planning practice and processes to take place.
5. To coach and facilitate the acquisition of skills and knowledge in others so that they are better equipped to be self-reliant in dealing with technical and people issues particularly for complex policy and research work.
6. To provide advice and guidance in response to planning best practice, procedure or policy within a legal/organisational policy framework and develop solutions or recommendations to meet service needs.
7. To ensure that you meet service-wide and corporate performance indicators, targets and customer service standards for the full range of your own workload and to take a proactive role in coaching junior staff you are supervising to effectively and efficiently meet their own performance targets.
8. To initiate, participate in and where necessary take a management role on matters relating to policy and project specific matters and conflict resolution to ensure high quality innovative outcomes that reflect Council-wide objectives and policies.

CRITERIA FOR PROGRESSION TO PO4 (as for PO3 plus the following)

1. When necessary, the job holder will be responsible for overseeing projects and the work of team members contributing to the project.
2. To demonstrate a proven track record of working independently and leading on a full range of complex policy areas, including leading on self-contained projects relating to policy development and review as well as commissioning and leading on research and evidence base.
3. To demonstrate a proven track record of working independently to assess, negotiate and set out clear and robust recommendations in an accurate, well written officer report based on relevant planning policies and a sound evidence base that requires no input or correction from the Principal Policy and Information Planner or Spatial Planning and Design Team Manager.
4. To demonstrate a proven track record in successfully engaging and consulting a wide variety of stakeholders, duty to co-operate bodies and the local community in the development and review of local planning policies and guidance.
5. To maintain an up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislation and to take a proactive approach to relevant changes in legislation and updating all staff on those changes and also recommending and implementing revised procedures and practices.
6. To coach and facilitate the acquisition of skills and knowledge in others so that they are better equipped to be self-reliant in dealing with technical and people issues particularly focusing on complex, high profile and politically sensitive policy and project specific matters.
7. To take a lead role in providing advice and guidance in response to planning best practice, procedure or policy within a legal/organisational policy framework and develop and implement solutions or recommendations to meet service needs.
8. To take responsibility for meeting service-wide and corporate performance indicators, targets and customer service standards for the full range of your work and that you are proactive in identifying issues and proposing improvements and creative solutions within the context of current and future service requirements in order to continually deliver high quality, customer focused planning services to customers and managers.

**Generic Duties and Responsibilities**

* To contribute to the continuous improvement of the services of Richmond & Wandsworth Better Service Partnerships.
* To comply with relevant Codes of Practice, including the Code of Conduct and policies concerning data protection and health and safety.
* To adhere to security controls and requirements as mandated by Richmond and Wandsworth procedures and local risk assessments to maintain confidentiality, integrity, availability and legal compliance of information and systems
* To promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, maintaining an awareness of the equality and diversity protocol/policy and working to create and maintain a safe, supportive and welcoming environment where all people are treated with dignity and their identity and culture are valued and respected.
* To understand both Councils’ duties and responsibilities for safeguarding children, young people and adults as they apply to the roles within the Councils.
* The profile is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the duties the post holder will carry out. Other reasonable duties commensurate with the level of the post, including supporting emergency and priority situations, will form part of the role.

**Additional Information**

* This post is in a matrix management structure, with the Team Manager being responsible for line management, and the Principal Policy and Information Planners as well as on occasion the Senior Planners (Policy) and Senior Information Planner providing day-to-day supervision on projects and workflows.

**Team structure**

**Person Specification**

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**Our Values**

**THINK BIGGER**

**EMBRACE DIFFERENCE**

**CONNECT BETTER**

**LEAD BY EXAMPLE**

**PUT PEOPLE FIRST**

Our Values are embedded across Richmond & Wandsworth Better Service Partnership and throughout all roles and responsibilities at all levels of the organisation. Please [familiarise yourself with our values](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/media/afdbdeao/five_values.pdf) as they are an integral part of our recruitment and selection process.

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| **Person Specification Requirements** | **Assessed by** **A/I/T/C** **(see below for explanation)** |
| **Knowledge** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Assessed** |
| Comprehensive knowledge and sound understanding of national, regional and local plan making and associated legislative requirements and policy guidance. | **X** |  | A/I/T |
| **Experience** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Assessed** |
| Experience in local government policy work including preparation of local plan documents or equivalents. | **X** |  | A/I |
| Proven experience of using initiative to identify innovative solutions to problem solving and demonstrating a 'can-do' attitude to improvements in service delivery.  | **X** |  | A/I |
| Experience of coaching, training and motivating staff on a day to day basis to secure and maintain improvements in service delivery. |  | **X** | A/I |
| **Skills** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Assessed** |
| Clear understanding of IT systems, such as Microsoft Office products and appropriate planning and local plan development software packages, including the ability to familiarise themselves quickly with new and emerging innovative and specialist plan-making software. | **X** |  | A/I/T |
| Effective report writing skills including preparation of local plan documents, committee reports, development plan examination statements or equivalents. | **X** |  | A/I/T |
| Articulate in written and oral communication skills with particular reference to report and letter writing, public speaking, presentation skills and communicating with Members, the public, staff and other professionals. | **X** |  | A/I |
| Ability to engage with and consult key stakeholders and the public on the development and review of planning policies and guidance. | **X** |  | A/I |
| Ability to analyse and interpret complex data and present key facts including policy implications in the preparation of reports, policy formulation and other material. | **X** |  | A/I/T |
| Ability to prepare briefs for and select, control and monitor consultants. | **X** |  | A/I |
| Ability to lead on designated projects with minimum supervision and to deputise for the Principal Policy and Information Planner in their absence. | **X** |  | A/I |
| To work effectively to meet challenging deadlines and manage competing and changing priorities. | **X** |  | A/I |
| To work as part of a team taking into account the needs of other Council Departments and with a willingness and ability to impart knowledge to other staff. | **X** |  | A/I |
| Ability to assist in identifying need for change and to introduce and manage changes designed to improve service delivery.  | **X** |  | A/I |
| **Qualifications** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Assessed** |
| A degree in planning or other appropriate professional qualification and a member of the RTPI or eligible for full membership. | **X** |  | A/C |

**A – Application form / CV**

**I – Interview**

**T – Test**

**C - Certificate**