

Sevenoaks District Council

Countryside Manager Candidate Pack



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Platinum
Until 2022


Sevenoaks
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Countryside Manager

Salary band F
£39,516 to £42,507

About us

Here at Sevenoaks we pride ourselves on treating both our employees and communities we serve with dignity and respect. We are an award winning Council having achieved the **Guardian Public Service Awards 2016** for being financially self-sufficient, are one of the few organisations in the country to retain its **Platinum Investors in People status**. We were voted **LGC Council of the Year 2017** and won a **Pushing the Boundaries of Innovation award in 2018**. The successes of the Finance Team have been recently recognised where the Finance Team has been nominated and is a finalist in the 2020 Public Finance Awards – Finance Team of the Year - Councils.

The role

This is an exciting opportunity to lead the Clean and Green service, which includes the Parks and Countryside Rangers service, Grounds Maintenance, Clean and Green operations on all relevant aspects of Street Cleansing, Woodlands and Countryside, related work.

You will lead on behalf of the Council in communications with the Forestry Commission, the Department for the Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the Environment Agency and other interested third parties on all relevant aspects of Clean and Green work.

You will help us develop, implement and continually review our countryside delivery policies, strategies and procedures relating to the team's clean and green areas, in response to legislative changes, members' priorities and demands for service from members of the public.

The successful applicant

- Relevant professional qualifications in countryside management, horticulture or Environmental Studies
- Substantial operational experience in a relevant role i.e. management of Street Cleansing, Grounds Maintenance, Parks and Countryside, Play areas and Commons related work or similar areas.

Interested in the role and want to know more?

Please contact Trevor Kennett, Head of Direct Services, trevor.kennett@sevenoaks.gov.uk 01732 227407 or Richard Taylor, Commercial Operations and Trading Manager, richard.taylor@sevenoaks.gov.uk 01732 227412 for an informal discussion about the role.

Need advice on how to ensure you have the best chance of being shortlisted?

Read the Job Description and Personal Specification attached to the role and ensure that your supporting statement explains how you meet the essential requirements as your application will be judged against these criteria.

How to get to us

Sevenoaks is only half an hour from central London by train. You will be based at the Dunbrik Depot, 2 Main Road, Dunbrik, Sundridge TN14 6EP.

Due to the current pandemic and current Government advice at the time of advert the role will require a combination of both remote and office based working.

A free staff car park is available on site.

Closing date: Sunday 26 September 2021

Assessment process: interview



About the Council

Sevenoaks District Council is a unique place to work. It's a place where positive and passionate people deliver some of the very best services in local government. We are honoured to be recognised as one of the most efficient, well managed Councils in the country, an achievement we work hard to maintain.

There are very few Councils that still collect all the rubbish and recycling every week using their own team of people. We are exceptionally proud that the people who work here care deeply about what they do, that they are creative, embrace risk and work hard to deliver exceptional services to our customers and to improve the Sevenoaks District. It's our team of people that makes Sevenoaks District Council unique.

We've worked hard to develop a no 'blame culture' among the people that work here. It's a place where staff take responsibility for the work they do and are empowered to take the decisions that help them to do their job effectively. We encourage new ideas and innovation and provide people with the support and training they need to become the very best at what they do.

Our mantra of 'the customer is anyone who isn't me' helps to grow strong and positive working relationships across our Council services, and ensures our residents, businesses and partners receive the very highest quality of service each time they contact us.

Recruiting the right people to our team is incredibly important to us and instrumental to our success. We value personal qualities as much as we do the skills and knowledge to do the job. We want people who can embrace our culture, that have ambition and determination and have the ability to shape our future.

Our vision

We're committed to delivering excellent services. This means we are ambitious for our staff, our customers and our Council. Together we work to shape the District for future generations to make it a great place to live, work and enjoy.

Our mission

To work smarter with an empowering culture, a focus on wellbeing and a dynamic and innovative approach.

The Sevenoaks District provides a great range of housing options whether you are looking to rent or buy.

Many of our staff live outside of the District. With excellent links by road and rail it makes Sevenoaks District Council an employer that is accessible from most parts of Kent and further afield.

The Council is fortunate to have its own car park which, increasingly rarely, is free to all staff to use. The Council also supports car sharing and is a member of the cycle to work scheme.

