



Role Profile

Chief Planning Officer
Inclusive Economy & Sustainability



SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Role Profile: Chief Planning Officer	Role Profile Number: SBC_12147
Grade: CFL 13	Salary:
Directorate/Group: Inclusive Economy & Sustainability	Reporting to: Corporate Director of Inclusive Economy & Sustainability
Date Prepared: 1 July 2024	Structure Chart attached: No

Job Purpose

To provide strategic leadership to deliver the council’s planning functions in a customer focused and solutions led way creating the right conditions for accelerating high-quality development and supporting sustainable growth in Swindon.

To build trust and be visible to key development partners, major housebuilders and residents ensuring that planning services provide earlier confidence of good growth opportunities which actively support the delivery of the council’s inclusive economy & sustainability priorities.

On a day-to-day basis, be ‘hands-on’ to lead the full suite of planning, building control, local land charges and street naming & numbering functions in a progressive and co-ordinated manner, ensuring that the service delivers (within its budget envelope) modern, efficient and best national planning outcomes.

Work closely with the Director of Inclusive Growth to unlock planning barriers and provide the appropriate policy context to support key regeneration projects, the transformation of the town centre and support the council’s emerging new ways of localities working.

Key Accountabilities

- The postholder will take strategic budget responsibility (circa £5m revenue and staff budgets) ensuring that the council’s statutory planning services and regulatory duties are delivered in a customer focused and solutions led manner.
- Lead, manage, develop and deliver progressive planning policies for the Borough through the timely production of the Local Plan (and its reviews), along with other supplementary planning documents where necessary to support good growth.
- Lead on the development of a coordinated cross-council strategic infrastructure delivery strategy that supports the deliverables within the Swindon Plan and fully aligns into the long term planning of the Borough.
- To position planning services as the ‘growth engine’ to unlock activity that contributes to the local economy through the delivery of new housing and strategically important economic development initiatives, including liaison with external agencies.

- Effectively coordinate and manage external consultants, partners and expert consultees who input into the service so that each organisation or group is able to do so in the most effective and cost-efficient manner and understands their roles and responsibilities.
- Lead and develop key relationships with strategic delivery partners, national housebuilders and local industries to achieve strategic objectives relating to place-making, and delivery of customer-focused value for money service solutions for all aspects of the service.
- Identify and secure external funding sources to support service innovation, digitisation and the integration of AI technologies to enable the delivery of a more customer focused service based on data not solely digital.
- Own and hold responsibility for providing strategic oversight on all major and locally controversial planning proposals, applications and infrastructure projects ensuring regular briefings are provided to the Corporate Director, Lead Member and Planning Committee members.
- Engage with and represent the Council's interests to key local, regional and national bodies to support the Corporate Director in driving the achievement of strategic objectives relating to planning.
- Ensure that the culture, behaviours and shared values that make the Council successful are embedded across the service and create an effective and efficient working environment to deliver Council priorities and pledges.

Supplementary Accountabilities

- To provide training, professional support and guidance to elected members enabling them to take strategic planning decisions in line with relevant legislation and the direction of the Local Plan.
- To be the council's lead technical officer on all aspects of planning and infrastructure.
- To embed commercial awareness throughout the planning team to recognise the impacts on its day to day work in unlocking and supporting development.
- Chair project boards and working groups as required associated with the delivery of key projects and strategic priorities for Swindon Borough Council and its partners.
- Embedding and maintaining rigour of key service performance indicators and planning outputs which exceed national and local targets.
- Through your visibility as a leader, provide clear direction and a motivational and inspirational environment for teams and individuals to develop

Knowledge & Experience

Candidates must have substantial knowledge and experience in the following areas of business and will be required to provide evidence of this:

- Proven ability of leadership at senior level within a Local Authority environment or private planning practice of the functions covered by the role.
- A proven ability of successful change management, implementing and delivering new working policies and practices alongside significant cultural and structural change that deliver improved services for customers in a more efficient way.

- Ability to work across organisational and professional boundaries, to contribute to the establishment of the desired organisational culture, to partnerships and to challenge inappropriate behaviour.
- Proven experience of successful financial management including budget formulation, including a track record of budget management and scheme cost management, an understanding of income generation in a Local Authority context, and the use of budgetary control and management as a driver for functional and cultural change
- A proven track record of establishing and sustaining a performance management culture, supported by effective and efficient management information systems
- Track record of developing staff, building effective teams and leading multi-disciplinary professional staff to achieve organisational aims and objectives
- An ability to lead and manage high profile projects and priorities
- Extensive experience of supporting decision makers, including Councillors and statutory consultees and strategic partner organisations to achieve positive outcomes
- Experience of working with existing, new and emerging statute and using statutory processes innovatively to deliver proactive and good growth outcomes for our residents
- Experience of contract management and major scheme delivery in a development context

Qualifications

- Educated to degree level or equivalent qualification with considerable relevant planning experience.
- Chartered membership of, or eligibility for membership of, a relevant professional body e.g RTPI/RICS

Decision Making

- The postholder has delegation of powers as the Chief Planning Officer to make significant, complex, high risk and controversial decisions (often in the face of public objection) and must be aware to manage substantial corporate risks.
- The postholder must take effective decisions quickly and act on their own initiative in order to resolve problems. Effective delegation across the team will be essential to empowering the team and accelerating planning outcomes.
- The postholder must be able to quickly get to the heart of issues and accurately assess and manage risk
- The postholder must show creativity in using intellectual capital and resources to deliver cost effective services
- The postholder will be accountable for the successful operational delivery of the services and by extension to cross council transformational priorities.
- Through developing and reviewing the Local Plan (and its evidence base) the postholder must ensure decisions taken are based on clearly defined needs of the community ensuring both short and long term needs are planned for.

