

# LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

## JOB DESCRIPTION

**Designation:** Senior Planning Technician

Grade: SO1

Reports to

(Designation): Business Improvement & Stakeholder Manager

Grade: PO8

Directorate: Place

Section: Planning

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### **Main Purpose of the job:**

- To work flexibly across the planning service to provide in-depth technical and admin support, particularly in relation to:
    - review and update of all the document templates within the planning service's IT systems,
    - general maintenance of the planning service's IT systems,
    - preparation of management reports,
    - validation of complex planning applications,
    - income monitoring and cost recovery activities,
    - processing, checking and sign off local land charges searches.
    - Handling of planning service complaints and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.
  - To assist the planning service management team with their customer service activities, promotion of chargeable services and service improvement projects; such as commercialisation of chargeable services, better data collection, web site changes and self-service.
  - Although there may be some specialisation of duties within the post, it is expected that all post holders will be able to cover any absence for post holders within their grade or respond to increases in demand for a particular service.
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### **Summary of Responsibilities and Personal Duties:**

1. To understand the mechanics of and be able to create/update all document templates within the planning service's IT software (currently IDOX Acolaid). Documents to be tested for accuracy before launching as a live document to the planning service.
2. To assist and deputise for the IT Systems Officer to manage the planning service's IT software (currently IDOX Acolaid, IDOX Enterprise, IDOX EDRMS and IDOX Public Access). To report planning IT system issues to the IDOX supplier and liaise with them to resolve problems. To manage specific data cleansing projects and assist with any upgrades / data migrations relating to the IT systems.
3. To prepare management reports as requested.
4. To undertake redaction of complex and sensitive documents to ensure that any personal and legally privileged information is removed in accordance with the service's GDPR privacy statement before wider publication.
5. To validate and consult neighbours, members and statutory consultees, where necessary, on complex planning and related applications. Ensure that proposal descriptions are in accordance with the published standards.
6. To deputise for the Local Land Charges Manager as required, determining priorities and allocating work to the Land Charges team members based on their experience, availability, local knowledge and estimated workload to complete the task and resolve conflicting work pressures as daily circumstances dictate. To assist the relevant service manager with commercialising and promoting the Land Charges service, to maximise income, by providing a high-quality product within published timescales.

7. To ensure that all searches together with associated correspondence and additional questions, are processed accurately and expeditiously, consulting other sources for information within the Council as appropriate, to provide a high-quality product.
8. Verify, sign off and issue Land Charge search results and certificates on behalf of the Council under delegated authority.
9. To proactively monitor, collect and chase planning service income the recovery of staff and consultant costs. To liaise with the Debtors team and undertake the necessary actions to ensure effective debt recovery of our chargeable services. To maintain appropriate financial records for income monitoring and producing reports.
10. To supervise and coach the Planning Technicians with creating new suppliers, creating purchase orders and receipting invoices.
11. To utilise knowledge of the planning service processes and general appreciation of planning and local land charges regulations, legislation and policy to investigate and resolve both customer enquiries and other possible issues. To take responsibility to achieve a good outcome for the customer ensuring that all communication with residents, planning professionals, Members and internal customers is clear, concise and addresses the points raised.
12. To promote and administer the chargeable Pre-application and Duty Planner services to maximise income.
13. To manage, on behalf of the management team, updates to the planning service's webpages. To identify areas for content update based on customer queries and changes in processes and legislation, to draft the required updates (when appropriate), upload changed web pages and liaise with the web team as required.
14. To log, monitor and process complaints on i-Casework system. Seek draft responses from the relevant service area and edit as necessary for completeness and consistency. Ensure that all enquiries and complaints are answered within specified timescales. To research and answer Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Enquires (EIRs) requests. To manage enquiries from MPs, Members, the Ombudsman and those received via the Mayor's and Chief Executive's offices, to ensure performance timescales achieved.
15. Ensure that any improvement actions arising from justified customer complaints are prioritised and incorporated into the Planning Service's improvement activities. Identify and advise managers of complaints, which may have positive or negative public relations implications.
16. To work as part of a flexible team to ensure that all the Business Improvement and Stakeholder team's workloads are effectively handled within the required operating timescales.
17. Actively participate in reviewing and implementing service improvement initiatives including system and process development, customer care initiatives and projects with stakeholders.
18. Keep abreast of planning legislation, IT development, Local Land Charges legislation and Council policy.
19. Ensure performance targets and service objectives are met.
20. To provide on the job training and coaching to new members of the planning service and team; including planning technicians, junior planning officers and apprentices.
21. Internal contacts: These include planning officers, senior staff within own and other Directorates.
22. External contacts: Constant contact with members of the public, applicants, developers and their representatives, objectors, amenity groups, solicitors, personal search agents, plus other officers from public bodies and organisations.
23. To carry out the duties of the post with due regard to the Council's relevant codes and procedures.
24. To carry out duties with due regard to the Council's values and behaviours
25. All employees are required to participate in Appraisal and Performance Management processes and to undertake appropriate training and development, including mandatory induction training, identified to enhance their work.
26. Undertake other duties, commensurate with the grade, as may reasonably be required.

