

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE
LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

Candidate Information Booklet

(Please read carefully)

Post of:
EXECUTIVE PLANNER

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Closing Date: 4.00pm
1st November 2024

Completed Application Forms (3 copies) should be submitted to:

Human Resources Department

Laois County Council

Áras an Chontae

Portlaoise

Co. Laois

And 1 copy emailed to hr@laoiscoco.ie

Subject line: Ref 24/42

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE - LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

POST OF: EXECUTIVE PLANNER

THE COMPETITION

Laois County Council invites applications from suitably qualified persons, who wish to be considered for inclusion on a panel for the role of Executive Planner from which permanent, specific purpose, fixed term, temporary and where applicable Acting-up vacancies may be filled.

THE ROLE

This is a senior position within the Planning Department reporting to the Senior Planner and/or another employee nominated by the Chief Executive. The Executive Planner is responsible for managing elements of the Planning Department and providing a multiplicity of services to Local Authorities.

Reporting to the appropriate line manager, the Executive Planner will be responsible for the efficient management of their prescribed work area within the planning or related function. This is a management role. Managers at this level work within defined parameters relevant to the position, in accordance with the Local Authority's vision and objectives. The Executive Planner will be required to work closely with elected Councillors to deliver the full range of services and implement local policy decisions.

In the current economic climate, managers are charged with service delivery and change management in an environment of limited resource availability, both human and financial. Delivery of efficient services and value for money is crucial.

Key Service Areas:

Executive Planner positions are multi-faceted and may include assignment to some or all the following key service areas within the Local Authority:

- Development Management
- Planning Enforcement
- Forward Planning and Sustainable Development
- Community Development

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE POST

CHARACTER

Candidates must be of good character.

HEALTH

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service. For the purpose of satisfying the requirements as to health, it will be necessary for successful candidates, before they are appointed, to undergo at their own expense a

medical examination by a qualified medical practitioner to be nominated by the Local Authority. On taking up appointment the expense of the medical examination will be refunded to candidates.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

1. Education, training, experience, etc.

Each candidate must, on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms -

- a) hold a qualification in Planning (at least level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications);
- b) have at least five years' satisfactory relevant experience of planning work;
- c) possess a high standard of technical training and expertise; and
- d) a high degree of administrative experience.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POST

In the context of the key duties and responsibilities for the post of Executive Planner, the ideal candidate shall also be able to demonstrate the following;

- have experience of analysing and considering new and emerging national and/or regulatory policies and guidelines in a town planning context with a view to assessing the implications of such developments and responding to same.
- have experience of preparation or assessment of planning applications and pre-application proposals in the context of applicable planning policies and regulations.
- have experience of participating in managing and leading multi-disciplinary and cross functional teams and have the ability to motivate, empower, encourage and achieve maximum efficiency and value for money from the personnel and processes under his/ her control.
- have a track record of delivering results.
- have an understanding of Local Authority services and structures in Ireland, particularly as they relate to the planning function, or have the ability to quickly acquire same.
- be capable of working in close consultation with key stakeholders and in seeking co-operation and consensus with a whole range of bodies and representative groups.
- be experienced in meeting regularly with stakeholders, providing updates, presentations and reports, taking customer feedback and ensuring any learning from same is used to enhance the operations of the organisation.
- be experienced in contributing to the operational and strategic planning processes and in the implementation of the agreed aims of same.
- have excellent interpersonal, communication and influencing skills.
- have good knowledge and awareness of statutory obligations of Health and Safety Legislation the implications for the organization and the employee, and their application in the workplace.
- have experience of managing finance and budgets and ensuring value for money.
- have experience of providing information on the pattern of demand and activity and the skills to schedule/programme the carrying out of work.
- have good general ICT skills.
- have a focus on the customer and on service improvement including taking ownership and resolving issues arising.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The main duties and responsibilities of the role of Executive Planner include but are not limited to the following: -

- To assess planning applications and pre-application proposals against the Council's policies and provide recommendations and policy responses to these as required.
- To prepare and implement development plan documents and prepare reports on these matters for the appropriate Committees of the Council.
- Interacting with Planning Authorities in matters related to preparation of Development Plans, Variations, etc.
- Liaising and working with constituent planning authorities and other public authorities on all aspects of implementation.
- Monitoring and reporting on implementation progress.
- Monitoring and assisting with county development plan and local area plan preparation/reviews.
- Implementing agreed milestones and timescales, setting achievable targets and indicators.
- Assist in public consultation and engagement exercises related to Planning.
- Assist individuals, groups, etc. on regional planning matters as requested.
- Report regularly and as required on regional planning issues.
- Carrying out planning enforcement duties.
- To supervise and manage staff in their functional area as required.
- Any other associated duties as may be assigned from time to time.

