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# Recruitment information

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## Job description and person specification

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**Your title** Senior / Principal Planning Policy Officer

**DBS check** N/A

**Post number** PRN000140

**Your team** Planning Policy & Strategy Team

**You would be based** Civic Centre, Esher

**Your line manager** Local Plan Manager

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## About the role

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You will be working within the Planning Policy & Strategy Team, tasked with assisting in the delivery of a new Local Plan for the borough. You will work directly under the Local Plan Manager.

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### The main purpose of the role:

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To assist the team Managers in the preparation, implementation and review of the Council's Local Plan and its supporting evidence base within a culture of continuous improvement towards principal level (senior position).

To take a leading position within the team, helping to drive and develop the preparation, implementation and review of the Council's Local Plan and evidence base (principal position).

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### Specific duties and responsibilities

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#### Senior position:

1. To support the development of key strategic planning policy areas (e.g. Green Belt & Housing) as part of the preparation, implementation and review of the Council's Local Plan, including the evidence base, in accordance with statutory requirements (e.g. Duty to Cooperate) and within the timescales set by the team's work programme & Local Development Scheme;
2. To assist in the preparation of the required documentation for the examination of any Local Plan document;
3. To provide support in preparing and securing adoption/approval and implementation of other planning documents and plans - including strategies, action plans, planning briefs, supplementary planning guidance, press releases and consultation material;
4. To ensure co-ordination with the Council's other policies plans and programmes, promote partnership working within and beyond the local

authority and efficiently and effectively engage a wide range of stakeholders in policy development and the plan making and review process;

5. To lead in the development and approval of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI);
6. To provide information and advice both verbally and written at an appropriate level to a wide range of stakeholders (internal and external) on planning and development matters including existing and emerging Local Plan policies and national policy and guidance;
7. To lead and provide advice and support to Town / Parish Councils in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans and other policy matters;
8. Manage stakeholder and community participation / consultation processes on the Local Plan and other documents, and respond to representations including making effective use of the Council's online system;
9. To prepare and present written reports as appropriate to Committees and Member steering groups;
10. Keep under review, engage and report/respond to neighbouring authorities (e.g. duty to cooperate consultations) and agencies operating in the Borough;
11. Through professional development and networking, to keep informed of current and proposed national planning policy and guidance, best practice, relevant legislation, procedures and standards;
12. To ensure the continued update of the team's webpages;
13. To demonstrate at all times a flexible, positive and proactive work ethic and attitude and a genuine desire to progress within the post;
14. Deputise and substitute for the Principal Planning Policy Officer as required;
15. Such other duties as may, from time to time, be allocated appropriate to the grade and contributing to the purpose and objectives of the post.

**Principal position:**

Officers progressing to the principal level will still be expected to fulfil the specific responsibilities of the senior post and have not been repeated below to avoid duplication.

1. To lead on and help drive and develop key strategic planning policy areas (e.g. Green Belt & Housing) as part of the preparation, implementation and review of the Council's Local Plan, including the evidence base, in accordance with statutory requirements (e.g. Duty to Cooperate) and within the timescales set by the team's work programme & Local Development Scheme;
2. To take a lead role in preparing the required documentation for the examination of any Local Plan document including expert presentation and robust defence at examination;
3. To take a lead role in preparing and securing adoption/approval and implementation of other planning documents and plans - including strategies, action plans, planning briefs, supplementary planning guidance, press releases and consultation material;
4. To provide advice and support to other officers in the role as 'oversight' as featured in the team's project management matrix;
5. To be fully aware of the key aspects of all other projects being undertaken by the team and be able to respond to basic questions and source information;
6. To take an active role and support the team's Managers in making key strategic decisions in all aspects of planning policy;
7. Commission, manage and review studies or advisory services provided by external consultants ensuring value for money and quality control in accordance with Corporate Policies;
8. In conjunction with the team Managers, keep under review, engage and report/respond as required on national and sub-regional guidance and policy matters/consultations;
9. With limited supervision, draft and present complex planning reports as appropriate to Member Steering Groups and Committees, and with robust proficiency, respond to resultant questions and challenge;
10. Support the team Managers in making presentations to the public on matters related to the requirements of the post and with robust proficiency, respond to resultant questions and challenge;
11. To robustly represent the Council at internal officer groups and at meetings with external organisations, including with other Local Planning Authorities and at their examination, ensuring the protection of the interests of the

Service/Council in relation to emerging local plans and policies of other local authorities and of agencies & organisations operating in the Borough;

12. With limited supervision, draft written and provide verbal advice as required to the Development Management Team on complex planning policy matters (pre-apps, applications and appeals) including the issues of existing and emerging planning policy and guidance at both the local, sub-regional and national levels;
13. Through professional development and networking, to keep informed of current and proposed national planning policy and guidance, best practice, relevant legislation, procedures and standards, and help ensure the achievement of team/service changes and improvements accordingly;
14. To create and maintain effective partnerships with relevant bodies to ensure the preparation, implementation and delivery of plans and policies;
15. To demonstrate at all times a flexible, positive and proactive work ethic and attitude and a genuine desire to progress within the post;
16. Mentor staff within the Planning Policy Team;
17. Deputise and substitute for the Local Plan Manager as required;
18. Such other duties as may, from time to time, be allocated appropriate to the grade and contributing to the purpose and objectives of the post.

