

Coventry City Council

Assistant Director - Planning

Application Pack



Chief Officer
Job Description and Person Specification

Assistant Director - Planning

Job Details	
Grade	AD2
Services	Planning
Location	City Centre
Job Evaluation Code	W0286W

Coventry City Council Values
We expect everyone who works for us to be committed to our One Coventry values and to share our commitment to becoming a more diverse and inclusive organisation: Open and fair: We are open, fair and transparent. Nurture and develop: We encourage a culture where everyone is supported to do and be the best they can be. Engage and empower: We engage with our residents and empower our employees to enable them to do the right thing. Create and innovate: We embrace new ways of working to continuously improve the services we offer. Own and be accountable: We work together to make the right decisions and deliver the best services for our residents. Value and respect: We put diversity and inclusion at the heart of all we do.

Chief Officer Responsibilities
All Chief Officers have an explicit responsibility to work as part of a team, in accordance with the Nolan Principles (see Person Specification) to collectively deliver the agenda of One Coventry. These are fundamental elements of the role, not an addition, and are summarised as follows; • Seeking to improve the lives of all residents by delivering a One Coventry Approach. • Being financially responsible and accountable. • Understanding, communicating and contributing to the delivery of strategic aims of the One Coventry Plan. • Working across the organisation to show ○ effective and visible leadership to overcome silos, ○ effective use of resources and ○ an increase in performance.

- Meeting statutory obligations to promote and ensure compliance with policies and procedures including the financial regulations and standing orders.
- Developing creative solutions whilst keeping the resident at the centre of our work.
- Being inclusive in approach and activity, living the values.
- Being flexible and adaptable in approach, working to deliver the best possible outcomes.
- Advising elected Members and supporting the democratic process.
- Proactively and continuously seeking to improve service delivery.
- Creating and endorsing a culture that nurtures and develops our people and their talent.
- Acting as corporate parent to the Council's Looked After Children, taking an active role in promoting and ensuring safeguarding responsibilities are met.

Job Purpose

As the Council's **Chief Planning Officer**, you will provide strategic leadership, professional direction, and corporate governance across all planning functions, ensuring the Council fulfils its statutory planning responsibilities in accordance with legislation, national planning policy, and professional standards.

You will lead and continuously develop a high-performing, customer-focused Planning Service encompassing Planning Policy, Development Management, Planning Enforcement, Environmental Planning, Ecology, Urban Design and Heritage, delivering sustainable development, housing growth, regeneration, environmental stewardship and place-making that supports the Council's Corporate Plan, the One Coventry Plan and the city's long-term ambitions.

As the Council's principal professional adviser on planning matters, you will provide authoritative advice to the Chief Executive, Corporate Leadership Team, Cabinet, Planning Committee, Scrutiny Boards, elected Members and senior officers on complex, high-profile and strategically significant planning issues. You will exercise independent professional judgement and delegated authority on matters carrying significant legal, financial, environmental, political, and reputational implications for the Council.

You will provide strategic leadership for the Council's contribution to major regeneration, infrastructure, housing, and inward investment programmes, balancing economic growth, climate resilience, biodiversity, heritage protection, and community priorities to enable high-quality, sustainable development and deliver long-term social, environmental, and economic benefits for Coventry.

Working collaboratively with Government Departments, the Planning Inspectorate, the West Midlands Combined Authority, Homes England, developers, investors, neighbouring authorities, statutory agencies, and local communities, you will represent the Council at regional and national level, influencing planning policy, securing investment, and protecting the Council's strategic interests.

The postholder operates with a high degree of professional autonomy and delegated authority, making decisions and providing strategic advice on matters of significant complexity and risk. Through effective leadership, governance and partnership working, the role makes a substantial

contribution to the Council's long-term prosperity, reputation, and ability to deliver sustainable growth and improved outcomes for residents, businesses, and communities.

Main Duties & Key Accountabilities

The work or results that you will be accountable for:

- Provide strategic leadership and professional direction as the Council's Chief Planning Officer, ensuring the council fulfils its planning responsibilities in accordance with legislation, national policy and professional standards.
- Lead the development and delivery of the Council's planning strategy, ensuring alignment with corporate priorities for growth, housing and sustainability.
- Lead the preparation, examination, adoption and implementation of the Local Plan and related planning frameworks.
- Provide expert, balanced and timely advice to Members, senior leadership and committees.
- Act as the Council's principal professional adviser on planning matters, providing authoritative advice to the Chief Executive, Cabinet, Corporate Leadership Team, Planning Committee, Scrutiny Boards, and elected Members.
- Exercise delegated authority and independent professional judgement on complex planning matters carrying significant legal, financial, environmental, political, and reputational implications.
- Represent the Council locally, regionally, and nationally, influencing planning policy, legislation and strategic investment through effective partnership working.
- Provide leadership of planning policy, development management, planning enforcement, urban design and heritage, ecology and biodiversity and environmental protection.
- Ensure the efficient, effective and timely determination of planning applications, appeals and related consents.
- Drive continuous improvement in service quality, performance and customer experience.
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties, regulatory frameworks and best practice.
- Enable and support major development and regeneration schemes across the city.
- Lead cross-boundary collaboration on strategic planning matters.
- Lead officer support to Planning Committee and other decision-making bodies.
- Prepare and present high-quality reports and advice to Members and senior forums.
- Ensure transparency, accountability and sound decision-making.
- Exercise strategic accountability for the financial leadership, governance, and performance of the Planning Service, ensuring effective stewardship of public resources, long-term financial sustainability, and value for money in support of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- Lead the development, management and monitoring of revenue budgets, planning income, fee-generating services and externally funded programmes, identifying financial risks and opportunities, delivering efficiencies, and ensuring resources are aligned to corporate priorities and statutory responsibilities.
- Provide strategic oversight of Section 106 planning obligations and developer contributions, ensuring robust governance, prioritisation, and investment of funding to deliver infrastructure, regeneration, housing, and wider corporate objectives.

- Deputise for the Director of Economic Growth as and when required.

Core Knowledge

- Extensive knowledge of planning policy, development management and regulatory frameworks.
- Strong understanding of local government structures and political governance.
- Knowledge of national and regional planning policy and emerging legislative changes.
- Understanding of economic growth, regeneration and place-making principles.

Specialist Knowledge

- Extensive knowledge of planning legislation, national planning policy, development management, planning enforcement and associated regulatory frameworks, together with the statutory responsibilities of the Council's Chief Planning Officer.
- Expert knowledge of environmental planning, including biodiversity, ecology, heritage, urban design, environmental protection, flood risk, air quality, contaminated land and minerals and waste planning.
- Strong understanding of corporate governance, strategic financial management, risk management, organisational performance, and public sector accountability within a complex local authority environment.
- Knowledge of partnership working across Government Departments, Combined Authorities, and other strategic stakeholders to influence policy and deliver corporate priorities.

Key Relationships

External:

- Governmental and regional bodies, such as the Planning Inspectorate and the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with developers, investors, community stakeholders and partner organisations.
- Lead cross-boundary collaboration on strategic planning matters.
- Local Members of Parliament (MPs).
- Parish and Neighbourhood Forums.
- Local employers and universities.

Internal:

- Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members, Elected members, Planning Committee, Cabinet and Scrutiny Boards.
- Chief Executive.
- Corporate Leadership Team.
- Strategic Leads, Heads of Service and Senior Managers.