Much of the District is surrounded by beautiful countryside, but our towns and villages have excellent transport links, good schools and a vibrant local economies.

Amongst the national chain stores are thriving local businesses, there are great places to eat and drink and a wonderful range of attractions for days out with friends and family.

The Sevenoaks District has three leisure centres, a range of local sports clubs and its own theatre. So if you have an interest in sport, film, comedy and stage there is something for you.

Transport

Sevenoaks mainline train station is a short walk from the Council offices and regular trains take approximately 30 minutes into central London.

The M25, M20 and A21 are all within a short drive of the Council offices.

Gatwick airport is just over a 30 minute drive and Heathrow airport is just over an hour's drive away.

Sevenoaks town

The Council's offices are based a short stroll away from the heart of Sevenoaks town. Sevenoaks is a busy town centre with a wide variety of shops, restaurants and cafes. There is a regular weekly market, as well as a choice of supermarkets, a theatre and a cinema.

The town also has the advantage of the wonderful Knole Park, including its deer, just a few minutes walk from the door of the offices for those that like to get away from it all during their lunch break.

The local area

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S

Strong sense of pride in our district

E

Enthusiastic and committed

V

Valuing others, valuing each other

E

Empowered to achieve

N

No blame culture

O

Open to new ideas; dedicated to developing talent

A

Ambitious with our community

K

Keep learning; keep improving

S

Sharing services; working closely with others

Annual Leave

You will be given a generous annual leave allowance of 27 days (plus an additional 5 days depending on having Continuous Local Government Service) as at 1 April. You will be eligible to buy additional leave or have an increased salary by selling annual leave.

Pension

We are part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). There is a 50/50 section which enables a member to pay half rate contributions for half the benefits. The LGPS is a contributory scheme that requires contributions from both employer and employee. The rate Sevenoaks as the employer currently pays is 18.7%. Your contribution rate of up to 6.5% would be based on your salary.

Health and wellbeing benefits

Free and confidential employee assistance programme

Confidential and expert advice in many areas, including family, legal, financial and consumer issues.

Regular onsite health check appointments available

We regularly offer mini health checks with our onsite Occupational Health Advisor, who offer checks on blood pressure, 'Know your numbers', body mass index, weight, risk of diabetes, stress management tips and 'Take a Walk' tips.

We also offer onsite free flu vaccinations and discounted osteopathy treatments.

Eye care

We offer eye care vouchers on request every two years to staff who use computers for a significant part of their work.

Financial benefits

Free staff car parking

Onsite staff car park, free of charge to everyone.

Cycle to work scheme

You can get a new bike for a significantly reduced cost by saving on tax and National Insurance (and paying for it monthly through your salary).

Staff Benefits

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Staff Benefits



Season ticket loan

We offer season ticket loans up to a maximum of £5,000, repayable over 12 months.

Car loan

You can apply for a loan up to a maximum of £10,000 to purchase a car, repayable over a maximum of five years at a low rate of interest.

Professional fees

Staff in roles where ongoing membership of a recognised professional body, (where this membership is gained through a qualification), is an essential requirement in the person specification for their job can claim the cost of one membership fee per year.

Recognition, Learning and Development

We believe all our employees have the potential to grow, both in their work role and personally, and endeavor to provide opportunities for this growth. We work within recognised good practice guidelines, including Investors in People, to ensure both the quality and quantity of training and development is relevant and “fit for purpose”.

The Talent in Me (TiM)

TiM is open to everyone and there are more than 60 courses available to choose from. Courses are ‘bite-sized’. Each one takes one to two hours to complete and are delivered by our own in-house service experts or external providers.

E learning

We offer e-learning courses that enable you to train at your desktop, working at your own pace wherever and whenever you want.

Coaching

We offer a tailored coaching programme with a number of professionally trained internal volunteer coaches, designed specifically to support staff performance and development and our culture, with a focus on specific skills and goals.

Apprenticeships

Any member of staff can apply to undertake an apprenticeship. There are now over 200 new apprenticeship standards with more in development.