Consideration will be given to restructuring the duties of this post for a disabled postholder

THIS JOB DESCRIPTION MAY NEED TO BE AMENDED BY THE DIRECTORATE TO MEET  
THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE SERVICE.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

**JOB TITLE:** Senior Planning Technician

**POST No:**

**DIRECTORATE:** Place

**Grade:** SO1

### Note to Candidates

The Person Specification is a picture of the skills, knowledge and experience needed to carry out the job. It has been used to draw up the advert and will also be used in the shortlisting and interview process for this post.

Those categories marked 'S' will be used especially for the purpose of shortlisting.

Please ensure that Equality and Diversity issues are addressed specifically in relation to the role for which you are applying when addressing the requirements of this person specification where appropriate.

If you are a disabled person and are unable to meet some of the job requirements specifically because of your disability, please address this in your application. If you meet all the other criteria you will be shortlisted and we will explore jointly with you if there are ways in which the job can be changed to enable you to meet the requirements.

<b>Knowledge</b>	
Broad understanding of Planning Legislation, Fee Regulations, planning practices and procedures.	<b>S</b>
Detailed knowledge of Local Land Charge search procedures.	
Knowledge of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and management of personal information.	<b>S</b>
<b>Aptitude</b>	
Responsive customer orientated approach to work.	
Produce high quality work, whilst maintaining performance targets.	<b>S</b>
Represent the planning service in a professional manner, to provide advice and to interpret and apply policy.	
Apply logic to resolving a complex problem, by separating the cause from its impact and identifying possible solutions.	
Contribute to the development of the service by initiating and implementing improvements.	
<b>Skills</b>	<b>To Be Tested - T</b>
<b>Skills can only be used as shortlisting criteria if the skill is to be tested</b>	
Clear communication skills both verbal and written.	
Ability to read technical drawings & plans to interpret development.	

Able to use previous experience and written guidance / polices to resolve problems.	
Able to organise a team to achieve performance targets.	
<b>Experience</b>	
Producing accurate work under pressure and to deadlines, paying close attention to detail.	<b>S</b>
Working on own initiative with minimal supervision.	<b>S</b>
Dealing with difficult people in stressful situations with courtesy and diplomacy.	
Experience of dealing with IT issues with both suppliers and external IT experts, and explaining to others how to resolve their IT issues.	
Experience of using financial systems to collect and monitor income.	
<b>General Education</b>	
A good standard of education to support this demanding role.	
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity</b>	
Awareness of and a commitment to Equality of Access and Opportunity in a diverse community	<b>S</b>
Understanding of how equality and diversity relates to this post	<b>S</b>
<b>Personal Qualities</b>	
Able to remain clam and maintain positivity during stressful periods e.g. IT outages, whilst influencing others to continue to effectively deliver their tasks.	<b>S</b>
<b>Circumstances</b>	
Able to attend evening meetings.	
<b>Physical</b>	
Generally, candidates must meet the standard Lewisham requirements for the post	

**DBS Disclosure Required**    **Basic**     **Standard**     **Enhanced**

(Tick as appropriate – guidance available from your HR Advisor, if a DBS is not required please leave boxes blank)