

# Job description

## Senior Planning Officer

Immediate team	Major Applications
Service team	Planning
Line manager's job title	Major Applications Team Leader
Number of direct reports	0
Salary and grade	£52,892 - 58,923
Duration of role	Fixed term contract for 12 months
Hours per week	37
Location	The designated office base is Abbey House, Abingdon. The councils operate in a truly flexible, and hybrid way where the focus is on outcomes not where you work.
Employing council	South Oxfordshire / Vale of White Horse
Probationary period	Six months
Notice period	One month
Annualised hours apply	Yes
DBS check required	No
Date job description updated	May 2026

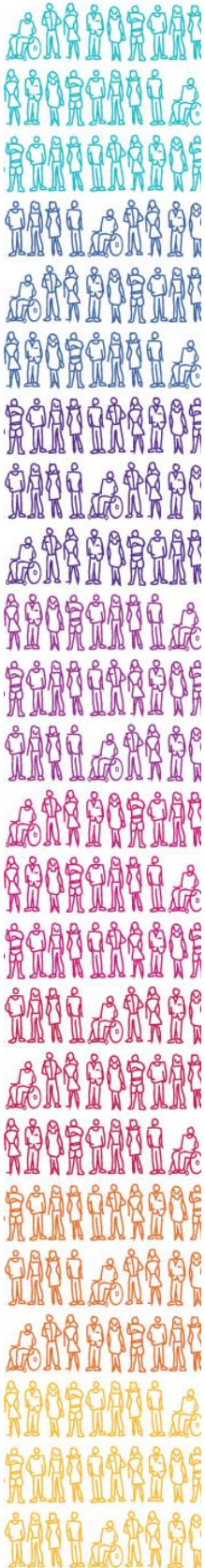
### About the role and what we're looking for

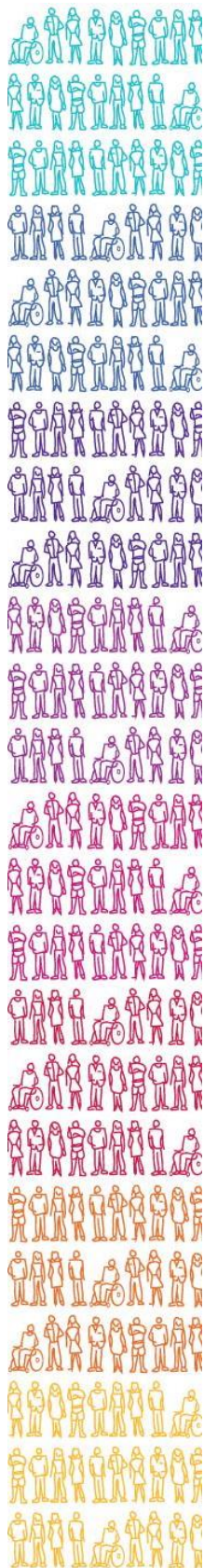
If you are looking to take a step up and progress your career as a senior planning officer dealing with more complex applications this is an excellent opportunity to expand your experience in a busy and forward-looking planning service. This is a temporary opportunity to work with Principal Planning Officers and your Team Leader to successfully deliver development on strategic and larger development sites and deal with a range of related planning applications, enforcement, appeals and policy work.

You'll be responsible for the effective assessment, processing and recommendations on a wide range of planning applications in accordance with policy, best practice and government targets. You will also be involved in the provision of professional advice on a wide range of planning matters and ensuring a development team approach to the customer.

#### Main duties and responsibilities

- processing and determining a wide range of more complex planning and associated applications
- providing professional advice face to face, on the telephone and in writing





- on behalf of the council in respect of planning and related issues which includes providing pre application advice
- attending councillor site visits and presenting recommendations to the relevant council committees as required
  - helping to deal with enforcement matters and carrying out associated duties as and when required
  - preparing and presenting evidence for the council in respect of appeals against planning decisions through written representations, hearings and inquiries as and when required
  - reviewing and checking reports on planning and enforcement related applications where appropriate and signing these off under 'delegated authority'.
  - undertaking specific projects within the planning service (such as participating in continuous improvement and development)
  - working with the policy team to input into policy development including neighbourhood plans for the district

The duties may vary from time to time without changing the nature of the post or the level of responsibility. The post holder may also be required to carry out any other duties appropriate to the grading of the post.