KEY COMPETENCIES

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate sufficient evidence within their application under each competency.

<p>Strategic Management and Change</p>	<p>Strategic Ability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays the ability to think and act strategically. Can translate strategy into operational plans and outputs. • Evaluates capacity and performance against objectives. • Demonstrates innovation and creativity to secure successful strategic outcomes. <p>Political Awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a clear understanding of the political reality and context of the organisation. <p>Networking and Representing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops and maintains positive and beneficial relationships with a range of stakeholders. • Builds networks of technical and professional contacts. • Promotes and sustains an appropriate, positive, and cohesive image for the organisation it represents. <p>Bringing about Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates flexibility and an openness to change. • Develops and initiates change management programmes to meet end objectives.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influences others and fosters commitment to change.
Delivering Results	<p>Problem Solving and Decision Making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can pinpoint critical information and address issues logically. • Understands the context and impact of decisions made. • Acts decisively and makes timely, informed and effective decisions. <p>Operational Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to operational plans and develops team plans in line with priorities and actions for their area of operations. • Delegates, tracks and monitors activity. • Establishes high quality service and customer care standards. <p>Managing Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages the allocation, use and evaluation of resources to ensure they are used effectively to deliver on operational plans. • Drives and promotes reduction in cost and minimisation of waste. <p>Delivering Quality Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes the achievement of quality outcomes in delivering services. • Organises the delivery of services to meet or exceed the required standard. • Evaluates the outcomes achieved, identifies learning and implements improvements required.
Performance through People	<p>Leading and Motivating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivate others individually and in teams to deliver high quality work and customer focused outcomes. • Develops the competence of team members and helps them meet their full potential. • Leads by example in terms of commitment, flexibility and a strong customer service ethos. <p>Managing Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively manages performance including underperformance or conflict. • Empowers and encourages people to deliver their part of the operational plan. <p>Communicating Effectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises the value of communicating effectively with all employees. • Is clear in all communications, considering the audience in getting the message across. Writes fluently, clearly structuring written communication. • Presents ideas effectively to individuals and groups and delivers presentations suited to the nature and needs of the audience.
Personal Effectiveness	<p>Relevant Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps up to date with current developments, trends and best practice in their area of responsibility. • Demonstrates the required specialist knowledge, understanding and training for the role. • Has strong knowledge and understanding in relation to statutory obligations of Health and Safety legislation and its application in the workplace. • Demonstrates a knowledge of the structures and functions of local government.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a knowledge of current local government planning related issues and advocates practical approaches to addressing them. <p>Resilience and Personal Well Being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates appropriate and positive self-confidence. • Remains calm under pressure and operates effectively in an environment with significant complexity and pace. <p>Integrity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaves in an honest, trustworthy and respectful manner and is transparent, fair and consistent in dealing with others. <p>Personal Motivation, Initiative and Achievement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is enthusiastic about the role and sets challenging goals to achieve high quality outcomes. • Is self-motivated and persistent when faced with difficulties. • Engages in regular critical reflection in order to identify how own performance can be improved.
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THE PRINCIPAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

1. PARTICULARS:

Laois County Council reserves the rights to, at any time, assign an employee to any premises in use by the Council now or in the future.

2. PROBATION:

Where a person who is not already a permanent employee of a local authority is appointed, the following provisions shall apply:

- (a) There shall be a period after appointment takes effect, during which such a person shall hold the position on probation;
- (b) Such period shall be ten months' but the Chief Executive may, at his/her discretion, extend such period;
- (c) Such a person shall cease to hold the position at the end of the period of probation, unless during this period the Chief Executive has certified that the service is satisfactory;
- (d) There will be ongoing assessments during the probationary period. Employment may be terminated by either party during probation or at the end of the probationary period on one week's notice.

