SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Job Description

Job title	Tree Officer (Planning)	Hours	37 hours *Flexible working options are available.*
Department	Planning	Salary	SK8 - SK 12 (currently £27,465 - £36,303) starting salary depends on skills and experience
Location	Mix of home and Grantham based office working	Contract	Permanent

Main Job Purpose

- To deliver the Council's statutory duties in relation to Arboriculture and to discharge the Council's obligations under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and its subsequent versions/variations.
- Deliver The Council's Tree Strategy in support of the agreed Local Plan and other National / Local Policy's
- To provide technical/professional advice to the Council on all aspects relating to tree preservation, woodland management, hedgerow regulations, high hedge complaints, the preparation of related conservation policies, environmental enhancements, and tree safety issues for public open space and where trees effect non-public land.

This role is not politically restricted.

Main Statement of Responsibilities

- To administer and deal with applications for work to trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders and notifications for work to trees in Conservation Areas and critically appraise planning applications in relation to the effect of development on trees and vice-versa
- To prepare new tree preservation orders and update old tree preservation orders as necessary, including surveys, preparation of reports, aspects of objections and the efficient maintenance of records.
- To investigate and advise on unauthorised works to protected trees, including attendance in court as the Council's expert witness.
- To support the planning enforcement team in monitoring compliance with arboricultural related conditions attached to planning permissions and manage the resolution of non-compliance.
- To process formal Appeals relating to decisions made under the regulations including preparation of additional information, presenting the council's case, attending inspections, and preparing evidence for formal hearings or enquiries as an expert witness.
- To maintain the correct level of knowledge required to undertake the council's obligations for tree protection under the Town and Countryside Act 1990.
- To consider and investigate high hedges applications under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.
- To support the Council's Emergency Planning Team in respect of tree related matters.
- To support the promotion of the Council's policies and strategies on tree and woodland management/protection throughout the organisation with presence at meetings and events as required. This will include working with the Planning Policy team to support the local plan process.

- To provide high levels of customer service for our residents, staff, managers and external partners, so that they are made to feel warm, welcome, wanted and cared for.
- Where a post involves working with members of the public, the post holder has a responsibility to be vigilant in identifying potential safeguarding issues and conduct themselves in a manner that protects both themselves and members of the public.

Core values

Our vision is to "be the best district in which to live, work, and visit." To achieve this promise, we are building an organisation with a strong internal culture. Our values determine how we behave and deliver services to our residents and businesses and how we interact with each other, and we believe that our values are just as important as skills.

They focus attention on six areas:

Trust
- We act with credibility, professionalism and integrity in all that we do.
- An important guiding principle in the Council's operations and decision-making process, Trust is found in all relationships; from colleagues, Members and building our resident's trust.

Empowerment
- Committed to creating an environment where employees are encouraged and supported to take initiative.
- A culture of collaboration and teamwork where everyone is encouraged to share ideas, contribute and work together.

Accountability
- Taking responsibility for our actions and operating in a transparent manner.
- Whatever job we do, we're responsible for our own performance.

Making a Difference
- Addressing the complex challenges we face with innovative solutions.
- The Council is driven by a purpose to create a positive impact and improve the lives of residents and the community of South Kesteven.

Supportive to All
- Putting residents at the heart of everything we do.
- Being an inclusive Council that values and celebrates diversity.

Kindness
- Empathy and understanding of others.
- Treating everyone with respect.

Person Specification

Relevant Experience, Skills and Knowledge

Essential

- Ability to interpret legislation, technical reports and National Planning Guidance
- IT literate with experience of using word processing, spreadsheets, GIS/map based systems and database packages as well as the internet.
- Awareness of politically sensitive issues

- Demonstratable skills in managing information and communicating with a variety of stakeholders.

Desirable

- Professional experience of working in a similar role within a Local Authority.
- Practical experience of managing and protecting trees in the landscape
- Vocational experience in arboriculture.
- Ability to confidently identify common species of trees and shrubs
- Experience of procedures relating to TPO's, Trees in Conservation areas and Hedgerow Notifications.
- Knowledge of current planning law and other relevant legislation including planning enforcement in relation to tree protection

Relevant Qualifications

Essential

- A minimum of 4 GCSEs at grade A-C (9-4) including maths and English, or a vocational level 2, plus GCSE grade A-C (9-4) in both maths and English.
- A current driving licence

Desirable

- Professional level qualification in Arboriculture or related subject
- Eligible for professional membership of the Arboricultural Association
- Eligible for professional membership of Institute of Chartered Foresters
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Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Essential

- Customer focussed approach with a drive for continuous self-development and improvement
- Ability to prepare and present clear written reports and responses fit for the relevant audience.
- Creative, flexible approach to problem solving
- Ability to work as part of a team

Desirable

- Experience of providing evidence in planning hearings