

Leeds City Council

Directorate	City Development
Service Area	Planning and Sustainable Development
Job Title	Chief Planning Officer
Grade	Dir 85%
Conditions of service	JNC Terms and Conditions
Reports to	Director of City Development
Responsible for	Planning and Sustainable Development Leadership Team

Job purpose With an emphasis on strong leadership, this role operates within the context of the Leeds Ambitions and the city's broader strategic objectives. The Chief Planning Officer is strategically and operationally responsible for the Council's planning functions and the delivery of agreed outcomes, targets and objectives as determined by our Organisational Plan.

This is a critical role for the council and will set the spatial requirements for the development and management of this core city within a large geography.

Responsibilities

- Provide strategic leadership, providing advice and expertise to decision makers across the Council.
- Work with key partners at national, regional and local level and in collaboration with colleagues and partners support the delivery of real change across the city.
- Effective leadership and management of the Council's planning functions to meet the needs of the city's residents and broader stakeholders.
- Creation of a culture of excellence in service delivery, continuous improvement and a focus on outcomes which maximises the use of resources and actively promotes the council's values and behaviours.
- Responsible, through delegated authority arrangements, for relevant statutory planning related matters: working closely with elected members to achieve this.
- Working across the council and with partners to ensure the delivery of strategic outcomes and objectives.
- Influencing and contributing to the wider issue of strategy development and prioritisation for both the city and the City Council.
- Working with the MCA on regional matters and with other District Chief Planning Officers for collaborations and joint delivery.
- Take responsibility for maintaining effective communications and engagement with staff, service users, councillors, trade unions, partners and other stakeholders and which supports open, inclusive, responsive and accountable government.
- Lead, promote and deliver positive solutions to achieving diversity and inclusion in all aspects of service delivery, community engagement and human resource areas, focussing on equality of outcome.
- Work with elected members, service users and community representatives in ways which support open, responsive and accountable government providing appropriate advice relating to the work of the Directorate to Members and council officers so as to manage risk and support them in their respective roles.
- In line with the Budget Management Accountability Framework Ensure that effective budget management and control takes place across your service, the planned level and quality of service provided for within the revenue and capital budgets are delivered and that budget pressures are resolved.

- Responsibility for the direction and control of a significant budget, the financial integrity of the service and accountable for directing and implementing comprehensive risk management programmes and resources across the service(s).
- The service is delivered within budget; value for money is maximised, and operational, regulatory, statutory and financial risk is managed and monitored in compliance with council requirements and with Local Government and national working practices.
- The duties outlined are not meant as an exhaustive list and will also comprise any other duties within the spirit of the post commensurate to the grade.

Qualifications Relevant post graduate degree qualification or substantial experience in working in this field together with substantial senior leadership and management experience, which allows for Corporate Membership of the RTPI.

Working Context - Post holders will work flexibly both at home and at various locations across the City and region. All colleagues should work in line with our hybrid working principles and spend regular time in the workplace to support service delivery, meeting the needs of the team and the requirements of their individual role. The hours are worked mainly Monday to Friday. However, the post holder will be expected to work outside normal working hours, including attendance at evening/weekend meetings or events if required to meet the needs of the service.

Essential requirements Candidates will only be shortlisted if they can demonstrate that they meet all the essential requirements.

- Experience of leading and managing the Planning functions in a major public sector or private sector organisation ensuring the delivery and improvement of services that meet the needs of our citizens and stakeholders.
 - Evidence of leading, shaping and influencing innovative and commercially astute practice to maximise opportunities while realising efficiencies.
 - Experience of developing and managing a transparent framework for compliance with national, regional and local planning, legislation and policy requirements.
 - Experience of representing an organisation on a range of planning related matters at regional and national level.
 - Ability to ensure the Council meets and complies with all statutory and legal planning requirements, ensuring appropriate plans, policies and resources are in place to respond to those needs including monitoring and evaluation arrangements.
 - Ability to shape solutions to complex and sensitive planning proposals.
- Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the current local, regional and national issues and the legislative and political context relating to Planning and Sustainable Development including Building Control.
- Demonstrate knowledge of applicable legislation, regulations, policies, inspections and performance information and relevant strategic functions e.g. health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection.
 - Detailed knowledge and understanding of economic strategy and policy, understanding of local government political systems and experience of working on politically sensitive issues including significant experience of developing productive working relationships with Council Members, trade unions and Corporate Leadership Team.
 - Evidence of working with partners and key stakeholders and of forging and driving successful partnership programmes to deliver cross sector priorities and outcomes.
 - Excellent communication skills with the ability to influence, negotiate and establish credibility across sectors to enhance reputation and form positive relationships.
 - Experience of successful leadership and management of large scale complex change programmes with an understanding of the strategic issues that face integrated work.

- Evidence of ability to make reasoned and logical decisions allied with high level organisational skills.
- Significant successful senior leadership experience.
- Substantial experience of operating in a political environment.
- Extensive experience of exercising sound judgement and providing clear advice at senior level.
- Experience of developing and implementing highly complex strategies leading to successful outcomes

Behavioural & other Characteristics required.

- Understand and embrace [Leeds City Council Values and Behaviours](#) and code of conduct.
- Committed to continuous improvement in all areas and work towards delivering the [Best City Ambition](#) of Health & Wellbeing, Inclusive Growth and Zero Carbon.
- Be aware of promote and comply with Leeds City Council policies and procedures e.g., health, safety and security, confidentiality, and data protection.
- Be aware of and support difference ensuring equality for all working in an anti-discriminatory manner, upholding, and promoting the behaviours, values and standards of Leeds City Council.
- Recognise and appropriately challenge any incidents of racism, bullying, harassment, victimisation, and any form of abuse, ensuring compliance with relevant policies and procedures.
- Understand and observe Leeds City Council approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Promote and lead a positive Health, Safety, Wellbeing and Fire (HSWF) culture, ensuring statutory compliance and effective risk management through implementation of council policies, and proactive leadership alongside support services.

Date Job description last reviewed: July 2025

Name Angela Barnicle

Designation Director of City Development

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