Family friendly policies

Maternity leave

All pregnant employees are entitled to up to 52 weeks' maternity leave regardless of length of service. Staff who have worked for us for more than 12 months by the time their baby is born receive enhanced maternity pay of the first six weeks paid at 90% of the weekly salary.

Paid paternity leave

Fathers to be or employees who will share the responsibility with a partner for bringing up a child, may have the right to Statutory Paternity Leave and Pay. Employees who have worked for us for more than 12 months by the time their baby is born receive enhanced paternity pay of two weeks full pay.

Flexible working

We are proud to offer a range of flexible working arrangements to all of our staff. We are happy to consider reduced hours, job shares, home working and more, ensuring the needs of the organisation continue to be met.

Other staff benefits

We participate in the Kaarp Benefits Scheme, a voluntary benefit scheme for local authority employees. The Benefits change regularly but include:

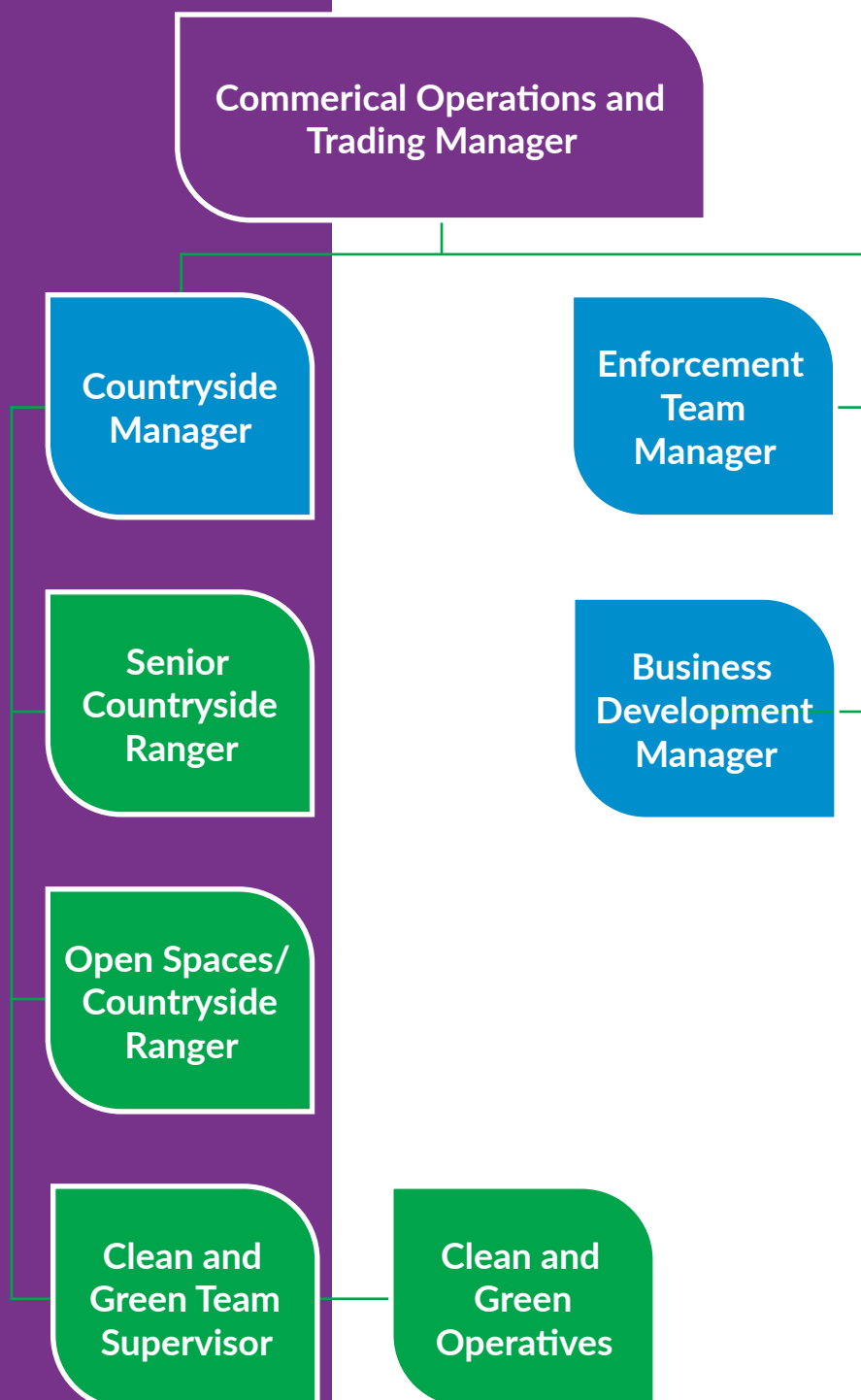
- Activities - discounted theme park entry and/or hotel rooms
- Finance - special deals, insurance and personal finance
- Health - money off many sports and fitness centres and golf courses
- Motoring - discount car club, reduced breakdown cover, car servicing/MOTs and money off driving lessons
- Shopping - many deals and offers
- Travel - A travel club, discounts on holiday insurance, hotels and airport parking
- Local discounts – these include many offers and discounts for restaurants, hotel rooms, hairdressers, dry cleaners and more.

