

## Folkestone & Hythe District Council Job Description

JOB DETAILS	
Job Title	Graduate Planning Officer
Service Area / Team	Planning / Development Management
Reports to	Development Management Team Leader
Post Number	TBC
Grade & Annual Salary	£19,839 - £25,458 (Grade C / D, dependent on career grade progression) (Subject to evaluation)
Politically Restricted Post	No
DBS Requirement	N/A

JOB PURPOSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following a period of training this entry level role into planning will require the applicant to initially start with a small number of basic planning applications and as skills and knowledge develop to take responsibility for a wider variety of types of applications and pre application enquiries and to be a vital team player suggesting and implementing ongoing improvements to help to provide an efficient and effective and user friendly Development Management service.</li> </ul>

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	Frequency (daily/weekly/ monthly/annually etc)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a basic knowledge of what a planning department does and the purpose of the role</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<b>After a period of training and learning/ developing skills;</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To case manage all types of applications dealt with in planning including planning permission, Listed building consent, Demolition notices, Lawful Development Certificates (proposed and existing), prior notifications etc including making a recommendation to approve or refuse to line manager or Development Management Planning Committee and drafting delegated and committee reports.</li> </ul>	Daily
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare draft decision notices</li> </ul>	Daily
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake site visits and provide advice in respect of pre-application enquiries in accordance with local and national planning policy and planning law.</li> </ul>	Daily

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage own workload to ensure application decisions and pre-application enquiries are dealt with within statutory time limits.</li> </ul>	Daily
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for ensuring consultations required by law and by internal procedure are carried out.</li> </ul>	Daily
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep abreast of changes to planning law and case law as determined by courts and recent appeal decisions.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify policy constraints to development both on proposals, maps and on site.</li> </ul>	Daily
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake negotiations with applicants and agents to improve quality of development.</li> </ul>	Regularly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a document management system to case manage including measuring distances and site areas and to upload site photos and new documents received during application process. Use computer system to input decisions and prepare and draft reports.</li> </ul>	Daily
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide advice and guidance verbally and in writing to a variety of stakeholders using appropriate language and communication methods depending on the audience including to Councillors, Parish Councils, Agents, Applicants, Internal Staff, Statutory Consultees inc Environment Agency, Natural England etc.</li> </ul>	Daily
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To investigate enforcement matters arising from their case load and carry out any necessary enforcement work as a result.</li> </ul>	As required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To prepare appeal statements.</li> </ul>	As required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To actively suggest and take part in implementation of ongoing continuous improvements within the department particularly in respect of new Government procedures.</li> </ul>	As required

## **CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adhere to the council's safeguarding policies and procedures and undertake relevant training in order to help protect children and vulnerable adults within the district.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To comply with legislation, council policies and procedures including the Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act, Information Security Policy, the Code of Conduct for Officers and to participate in any Emergency Planning activities as required.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To actively demonstrate the values and behaviours of the council.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure our customers are valued by taking into account their views and needs in all that we do.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To contribute to the development and achievement of relevant corporate and service objectives by suggesting ideas for service improvements.</li> </ul>

- To communicate openly and honestly with colleagues, members and customers.
- To undergo any training necessary to be able to fulfil the requirements of the job.
- To carry out other duties commensurate with the grade, skills, experience and qualifications of the post holder as directed and as may be required from time to time.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

<b>Responsibility for Staff (direct reports)</b>	n/a
<b>Responsibility for Staff (indirect reports)</b>	n/a
<b>Financial / Budgetary Accountability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall Accountability/control (£ value)</li> <li>• Directly Managed (£ value)</li> <li>• Income Generation (£ value)</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	n/a n/a Jointly responsible for generating income from planning fees and pre-application enquiries. If time limit targets are not met fees have to be returned. Responsible for ensuring this does not happen.
<b>Responsibility for Physical Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicles / Equipment / Tools</li> <li>• Information Systems</li> <li>• Buildings / External Locations</li> <li>• Maintenance</li> <li>• Stocks / Supplies / Procurement</li> </ul>	Responsible for laptop and mobile phone. Responsible for accurately updating planning document management systems.
<b>Responsibility for Service Contracts</b>	Procuring consultants to undertake work as required.

#### The key decision making areas in the role

- Planning Officers need to make informed recommendations based on planning law, case law and local and national planning policy taking into consideration all material planning considerations in order to put forward a recommendation within a report to senior officers or Planning Committee.

