

Job Description and Person Specification

Principal Digital Planner

A Lambeth to be proud of



Job Title: Principal Digital Planner

Department: Climate and Inclusive Growth

Grade: PO5

Reports to: Digital Planning Lead

Responsible for: N/A

Job Purpose

To provide and lead principal digital planning officer input into the council's digital planning innovation programme, including the PlanX (formerly Reducing Invalid Planning Applications - RIPA), the Back Office Planning System (BoPS) projects and the Building Control Digital Discovery project. These are high profile projects that form part of the Government's overarching ambitions for a digitally transformed planning system. The post holder will work with the Digital Planning Lead (including partnering with and providing leadership to other councils) on the two planning projects (and any associated projects) which seek to develop innovative solutions to inform the Government's future vision for digital planning. The post holder will also provide the Lead Product Owner role to the Back Office Planning System project on behalf of the 18+ other councils involved. The post holder will work with the Head of Operations & Innovation (Head of O&I) on the Building Control discovery project and will be expected to deputise for the Head of O&I and lead project workshops, manage and quality control the input from systems analyst, user research and service design consultants as required. The post holder may also be required to work on similar, emerging digitally focused projects related to the improvement of delivering other government services digitally.

The post holder will be a leader within a team integral to the digital development and architecture of the future Planning system and other local government services. They will be a Product Owner (or Lead) and key attendee at project sessions, as required, for both the PlanX and BoPS projects providing specialist input into the development of the tools for planning and other government services. They will need to use their expertise in planning legislation as well as planning related working practices, processes, and policy. They will also need to develop strong influencing and persuasion in communicating with the wider project team partners to ensure that the Planning requirements and Lambeth's specific needs are addressed.

They will work with the Digital Planning Lead and Head of Operations and Innovation to ensure that Lambeth helps influence, steer and informs the development of digital tools. This will include using a creative approach that informs changes and improvements to existing practices. They will need to have extensive experience of working as a town planning professional in local government, and a thorough knowledge of all relevant planning legislation, policies and procedures of the English planning system. They should have experience of contributing to the review and formulation of planning policies and site development proposals and have a strong working knowledge of planning policy related areas.

Responsibilities

1. To work flexibly in undertaking the duties and responsibilities of this job and participate as required in multi-disciplinary and cross-organisational groups and task teams.

2. To attend meetings outside normal office hours when required.
3. To take responsibility, appropriate to the post for tackling racism and promoting good race, ethnic and community relations.
4. To take responsibility, relevant to the post, for ensuring that Council statutes and government legislation is upheld. This includes, amongst others; Management Compliance Charter, Environmental Policy, Data Protection Act, Race Equality Action Plan, Quality Assurance Plan, Health & Safety, Sustainable Construction and Recycling.
5. To be integral to the development of complex systems and organisational redesign projects and lead on and contribute to multi-disciplinary and multiple project teams to deliver organisational and cultural change across the council.
6. To be an active participant and to provide leadership in the project workshops and other digital related meetings to provide advice, expertise and content for digital and systems transformation for planning applications as a process considering dependencies across projects.
7. Experience of having prepared and presented statements and evidence for planning appeals including public inquiries and informal hearings for the full range of applications, including major and complex applications. This knowledge will allow the post holder to have the level of experience to help inform the direction of development as the tools' scope expands.
8. Strong knowledge of the tasks required for validation and allocation of the full range of planning applications.
9. To support and assist the Digital Planning lead in the development, and delivery of the council's involvement in key digital planning programmes being driven by MHCLG to modernise the software used for making and case-managing planning applications as well as digitisation of plan making and other related policy digitisation workstreams
10. To work with the Digital Planning Lead on a range of digital related content and flow digital development requirements for applications from all category types (major, minor, other, unknown etc) planning applications as well as digital policy content such as consultation, local plan and other policy related functions. This will include, where necessary, involvement in discussions with users, including developers and other partner local authorities as well as key officers from MHCLG as well as senior stakeholders. To be an integral part of those projects carrying out research and preparing and presenting all types of report to senior stakeholders (including councillors and council meetings)
11. To observe and engage in User testing related to the digital projects. Sharing analysis and insights to the wider team.