Staff Benefits

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The structure of the Team



Title of post: Countryside Manager**Department:** Finance and Trading**Reports to:** Commercial Operations and Trading Manager**Responsible for:** The Clean and Green Service**Supervises:** Clean and Green Supervisor, Clean and Green Operatives and the Countryside Rangers.**Band:** F £39,516 - £42,507**Purpose of the job:**

To be responsible for the overall management of the Direct Services Clean and Green Teams, including the management of staff, delegated budgets and all other allocated resources.

The post-holder will devise and implement all work programmes and maintain a balance between proactive and reactive work and be expected to manage potentially conflicting priorities which occur due to public complaints.

To oversee the inspection, maintenance and improvement of the natural growing environment (including trees, grass and hedges) on Council owned land, or other publicly accessible land for which the Council has a maintenance responsibility.

To oversee the inspection, maintenance and repair of Council owned play areas and equipment and for the maintenance of disused cemeteries.

To ensure compliance with statutory regulations, legislation, professional codes of practice and adherence to council policy.

Main duties**Service related:**

- To lead the Clean and Green service including Parks and Countryside Rangers, Grounds Maintenance Supervisor and Clean and Green operatives, on all relevant aspects of Street Cleansing, Grounds Maintenance, Parks, Woodlands and Countryside, Play areas and Commons related work.
- To lead on behalf of the Council in communications with the Forestry Commission, the Department for the Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the Environment Agency and other interested third parties on all relevant aspects of Clean and Green work.
- To procure and manage suppliers and contractors ensuring compliance with Council procurement

Job description

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rules, Health and Safety regulations and Environmental considerations applicable to work the work activities undertaken.

- To lead on the grounds maintenance of Bradbourne Lakes, Housing estate lands and other Parks and Countryside assets, preparation and compliance with woodland management plans, including coppicing and sale of timber, and to advise on Council owned amenities assets where required.
- To be responsible for the management of annual or more frequent inspections of trees growing on the Council's land, Woodlands, Commons and other relevant open spaces, and arrange identified works to ensure public safety, improve tree health, limit risk of subsidence and avoid property damage.
- To lead on the regular inspections of play areas and play equipment to identify defects, decommission or remove equipment temporarily if appropriate and arrange repairs or replacement to ensure the safety of play area users.
- To be act as the Council's expert in regards to all applications for felling, burning and water extraction licences and maintain accurate up to date records to demonstrate compliance with permissions.
- To lead and ensure accurate and up to date monitoring of employee vibration and noise exposure resulting from use of powered plant, equipment and tools and support annual employee health surveillance checks.
- To ensure understanding and compliance with all related Health and Safety requirements including preparation, issue, monitoring, review and updating of risk assessments, safe working practices, work instructions and COSHH assessments.
- To report any incidents, accidents, near misses or non-compliance immediately, discuss and agree corrective actions with the employee or contractor and to check that such actions have been taken to ensure the safety and compliance of the work activity.
- To lead on the consultation, development and delivery of assigned amenities projects working with external consultants, subject experts and contractors as appropriate.
- To identify sources of funding and to prepare, in consultation with colleagues and external partners, relevant funding applications.
- To develop, implement and continually review the services policies, strategies and procedures relating to the Team's functional areas, in response to legislative changes, members' priorities and demands for service from members of the public.