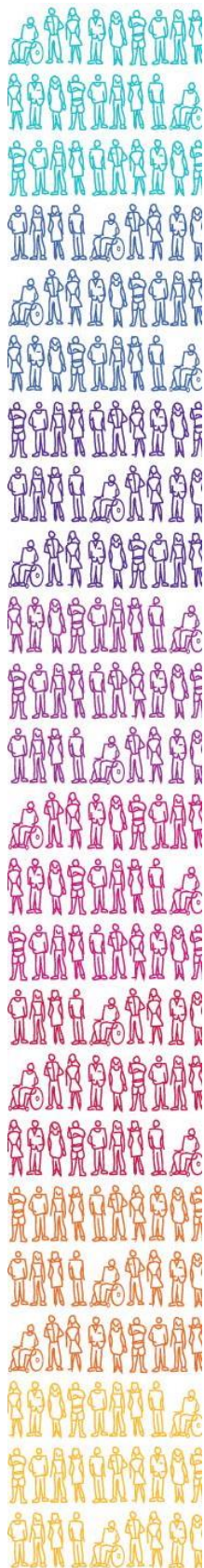
#### Knowledge and experience

- ▮ Excellent communication skills, in writing and orally, and experience in providing clear and succinct presentations
- ▮ Knowledge of planning legislation and experience assessing planning applications, with the ability to appraise and relay complex information
- ▮ Reliable, be able to work under pressure and meet deadlines. Ability and willingness to take individual responsibility for one's work, establish priorities and meet agreed standards
- ▮ Be diplomatic, tactful and able to maintain discretion in difficult circumstances and have the ability to deal with angry, upset, persistent and articulate customers
- ▮ Commitment to deliver service and corporate objectives

### About you

#### Essential criteria

- a degree in a planning related discipline, or relevant qualification or equivalent level of experience
- at least five years post qualification planning experience and some experience of working in a local authority planning service
- hold a current driving licence and access to a vehicle insured for business use
- eligibility for full RTPI membership or in the process of applying for full membership



- If you have the following experience or qualifications - it's a bonus
- Membership of a professional institute such as the Royal Town Planning Institute
  - Experience of working in a customer focused environment and dealing with difficult customers
  - Awareness and commitment to high quality design
  - Understanding of the principles of lean working and continuous improvement
  - Commitment to continuing professional development

Your style and behaviours

- ▮ enthusiastic and motivated
- ▮ good self presentation
- ▮ ability to think rationally and logically
- ▮ ability to relate well to people
- ▮ Strong customer ethos

**Work related requirements:**

This role has been identified as public facing in accordance with Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2017; the requirement to fulfil all spoken aspects of the role with confidence in English applies.	Yes
Politically sensitive post	No
DBS check required	No
Full driving licence and use of a car for work	Yes
This role requires you to drive a company vehicle for work	No

**About us**

**Our Vision**

We are customer focused and approachable. We are honest and open and are committed to providing high quality cost-effective public services.

**Our Values**



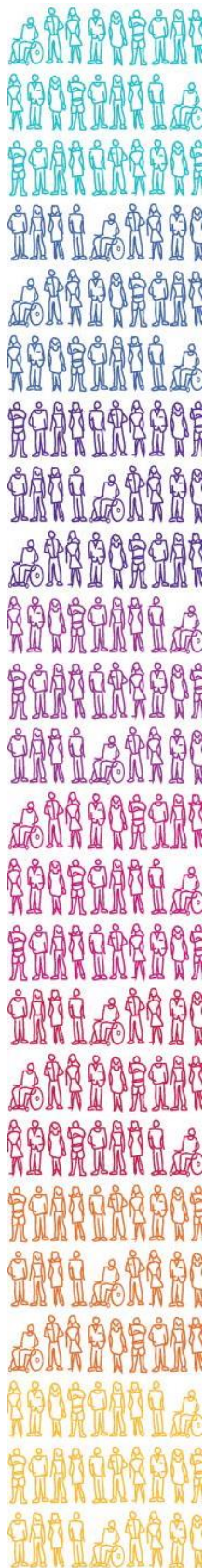
**Working Together**

We are a committed professional team, who embrace change and help one another improve



**People and Planet**

We care about each other and the environment we share



## Respect

We act with integrity, and champion diversity and inclusivity



## Accountability

We take ownership, do what we say, strive for clarity and welcome feedback



## Approachability

We are open, honest and accessible

Our vision and values are important to the councils, and we expect you to support them and embed them in the way we work.

### The benefits we offer

- ▮ A basic 26 days **annual leave** per annum, rising to 31 days after five years. You also have all the bank holidays to look forward to and time off between Christmas and New Year.
- ▮ **Flexible working and annualised hours** - a flexible approach to work that our employees love!
- ▮ **Salary pay awards** - most jobs give scope for a pay increase after six months or the following April (depending on your start date) and we also review salaries each April.
- ▮ A generous career average **pension** scheme which includes life insurance of three times your salary
- ▮ The opportunity to **purchase a bike** through Cyclescheme (cheaper than directly through a store) so that you can cycle to work!
- ▮ Various schemes to **keep you healthy** (reduced gym membership, free swims, free eye tests for DSE users and more)
- ▮ We give you two days per year to **volunteer** within the local community.
- ▮ A range of resources, support, and activities to help you maintain your **wellbeing** including a monthly wellbeing hour in addition to annualised hours (the ability to work flexibly as long as, over the course of the year, you complete your contracted hours) and annual leave.

### How to apply

Having read about our role if you have any questions please email Cathie Scotting at [cathie.scotting@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:cathie.scotting@southandvale.gov.uk) or Stuart Walker at [stuart.walker@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.walker@southandvale.gov.uk) for an informal discussion.



If this job excites you please complete our online application at  
<https://myrecruitment.southandvale.gov.uk/>

We look forward to hearing from you.