

**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**

**ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION DEPARTMENT**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**POST TITLE:** Placemaking and Regeneration Officer

**Grade:** ME15

**DIVISION/SECTION:** Sustainable Communities/Future Merton

**Location:** Merton Civic Centre

**Responsible to:** Deputy Future Merton Manager

**Post number:** M3021304

**Date:** March 2021

**MAIN PURPOSE**

1. To lead and manage multi-disciplinary project teams of council officers and external stakeholders to develop and deliver innovative planning solutions for a wide range of planning policy issues including housing, infrastructure, economic development, open space, biodiversity, design, waste management, climate change and minimising flood risk.
2. To lead on the delivery of strategic planning policy for Merton Council, primarily the preparation, submission, review and delivery of all aspects of Merton's development plan and associated supplementary guidance and to engage with developers in the pre-planning application process.
3. To act as the lead specialist, principal point of contact, technical advisor for the Council in matters relating to planning policies, including housing, infrastructure, economic development, open space, biodiversity, design, waste management, climate change and minimising flood risk, providing expert advice to the development management process, Councillors, local residents, developers, community groups, businesses and other technical and non-technical audiences.
4. Operate at a senior level with key stakeholders to deliver strategic planning, regeneration and corporate objectives.

5. To operate at a multi-disciplinary level combining urban design, GIS, planning policy, data management, to interrogate and display for informing council strategies.
6. The role is also expected to ensure a high quality of service and advice to the Council, its clients and partners.

## **MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

7. To devise innovative approaches to enable the efficient collection of primary data in support of a range of statutory and non-statutory strategic planning and development issues, including housing, infrastructure, economic development, open space, biodiversity, design, climate change, flooding, waste and transport.
8. To be responsible for the delivery of all aspects of annual monitoring reports relating to strategic planning, including the Local Plan Local Implementation Plan, climate change, housing and other matters, and to make recommendations to support the delivery of strategic planning policy, site allocations and development decisions in Merton.
9. To convert research findings into strategic outcomes, prepare written reports and policy documents.
10. To lead on and co-ordinate Future Merton's statutory compliance and reporting requirements, providing advice to other departments and external stakeholders where appropriate. To provide comprehensive data in support of any information returns required by statute, and to deliver statutory returns on time and to a high standard.
11. To make effective, integrated use of a wide range of IT packages including statistical analysis and geographic information systems (GIS) in the collection, analysis and presentation of strategic planning research and information and to be responsible for the development and the overall management of the team's databases, including GIS.
12. To lead on organising and participating in public consultation initiatives, including designing leaflets or questionnaires and attending scheme exhibitions as required. To enable effective community engagement by collecting, managing and maintaining consultation records, including confidential data.
13. To devise innovative approaches towards the efficient collection, analysis and presentation of new data to support Future Merton projects.
14. The post holder is expected to be committed to the council's core values of public service, quality, equality and empowerment and to demonstrate this commitment in the way they carry out their duties. In addition, they should be

available to carry out such other duties, as may be required, which are consistent with the grade and scope of the post.

15. To ensure that Corporate and Departmental health and safety policies and procedures are implemented at all times and to raise any concerns regarding their operation or any other health and safety matters with the appropriate line manager.
16. To be aware of the council's Equal Opportunities Policy: to understand it and to adhere to it.
17. To assist in ensuring that the council's aims and objectives relating to customer awareness are achieved.
18. To assist in the compilation, monitoring and management of budgets for projects, programmes of works, tasks and functions and to keep managers aware of issues and variances.
19. To attend meetings with planning staff; other officers of the Council; Members of the Council; developers; applicants and agents at the Council's offices or on site as appropriate.
20. To be able to disseminate new information rapidly, identifying conflicts and inconsistencies and recommending a range of logical and practical solutions to a problem.
21. To provide specialist expertise at a complex level to the planning policy team to inform the development of planning policy.
22. To represent the Council at external bodies, on matters relating to the development of planning policy, information systems, research and reporting.
23. To deal personally with contractors and consultants on a range of complex issues related to the programme of work, including taking decisions on variations to work and authorisation of payments.
24. To investigate and respond to inquiries from members of the public, Councillors, stakeholders, and other departments of the Council.
25. To develop effective working relationships at an appropriate level with key agencies and organisations, such as government departments, the Greater London Authority, strategic healthcare providers, housing providers, the Environment Agency, infrastructure providers and others. This includes undertaking negotiations to raise the profile of Merton for strategic planning and development matters, representing the Council at external meetings and leading on Merton's input to external strategies.
26. To undertake regular site visits borough-wide in all seasons to assess spatial planning matters including on development sites under construction.