#### The numerical measures in the role

<b>Financial</b>	<b>Non-financial (As a department)</b>
N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numbers of planning applications – approx 1900 per year</li> </ul>

<b>NATURE OF CONTACTS</b>	
<b>Internal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colleagues within planning inc other planning officers and support staff</li> <li>Colleagues within other departments</li> <li>Managers</li> <li>Corporate Management Team</li> <li>Members</li> </ul>
<b>External</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents/ General Public/ Applicants</li> <li>Parish Councils</li> <li>Other local authorities</li> <li>Agents</li> <li>Planning professionals/ other professionals eg Surveyors, Architects</li> <li>Government agencies such as The Planning Inspectorate and Department for Communities &amp; Local Government and Highways England</li> <li>Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England</li> </ul>

<b>WORKING ENVIRONMENT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Describe how and by whom the post is managed</b> The post is line managed by the Development Management Team Leader with regular contact but constant access to line management should queries arise and weekly 1 to 1's to discuss caseload.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Describe the level of initiative and/or independence expected</b> On a day to day basis the post holder is expected to use their own initiative to manage their workload and priorities and to make recommendations based upon existing policies, procedures and legislation, discussing all cases with their line manager. The post holder is expected to respond to pre-application enquiries with assistance where required. Whilst many documents or tasks are created from existing templates or within existing procedures, the post holder is required to populate the template with conditions and decisions taking into account legislation, case law and planning law. They are also required to undertake site visits and meetings independently and provide advice.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Location - Flexible</b></li> </ul>

The post is based at the Civic Centre, Folkestone but designated as a flexible worker to enable mobile working as appropriate according to the service area requirements. However the balance between working from home and at the Civic Centre must take into account the fact that they can benefit from working with and being trained by other Planners in the office and that constant client contact is an important requirement of the role.

- **Describe the level of IT competence and skill required for the post holder**  
The post holder will need to be competent at using standard Microsoft Office packages, as well as the ability to learn other IT software such as Uniform or other database system and document management system as brought in by the Council/ department.

**Progression in Role**

**Starting – the required related knowledge / skills / qualifications and experience required at selection**

**Essential**

- Degree or equivalent relevant experience in planning
- GCSE Maths & English A-C (or equivalent)
- Report writing skills
- Experience with office systems such as Word, Excel & Outlook
- Appreciation of requirements of working in a policy-making/ decision-making or political environment
- Knowledge and understanding of the role of development management and the planning system

- **Induction – what initial induction / training is required to become proficient in this role?**

During the first few weeks of employment the post holder will be expected to follow the basic corporate induction framework, attend the next available formal corporate induction session and complete any departmental induction requirements.

In addition, the post holder will need to read and digest the local plan and Core Strategy and be aware of our local planning policies, learn how to be confident and proficient in using our mapping system to identify planning constraints and gain a knowledge of the District (required to carry out site visits).The post holder will also need to learn how to use database and document management system as these will be used daily. Learn how to research planning law, case law and appeal decisions and be introduced to planning legislation including the Town and Country Planning Act, the Procedure Order and General Permitted Development Order. Be introduced to key members of staff within linked departments such as Economic Development, Council Tax and Business Support.