Creativity and Innovation

- Constantly reviews ways of working and identifies opportunities to improve the quality of work of the service
- Identifies creative solutions to Council-wide issues and takes action to implement them
- Shows creativity in using resources to deliver cost effective services, engaging external experts where relevant, and looking beyond the boundary of current service delivery
- Continually identifying, evaluating and implementing innovative new areas of partnership working where it is beneficial to Swindon

<p><u>Job Scope</u></p> <p>Number and types of jobs managed To lead and co-ordinate service delivery and performance in the following service areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Development Management (including enforcement) • Planning policy, the Local Plan and associated documents • Neighbourhood Planning • Infrastructure delivery planning and developer contributions management • Building Control • Local land Charges • Street Naming & Numbering <p>The total service staffing headcount is c.50 via 5 direct reports. The postholder will also convene cross-council boards to develop policies to support the Local Plan and strategic infrastructure delivery.</p> <p>Typical tasks supervised/allocated to others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To visibly lead the day to day running of the planning services and associated regulatory elements. • Detailed budget monitoring • Implementation of staffing and performance matters including recruitment and retention of staff. • Determination of Planning Applications • Responses to planning and infrastructure matters • Support to chair of planning committee and the lead member for planning & placemaking. 	<p>Budget Holder:</p> <p>Responsibility:</p> <p>Asset Responsibility:</p>	<p>YES - Overall responsibility for the service area budget</p> <p>The postholder will take strategic budget responsibility (circa £5m revenue and staff budgets) ensuring that the council's statutory planning services and regulatory duties are delivered in a customer focused and solutions led manner.</p> <p>The post holder also manages responsibility for circa £25m CIL & S.106 receipts, allocation (through capital board) and monitoring of spend</p> <p><i>Services are recognised as income generating and operating at a minimum position of cost neutral.</i></p> <p>Various operational assets and equipment</p>
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Contacts and Relationships

The Postholder will work in a collaborative manner with Members, Corporate Boards, other directorates, external and internal stakeholders, community members and other bodies that interact with this role to deliver solutions led positive outcomes.

Values and Behaviours

We strive to underpin our culture of being 'At our Best' through strong management and authentic leadership. This means getting the management basics right. We own and demonstrate accountability, both individually and collectively, and aim to get things right first time. Building on this we also expect everyone at SBC to demonstrate and live our organisational values and behaviours, by displaying:

- Accountability at all levels
- Customer care and pride in what we do
- Continuous learning and evaluation
- Valuing one another and the contribution each of us makes

The postholder will be required to observe and fulfill the seven principles of public life (also known as the Nolan Principles):

- Selflessness - *Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.*
- Integrity - *Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.*
- Objectivity - *Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.*
- Accountability - *Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.*
- Openness - *Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.*
- Honesty - *Holders of public office should be truthful.*
- Leadership - *Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.*

Other key requirements of the role

The post holder is jointly accountable with the corporate management team and all senior management for the delivery of the outcomes within the Swindon Plan and will personally lead relevant elements of it and champion it overall. Further, the post holder will also empower and enable staff within the service area to lead and partake in cross-council projects to support the delivery of outcomes within the Swindon Plan. The post holder will:

- ensure financial probity and competence of financial management across their department and that effective arrangements are in place to meet legislative and statutory requirements in relation to financial management, audit and internal control.

- ensure the corporate parenting responsibilities for the council’s looked after children and care leavers are fulfilled in accordance with the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- participate in the council’s emergency arrangements as an on-call member and will fully participate as required, which may require chairing the formal council meetings.
- ensure that all relevant health & safety legislation and the council’s health & safety requirements are reasonably complied with.
- be required to operate within any relevant delegations as detailed in the council’s scheme of delegation of the council’s constitution.
- be required to work some evenings, weekends and occasional public holidays in order to meet service requirements and to ensure appropriate representation of the council with residents, the Leader and Cabinet and all elected Members and external bodies.
- Team player capable of influencing and working within cross-functional teams at all levels
- Able to deal with ambiguity and the pace of change within local government, confidently making and standing by decisions in challenging situations and persisting with flexibility in the face of setbacks
- Having the confidence to speak out for what is best for Swindon, even when it is not easy to do so.
- Ability to make site visits throughout the Borough and attend meetings outside the Borough

This is a politically restricted post under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990. The individual holding this post cannot have any active political role.

Politically restricted employees are prohibited from:

- standing for office as local councillors, MPs, MEPs, Members of the Welsh Assembly or Members of the Scottish Parliament,
- canvassing on behalf of a political party or a person who is, or seeks to be, a candidate, and
- speaking to the public at large or publishing any written or artistic work that could give the impression of advocating support for a political party.

Employee Name: Enter name here	Employee Signature:
Date: Enter date here	<i>Sign here</i>
Line Manager:	Line Manager Signature:
Date: Enter date here	