27. Make recommendations informing the council's strategic policy direction to directors and senior management based on analysis and research covering multi-disciplinary policy issues, including housing, infrastructure, the built and natural environment.
28. To develop and optimise the use of information systems, to enable efficient and effective service delivery, working with the council's IT team and other managers where appropriate.
29. To identify potential external funding sources and develop effective bids to secure them, ensuring that the Council's ability to generate external funding for projects is maximised. To develop bids for capital and revenue resources as appropriate and provide support for project management, budget management and financial forecasts to enable effective resource management.
30. To supervise and motivate junior staff, to establish the quality and budgetary criteria they are expected to work within, and to manage their performance within specific projects.
31. To provide specialist technical planning advice to Council officers and planning applicants, including at pre-application stage, and to negotiate acceptable solutions for the built environment.
32. To ensure that effective consultation arrangements which are fully compliant with any relevant statutory requirement, are in place to provide a clear and transparent mechanism for individuals and groups to contribute to the strategy development process.
33. To manage tendering and contract procedures for projects within the service area, advise on and agree the appointment of consultants carrying out studies and projects. Final responsibility would ultimately rest with the post holder.
34. Play a major role in the procurement of council-wide and cross-departmental projects and strategies (e.g. multi-million pound contracts such as GIS, advertisement).
35. To manage assigned budgets and resources and secure efficiency gains across council departments (e.g. planning policy, property management) and across external partners (e.g. public sector partners, Business Improvement Districts, and infrastructure providers). Taking sole responsibility for the management and delivery of the project.
36. To represent senior colleagues at director level of the Council as required at strategic meetings and meetings with partners, key agencies and organisations, such as government departments, the Greater London Authority, strategic healthcare providers, housing providers, the Environment Agency, infrastructure providers and others. This includes undertaking negotiations to raise the profile of Merton for strategic planning and

development matters, representing the Council at external meetings and leading on Merton's input to external strategies.

37. To produce and deliver strategic planning policies and guidance for Merton including for the Local Plan and other technical plans demonstrating a substantial level of technical and complex knowledge on urban design and strategic planning policy matters including housing, infrastructure, economic development, open space, biodiversity, design, climate change, flooding and waste management.
38. To be solely responsible for making planning-related technical judgements and recommendations on competing needs and development requirements, for example for housing, economic development, infrastructure, the natural environment etc. To demonstrate dealing with emotive issues, having strong negotiation skills, managing conflict, making and conveying difficult decisions due to the potential impact of the wide range of topic areas on people's lives and on financial investments into Merton.
39. To work in partnership, influence and ensure effective liaison with a range of organisations including residents, groups and community organisations Transport for London, Greater London Authority, other boroughs, other public sector partners (including Health, Fire, Police, Ministry of Justice) consultants, contractors, developers and other internal teams including, property management, public health, corporate services and schools.
40. To take sole responsibility for representing the Council as expert witness on specific technical planning policy matters at public enquiries as required (e.g. statutory development plans, planning appeals.) This process can be adversarial with robust cross-examination.
41. To take part in the selection and recruitment of staff including shortlisting and interviewing, carrying out staff appraisals, career grade reviews, identifying staff training needs and monitoring the effectiveness of training provided.



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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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**Date:** March 2021

**Knowledge**

1. Knowledge of techniques relating to data management and monitoring, including IT packages.
2. Knowledge of techniques in relation to one or more of the following: development plan making and delivery, transport planning, public realm, economic development, sustainability and regeneration.
3. Knowledge of best practice and innovative approaches to monitoring and managing data and analysing and presenting the results to a variety of technical and non-technical audiences.
4. Knowledge and awareness of issues relating to equal opportunities.
5. Understanding of the legislation relating to strategic planning and associated topics
6. Knowledge of best practice and innovative approaches to strategic planning

## **Skills & Abilities**

7. Excellent experience in producing proposals and documents graphically, utilising computer design software such as GIS Adobe InDesign, Illustrator or Photoshop.
8. Excellent communication and presentation skills to promote proposals to a range of audiences including developers, land-owners, corporate management team, other council departments, councillors and the local community.
9. Ability to plan, co-ordinate and supervise programmes of work
10. Ability to negotiate successfully, influence and manage relationships with external partnership organisations.
11. Ability to prepare a tender brief, procure consultants and ensure that the aims of the project are met.
12. Ability to plan, programme, manage monitor and deliver major projects and programmes of work in accordance with required timescales.
13. Excellent problem solving and analytical skills including the ability to collect, present and interpret complex information.
14. Understanding of resource management, including effective budget management.
15. Research and development skills - able to plan prepare and deliver short-term research and analysis to produce accurate reports in a timely manner.
16. Excellent organisational, time management and planning skills.
17. Meticulous attention to detail and able to work under pressure and manage conflicting priorities.

## **Experience & Training**

1. Relevant degree or qualification.
2. Substantial experience in use of GIS and a wide range of database and graphical IT packages.
3. Experience of collecting technical data, analysing the results and making recommendations and presenting complex information to a variety of technical and non-technical audiences.

4. Leadership and interpersonal skills combined with the ability to work effectively as an individual and within a team.
5. Substantial in-depth comprehensive experience in preparing and delivering strategies including development plans, policy formulation and projects covering and combining a wide range of areas including transport planning, public realm, economic development, sustainability and regeneration.
6. Experience of motivating and supervising staff.
7. Experience of working in a political environment.

### **Other Requirements**

1. To undertake site visits solo on a regular basis at all times of year and in all weather.
2. A willingness to work outside normal office hours.