12. To assist in activities with existing partners and MHCLG to deliver wider engagement and adoption of digital tools being developed. To monitor progress of the digital pilots in other Local Planning Authorities.
13. To work with multidisciplinary teams of stakeholders from a variety of business areas and input into the formulating and gathering of metrics relevant to the project to measure key success criteria including savings and customer satisfaction.
14. To maintain a current knowledge and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of relevant planning law, policies, working practices and procedures.
15. To help ensure effective liaison and co-ordination with other parts of the Council, and with other services as required on digital planning projects and other related matters.
16. To contribute to the development of a strategic planning function, which promotes the Council's regeneration framework and provides an integrated approach to policy, regeneration and development issues.
17. To maintain a thorough, up-to-date knowledge of relevant law, policies, working practices and procedures. To ensure that the council's requirements and ambitions inform discussions around the development of digital tools. To ensure that Members' Enquiries, Chief Executive's correspondence and formal complaints relating to the digital projects are appropriately responded to in compliance with established timescales and procedures.
18. To provide advice, guidance and knowledge to non-planning professional partners of the projects. To work to develop and inform metrics to measure benefits and other outputs.
19. To support the work to develop a rules-based validation system for Lambeth, in particular for Householders and other relevant applications. To ensure the services being developed meet the council's expectations and requirements for assessment of planning applications and its policy requirements are taken into consideration and prioritised.
20. To be the lead Product Owner (project lead) on the BOPS workstream, ensuring that the needs and input of all partner authorities are represented in both regular sprint planning sessions as well as weekly work and programme scheduling. To interpret the needs of partner LPAs (Local Planning Authorities) in a fair and responsive way.
21. To assist the Digital Planning Lead in promoting the digital planning and building control products to other Councils and industry professionals by hosting and presenting at show and tells.
22. Lead on the preparation of funding bids for the continued development of the BOPS digital planning product and support the development and preparation of bids for other digital projects related to the improvement of delivering government services.

23. To direct and manage the data analyst and systems work in investigating the outputs from research and data, helping them present complex findings in simple, summary format for presentation to senior officers.
24. To mentor junior members of the Digital Planning team and train them to use the PlanX and BOPS services.
25. To be the lead officer assessing full and minor planning applications and presenting them to the Planning Application Committee as required and assisting principal planning officers in the assessment of major and complex planning applications.
26. To directly line manage and mentor officer, senior and graduate staff members of the team, and to assist in their professional development.
27. To assess major and complex planning applications and present them to the Planning Application Committee.
28. To assist and lead as required Lead on the preparation of funding bids for the continued development of the PlanX digital planning product.
29. To plan, programme and prioritise work / projects and actively contribute to the day-to-day management of the team appropriate to the post, including providing advice, guidance, training and supervision to team members and developing and co-ordinating specific programmes and activities within the team, as agreed.
30. To scope, commission and project manage consultants to deliver projects / work programmes as required, including the management of allocated budgets. To provide high quality professional advice to appointed developers, public, stakeholders and project partners. To provide briefing papers to MP's, Council members, senior officers, and applicants on the progress of digital projects and related matters.
31. To lead in the promotion of the digital planning and building control products to other Councils and industry professionals including hosting and presenting at show and tells, and presenting at professional conferences such as the Digital Leader's Week and other promotional engagements.
32. To assist the Digital Planning Lead and Head of Service to ensure that Members' Enquiries, Chief Executive's correspondence and formal complaints relating to the digital projects are appropriately responded to in compliance with established timescales and procedures.
33. To deputise for the Head of O&I as required in relation to other emerging digital innovation projects, including the Building Control Discovery project. This will include, leading shortlisting, interviews, procurement and workshops and developing analysis and insights from the workstream.

34. To present to Senior Management Board, Cabinet Member Briefings and other forums insights and developments of the digital workstreams. Ensuring complex analysis and data is explained in well structured, simple and concise presentations.
35. To lead on the promotion of the digital innovation projects to internal and external parties – ensuring Lambeth’s position as a front runner of digital innovation is maintained and enhanced and encouraging a positive representation of Lambeth as a council.

Other

- The post-holder’s decision-making authority is determined by council policy and procedures.
- The post-holder may be required to lead staff and consultants commissioned in relation to specific elements of the projects, appropriate to the level of the grade.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