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## What's missing?

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Our job descriptions cover as much of the role as we can possibly get down in writing, but issues will arise, and we hope and expect that you will understand that and take on-board other tasks from time-to-time, in keeping with your role of course.

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## Your conduct

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We expect the highest standards of conduct from our employees and at all times you must carry out your duties with integrity and in accordance with the Code of Conduct for employees.

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## Equal opportunities

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We have a strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity and expect all employees to implement and promote our policy in their own work.

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## Health and safety

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We are committed to a healthy and safe working environment and expect all employees to implement and promote its policy in all aspects of their work.

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## Personal and sensitive data

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You will have regard for the duty of care owed to personal data and sensitive personal data and any other confidential or sensitive information which you access in the course of your employment ensuring adherence to the Data Protection Act and the Council's Information Security Policy and related guidance.

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## Talent development

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We have a talent development programme that includes regular one-to-ones, mid-year reviews, end of year performance reviews and a strong and varied learning and development programme.

You will be expected to get involved in this talent programme to ensure you are performing at the highest level.

## Confidentiality

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We are committed to maintaining privacy of all staff and customers. We expect all staff to handle all individuals' personal information in a sensitive and professional manner. All staff are under an obligation not to gain access or attempt to gain access to information they are not authorised to have.

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## Person specification

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**Please read the details on this form carefully before you complete your Application Form. This form lists the essential requirements needed in order to do the job.**

Your written application will be considered in relation to the essential knowledge, skills, abilities, education and experience required for the job and candidates will therefore be selected for interview on this basis.

Elmbridge Borough Council is committed to providing the best possible services and ensuring they are accessible to all who need them irrespective of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religious or political belief, Trade Union activity, age, disability, being male or female, married or unmarried, sexuality.

**What you need to tell us on your application form:**

- You will need to tell us throughout your application form and at interview how you can contribute to providing good quality services for all.
- For each of the requirements listed overleaf, you will need to explain how your skills, abilities, knowledge, education and experience make you suitable for this post.
- These may have been gained through previous employment, voluntary/community work, spare time activities, home responsibilities, training or languages spoken.
- You should also include anything else relevant to the job which you think we should know about.

We regret that we can only consider applicants who are already eligible to work in the United Kingdom.

**Title: Senior / Principal Planning Policy Officer**

**Post no: PRN000140**

**Team: Planning Policy & Strategy**

**Hours: 36 per week (including out of normal office hours)**

**Grade: PO36 – 48 (transition to Principal – PO42).**

**Car allowance: C3**

**Salary: £45,868 - £51,653 (senior officer)  
£52,769 - £59,657 (principal officer)**

## Qualifications and education

No.	Key requirements	Senior	Principal	To be tested by: Application (A) Interview (I)
		Essential (E) or Desirable (D)		
1.	A degree or equivalent qualification in Town Planning or related discipline	E	E	A
2.	Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute (MRTPI).	D	D	A

## Experience

No.	Key requirements	Senior	Principal	To be tested by: Application (A) Test (T) Interview (I)
		Essential (E) or Desirable (D)		
3.	Experience in planning policy and / or development plan preparation.	E	E	A, I
4.	Experience of writing policies, evidence base documents, and / supplementary planning documents.	E	E	A
5.	Experience of working in Local Government or similar environment.	D	E	A, I
6.	Experience in giving evidence at formal hearings and similar occasions.	D	E	A
7.	Experience of giving evidence under cross examination.	D	E	A
8.	Experience of organising public consultation exercises.	D	E	A
9.	Experience of managing complex planning projects governed by statutory procedures.	D	E	A, I
10.	Experience of managing external consultants.	D	E	A

11.	A minimum of 3 years' post qualification experience directly related to planning policy and development plan preparation.	D	E	A, I
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## Knowledge, skills and abilities

No.	Key requirements	Senior	Principal	To be tested by: Application (A) Test (T) Interview (I)
		Essential (E) or Desirable (D)		
12.	Able to display good communication skills both orally and in writing.	E	E	A, I
13.	Ability to communicate ideas effectively with professionals and non-specialists and to explain complex matters in simple terms.	D	E	A, I
14.	Ability to plan, prioritise and programme own workload to meet deadlines.	E	E	A, I
15.	Ability to plan, prioritise and manage own and project team workloads to meet deadlines	D	E	A, I
16.	Ability to produce clear and concise reports.	E	E	A
17.	Good computer literacy.	E	E	A
18.	Good project management skills.	D	E	A, I
19.	Ability to work with limited supervision.	D	E	A, I
20.	Knowledge of the current legislation relating to development plans, circular advice and national planning policy / guidance / statements.	E	E	A, I
21.	Commitment to deliver excellent customer service	E	E	A
22.	Commitment to continued professional development.	E	E	A
23.	Display a positive attitude and be flexible and adaptable to meet changing requirements.	E	E	A, I

## Special requirements

No.	Key requirements	Senior	Principal	To be tested by: Application (A) Test (T) Interview (I)
		Essential (E) or Desirable (D)		
24.	Full driving licence and vehicle available for work.	D	D	A

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25.	Attendance at formal evening meetings of the Borough Council and consultation / community events as required.	E	E	A
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