

Sevenoaks District Council

Urban Design Officer Candidate Pack



About the role

Technical Team Leader

Urban Design Officer (Initial 2 year contract)

Salary: Up to £37,548

Our Design and Conservation team is a vital component of the Planning Service at Sevenoaks, where we strive to achieve great places that reflect the principles of excellent design and the needs of our communities.

This role works across the whole Planning service, providing expert advice on a variety of design issues relating to development proposals. You will also seek to imbue quality by providing specialist input into the Local Plan as well as providing training to Officers and Members. Additionally, this role will be responsible for setting up our Design Review Panel and managing and delivering SPDs and Masterplans.

You will be confident and persuasive, and an excellent communicator whomever the audience. You will bring energy and enthusiasm and be keen to make a tangible positive impact on the environment of the district.

Key background for this role includes:

- Experience in an Urban Design or an Architecture role
- Relevant degree
- Excellent communication and negotiation skills

Do you want to know more?

Please contact Rebecca Lamb, Design and Conservation Team Leader on 01732 227334 or rebecca.lamb@sevenoaks.gov.uk to find out more details.

No agency enquiries please.

Do you want 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.

Closing date: Monday 28 February 2022

Interviews: Week commencing Monday 7 March 2020



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.



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Strong sense of pride in our district

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Enthusiastic and committed

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Valuing others, valuing each other

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Empowered to achieve

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No blame culture

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Open to new ideas; dedicated to developing talent

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Ambitious with our community

K

Keep learning; keep improving

S

Sharing services; working closely with others

Annual Leave

You will be given 29 days annual leave plus any Bank Holidays. An extra five days leave is accrued after five years Continuous Local Government Service as at 1 April. Bank Holidays are pro rata (for part time staff) based on the amount of hours you work. 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 6.8% 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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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

Staff who have worked for us for more than 12 months, receive enhanced maternity pay of the first six weeks paid at 90% of the weekly salary, followed by 12 weeks paid at 50% of the weekly salary, followed by 21 weeks at a statutory rate.

Paid paternity leave

Employees who have worked for us for more than 12 months receive enhanced paternity pay of two weeks at 90% of the weekly salary.

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 Karp 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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Job description

Title of post: Commercial Officer

Post number: Urban Design Officer

Band: E1

Reports to: Design and Conservation Team Leader

Purpose of the job

To provide expert professional advice on design issues in relation to development proposals and helping to imbed good quality design skills within the Council.

Key activities

- Provide professional advice in relation to design matters generally, and specifically in relation to planning and other applications and planning enforcement.
- Prepare as required, design guidance, advice notes and development briefs and undertake appropriate consultations.
- Provide specialist input to policy and evidence base formulation on design and appropriate matters.
- Prepare and present as necessary professional evidence at appeal Inquiries, Hearings and to written cases.
- Provide informal training on design matters for Officers, Members and Parish Councils as agreed.
- Attend relevant committee meetings as required in connection with the role.
- Comply with the Council's Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities Policies.
- Comply with the Council's Safeguarding Policy.
- Carry out such other duties as may be reasonably required by the Design and Conservation Team Leader.
- To participate fully in the Council's staff appraisal scheme.

Other conditions

Essential car user as appropriate.

Location

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

Approach

Essential

- Recognises the importance and value of development management and policy planning in an area of pressure and constraint

- An understanding of the effects that planning has on people and communities
- Ability and desire to provide effective and efficient service to all customers
- Team player
- Ability to devise and manage own work programme and manage multiple deadlines.

Skills, experience and qualifications

Essential

- Relevant First degree
- Relevant experience in Urban Design or an Architecture role.
- Able to work with the minimum of supervision within an agreed work programme.
- Ability to communicate complex issues clearly and concisely both orally and in writing.
- Good communication and negotiation skills
- Awareness of public expectations of the planning process
- Ability to use IT packages including Microsoft Word, Outlook

Desirable

- Experience in designing document templates.
- Experience of working within a Revenues and/or Benefits environment in a supervisory/managerial role.
- Experience of liaising and/or working with other organisations and agencies.

Qualifications

Essential

- Experience of working with a variety of stakeholders.

Other

Essential

- Commitment to undertake any relevant training
- Flexibility in attitude to work i.e. willingness to take on additional tasks

Desirable

- Full Driving Licence and use of vehicle for work purposes