It is essential that in you can meet the following requirements for the role and be able to give evidence or examples of your proven experience in each of the short-listing criteria marked Application (A).			Shortlisting Criteria
You should expect that all areas listed below will be assessed as part of the interview and assessment process should you be shortlisted.			
If you are applying under the Disability Confident scheme, you will need to give evidence or examples of your proven experience in the areas marked with “Ticks” (✓) on the person specification when you complete the application form.			
<i>For link/career graded post, please mark knowledge, experience, and behaviours clearly for each grade.</i>			
Key Knowledge	K1	Thorough up to date knowledge of all relevant planning legislation, policies and procedures.	✓A
	K2	Knowledge and awareness of current issues and developments affecting planning, growth, urban regeneration and local government in England.	
	K3	Good knowledge and experience of relevant digital platforms/ICT systems. Including GIS and other planning related digital tools.	
	K4	Knowledge of customer care and the principles of equal opportunities in providing a Planning function	
	K5	Knowledge and understanding of the statutory requirements and good practice in relation to service related matters.	
Relevant Experience	E1	Significant post qualification experience of relevant development management work, preferably including	✓A

		responsibility for dealing with a planning application caseload.	
	E2	Experience of providing planning advice to members, senior officers, developers and the public, including on complex planning issues.	
	E3	Experience of processing the full range of minor other and major applications.	✓A
	E4	Experience of validations and case allocation of all types of application including complex major applications.	✓A
	E5	Experience of and/or a strong understanding of policy underlining the planning system. Policy work within local government desirable	
	E6	Experience of dealing with informal hearings, public inquiries, including with complex major public inquiries and / or Examination in Public of development plans.	
	E7	Experience of working on transformational projects and understanding / enthusiasm for digital solutions	
	E8	Experience of providing supervision and/or guidance/mentoring to more junior staff	
	E9	Experience of processing the full range of applications together with experience of negotiating planning obligations, or similar, in respect of complex development proposals.	✓A
	E10	Experience of dealing with all types of planning appeals, including giving evidence at public inquiries and / or Examination in Public of development plans.	✓A
	E11	Experience of managing cross-partner projects, with the ability of bring those partners together and lead a programme of works.	✓A
Qualification	Q1	An RTPI-recognised degree level qualification in Town Planning or equivalent	✓A
	Q2	Eligible for Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute.	✓A

Core Values and Behaviours		<p>Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the views of others and ask for their opinions making sure that everyone in my team inputs into the things that matter. • Ensure fairness and justice is at the heart of my decision making and support to my team and others. • Take time to build trust, building the respect of our stakeholders and ensuring as a team we take accountability for doing what we agree to do. • Develop others and ensure we work as one team for Lambeth, encouraging everyone to play their part 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take positive action to ensure everyone in my team has opportunities to learn and grow at work • Encourage everyone to be themselves at work and value who they are • I am inclusive and actively celebrate diversity, recognising everyone in my team as individuals. 	
		Kindness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat each member of my team with respect and dignity just as I would want for myself. • Encourage each member of my team to do their very best work and am available to them to provide support and guidance. • Personalise my support to each team members and look out for them, lending a hand wherever I can • Encourage everyone to try and learn from mistakes and use integrity to take action with my team to put things right together • Work with empathy seeking to understand each and every member of team, their unique perspective and circumstances and ensure everyone is heard • Take the time to communicate, being honest, open and genuine and taking the time to get to know team members as individuals. • Show compassion and patience recognising that everyone in the team has unique experience and celebrating the great work they do for Lambeth. • Look after the health and wellbeing of my team members and encourage open and regular discussions about the issues that impact on them, working together to find solutions. 	
		Accountability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I encourage and support my team to do the right thing even when it's tough and we communicate our decisions in a timely way • I ensure my team and employees take individual and collective accountability for performance and delivery, making sure that they have clear plans and performance objectives. • I ensure my team plan ahead, getting the basics right and take swift action when problems arise • I encourage my team to be risk aware and ensuring that our decisions and actions are informed and understood and communicated to others. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I provide regular, timely and constructive feedback to my team members on their performance and behaviours and act quickly when performance is not on track. • I share my learning, knowledge and skills with others thorough coaching and mentoring and encourage others to do the same. • I ensure that my team and I put residents, communities, customers and their needs at the centre of everything we do. • I encourage my team to learn and grow and ask questions to find the information they need to do their jobs 	
		<p>Ambition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am proud of our borough and my team and encourage everyone in the team to aim for the highest possible standards of excellence in everything we do. • Encourage my team to be flexible and try new things when it's appropriate to do so and tell me what could be improved. • Promote a one team for Lambeth approach reaching out to our stakeholders to face our challenges together • Encourage and support my team to be courageous for our residents and communities and stop at nothing to ensure they have the best possible outcomes • I make time for the team to Innovate and look for creative ways to do things better, being curious about possibilities. • Positively challenge and encourage the team to collaborate and look for solutions together across service and team boundaries. • Make time for my team to grow and develop taking advantage of opportunities to learn from each other and others. We plan our learning and career growth. 	