- **Proficient – how would this be displayed in the role?**

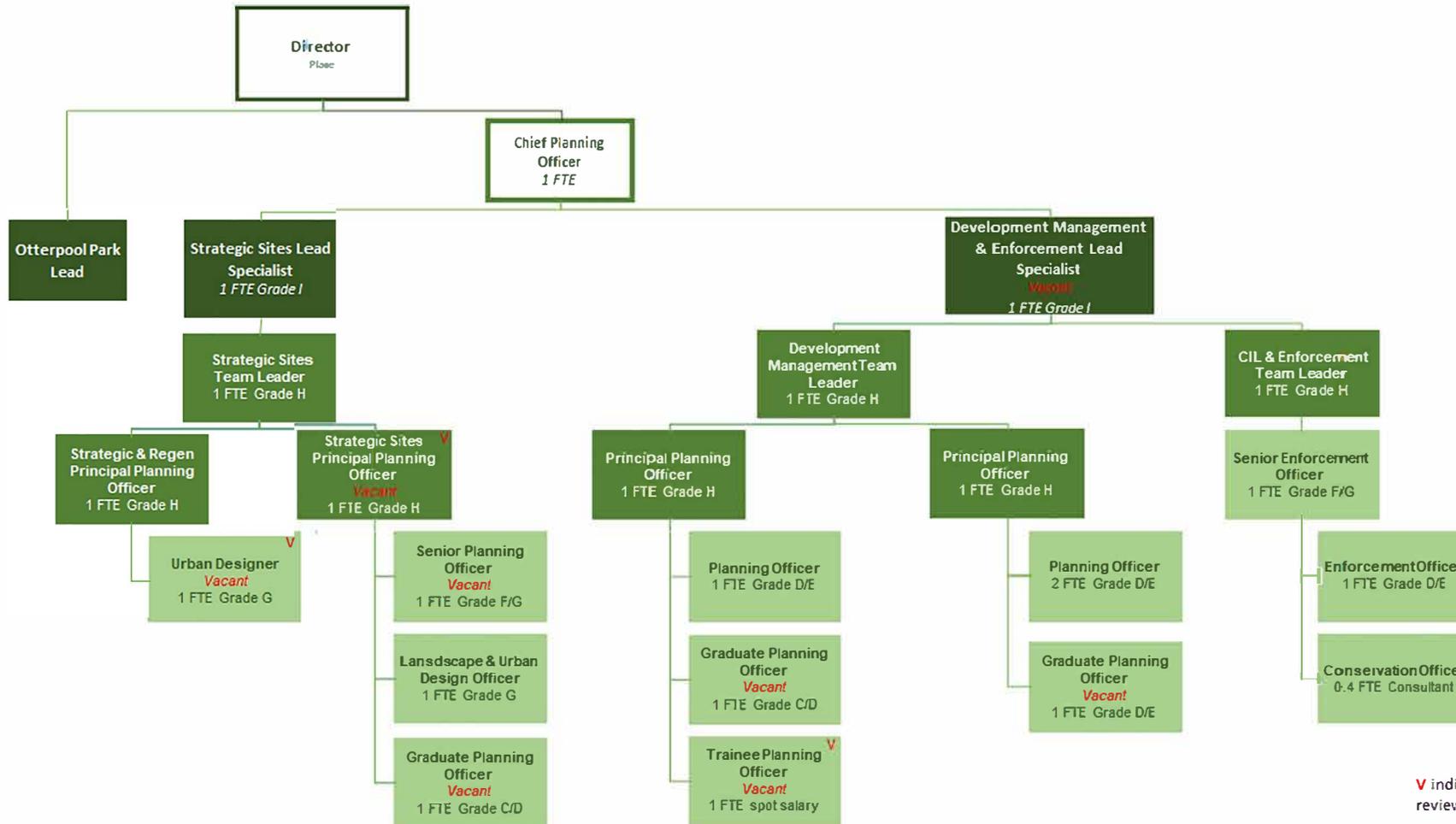
- The post holder will be able to confidently make appropriate and accurate recommendations and write subsequent reports with minimal or no assistance

and fully manage cases alone with only the need to involve managers on complex matters for guidance.

- Be proficient in using all of the systems required to use daily
- Being able to simply yet accurately convey complex information to the public

- **Advanced – what additional characteristics will be displayed?**

- Actively highlighting and putting forward ideas for improvements within the team/department and assisting in the implementation of these



V indicates a post pending review in October 2020

## Folkestone & Hythe District Council Person Specification

### Post Title: Graduate Planning Officer

<b>Important Information for Applicants:</b>				
The criteria listed in this person specification are the requirements for the post. Where the method of assessment is stated to be the application form, your application needs to demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria, even if other methods of assessment are also shown. <b>If you do not address these criteria fully, you may not be shortlisted. Please give specific examples wherever possible.</b>				
Factors	Criteria	Means of Assessment		
		Application	Interview	Test
Qualifications	<b>Essential</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ GCSE A-C standard or equivalent (including Maths &amp; English)</li> <li>▪ Degree or equivalent relevant experience in planning</li> </ul>	✓		
	<b>Desirable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student membership of RTPI</li> <li>▪ Good numeracy and IT skills</li> <li>▪ Willingness to work towards planning qualification (post-graduate)</li> </ul>	✓ ✓ ✓		
Experience and Knowledge	<b>Essential</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of the role of Planning Policy/Development Management and the planning system.</li> <li>• An appreciation of the requirements of working in a policy-making/decision making or political environment</li> <li>▪ Experience of operating MS Office systems such as Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook</li> <li>▪ IT skills and report writing skills</li> </ul>	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	
	<b>Desirable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An appreciation of the requirements of working in a policy-making/decision making or political environment</li> </ul>	✓	✓	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Experience of operating MS Office systems such as Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook</li> <li>▪ IT skills and report writing skills</li> <li>▪ Previous experience of GIS and map based applications.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	
<b>Skills and Abilities</b>	<p><b>Essential</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The written and oral communication skills required to effectively liaise with stakeholders, customers and colleagues at every level and through a range of mediums.</li> <li>• Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to convey and receive information accurately with tact and diplomacy.</li> <li>• Ability to write clear and concise, logical reports and statements.</li> <li>• Ability to work as part of a team and on own initiative.</li> <li>• Ability to organise and prioritise workload and competing demands effectively in order to meet deadlines and maintain high standards at all times.</li> <li>• Flexible, adaptable and receptive to new initiatives and change.</li> <li>• Excellent customer service skills and the ability to offer customers an effective, efficient and consistent service.</li> <li>• Ability to deal effectively with confrontational situations</li> <li>• Access to car or motorcycle</li> <li>• Full driving license</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>	
	<p><b>Desirable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> </ul>			