- To be the Council's expert advisor for the clean and green designated areas of work and to provide expert technical and professional advice to Senior Managers, Members and service users and to devise, implement and evaluate training programmes in those areas of expertise for all staff.
- To be responsible for and to respond to Members Enquiries, Corporate Complaints, Ombudsman enquiries and Freedom of Information enquiries, ensuring high quality responses are provided within target times.
- To be responsible for the management of staff sickness in the team in accordance with procedures, policy and targets.
- To be responsible for the management of staff performance and development in the team in accordance with procedure policy and targets.
- To be responsible for the effective management of the teams budget in accordance with procedure, policy and targets.
- To manage major projects, undertake research, develop proposals, negotiate agreements, secure finances and monitor implementation.
- To deliver high quality services relating to Direct Services clean and green issues and direct liaison with a number of partners.
- To regularly liaise and consult with Government Departments, external bodies, voluntary agencies and user groups when the post-holder will represent, act and take decisions on behalf of the Council.
- To exercise delegated authority and act on behalf of the Council to ensure that the Authority's statutory and other obligations are properly and effectively discharged.
- Produce and present information and reports on clean and green initiatives to a variety of audiences, including user groups, Council Committees and local forums.
- Through the implementation of the Council's performance systems undertake training needs analysis of staff to develop and implement a training strategy for the clean and green team.
- Attend, convene and chair working parties and groups in connection with clean and green projects and issues.
- Work in association with Communications team on media campaigns.

Dimensions

- Responsible for service budgets and procurement

plans including approximately £2 million annual revenue spend.

- Overall management responsibility for clean and green services of around 35.0fte currently.
- To directly manage, lead and motivate officers in Direct Services.

Location

Dunbrik Depot, 2 Main Road, Dunbrik, Sundridge TN14 6EP

Sevenoaks District Council, Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG

Dimensions

- To embrace the values and behaviours of the Council. To comply with the Council's Safeguarding policy.
- To comply with the Council's Equal Opportunities policy, and to actively promote equality of opportunity wherever possible.
- To comply with the Council's Health and Safety policy.
- To participate in any relevant training for the duties of this post and to achieve the key objectives of the Council.
- To participate fully in the Councils staff appraisal scheme.
- To carry out any other related duties which may be directed by the Head of Direct Services and the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer Finance and Trading.

Qualifications

Essential

- Relevant professional qualifications (either working towards or holder of a Degree /NVQ 4/HNC in Countryside Management or Environmental Studies or equivalent).
- Or substantial operational experience in a relevant role i.e. management of Street Cleansing, Grounds Maintenance, Parks and Countryside, Play areas and Commons related work or similar areas.

Desirable

- Membership of an appropriate professional institution.

Knowledge, skills and experience

Essential

- Experienced in tree inspections and options for

remedial works and felling operations.

- A working knowledge of Health and Safety legislation, risk assessment, safe working practices and record keeping relating to grounds maintenance, arboriculture, horticulture and lake maintenance operations.
- Recognised competency for play area and equipment inspections, maintenance and repair.
- Experience in a relevant position within a local authority or countryside agency.
- Experience of partnership working.
- An excellent communicator, able to build and maintain good working relationships, with the ability to listen and talk to a range of people from street cleaning operatives to Members.
- Good IT skills and experience of using databases and spreadsheets, particularly to manipulate/analyse data
- Previous management experience including staff supervision, development and organisational skills whilst ensuring fairness and consistency,
- Delegate authority and responsibility to staff as appropriate.
- Proven problem solving skills i.e. the ability to exercise high levels of initiative, take account of resources required, ensure adequate systems are in place to devise and implement workable solutions.

Desirable

- Experience of presenting civil and criminal cases at Court

Approach

Essential

- Ability to build and maintain supportive and empathetic relationships, securing people's support and commitment to a course of action or different way of thinking by presenting ideas convincingly and persuasively, and to lead negotiations.
- Excellent negotiation, consultation and influencing skills tailored to meet the needs of a wide range of audiences, partners and stakeholders.
- Very strong commitment to achieve and develop services and other corporate initiatives.

Other

Essential

- An ability to work when necessary outside normal office hours including attendance at evening meetings.