3. SALARY:

The salary shall be fully inclusive and shall be as determined from time to time. Holders of the office shall pay to the local authority any fees or other monies (other than their inclusive salary) payable to or received by them by virtue of their office or in respect of services which they are required by or under any enactment to perform.

The salary scale for the post of Executive Planner is: €57,909 - €80,498 (LSI2) - Circular EL 03/24 refers.

In accordance with EL 02/2011 persons who are not serving local authority employees must be placed on the minimum of the scale. Where a person being appointed is a serving local authority employee normal starting pay rules will apply. The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with government policy.

4. WORKING HOURS:

The standard working week will be 35 hours. The role may require flexible working hours and may occasionally include evening and weekend work for which overtime will not be paid but time-off-in-lieu will be available.

5. ANNUAL LEAVE:

30 days per annum.

6. RESIDENCE

The holder of the position shall reside in the district in which his/her duties are to be performed or within a reasonable distance thereof.

7. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Council shall work to promote a culture of equality and to develop equality and recruitment policies and procedures to ensure that all candidates are selected on merit. The Council shall endeavour to ensure that the selection process does not provide unjustifiable advantage or disadvantage to any particular candidate or group of candidates. The recruitment and selection process shall embrace genuine equality of opportunity, and this will be integral to the process by which appointments are made.

8. RECRUITMENT

Selection of candidates for appointment shall be by means of a competitive interview.

a) Shortlisting Process

The local authority may decide, by reason of the number of persons seeking admission to a competition, to carry out a shortlisting procedure. The number of persons to be invited, in these circumstances, to interview, shall be determined by the local authority from time to time having regard to the likely number of vacancies to be filled. The local authority may at its discretion, decide that such shortlisting will be based on qualifications, relevant experience and information submitted on the application form. In that regard, candidates should ensure they provide detailed and accurate information in completing the form. Alternatively, the local authority may at its discretion decide to shortlist by way of preliminary interview.

b) Competitive Interview

Selection of candidates for appointment shall be by means of a competitive interview. The competitive interview shall be conducted by or on behalf of the local authority. The Council is committed to a process of selection on merit, based on fair and open competition. The criteria for judging suitability and ranking will be related directly to the qualification, attributes and skills required to undertake the duties and responsibilities to the standard required in the post.

c) Panels

Following completion of interviews, panels may be formed, the duration of which is at the discretion of the Council. While a panel remains in force, offers of temporary or permanent employment may be made subject to confirmation of qualifications and satisfying clauses in relation to health, character, or other requirements of the particular post. Persons to whom an offer of employment is made must take up duty within **1 month** from the date of offer, or such extended period as the Council may agree, otherwise, the Council may decide not to appoint them.

d) References/Documentary Evidence

Each candidate may be required to submit as references the names and addresses of two responsible persons to whom he/she is well known but not related. Candidates may be required to submit documentary evidence to the local authority in support of their application.

9. COMMENCEMENT

The local authority shall require a person to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month and if he/she fails to take up the appointment within such period or such longer period as the local authority in its absolute discretion may determine, the local authority shall not appoint him/her.

10. RETIREMENT

The Single Public Service Pension Scheme (“Single Scheme”) as provided by the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 commenced with effect from 1st January 2013. The act introduces new pension and retirement provisions for **new entrants** to the public service appointed on or after 1st January 2013. Pension age set initially at 66 years; this will rise in step with statutory changes in the SPC age to 67 years in 2021 and 68 years in 2028. The compulsory retirement age of 70 applies. Otherwise the retirement age of the relevant Scheme applies. It should be noted that candidates who are in receipt of a Public Service Pension and are rehired in any paid capacity by a Public Service Body may be liable to have their pension abated. Prior to appointment successful candidates will be obliged to complete a Declaration in relation to previous Public Pensionable Employment.

11. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

[Laois County Council is committed to protecting your personal data and we comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Acts, 1988 – 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations.](#)

Basis for Processing your Personal Information

The basis for processing your personal data is to process your application for the position you have applied for with Laois County Council under the Terms of the Employment (Information) Act 1994 and Human Resources Department policies and procedures. Personal data sought for the purpose of recruitment will include your name, your contact details including email address and mobile number, particulars of education, details regarding your record of employment, details of referees and confirmation of if you require an employment permit/visa or work authorisation. When your application form is received, we create a computer record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. You are entitled to obtain at any time, a copy of information about you, which is kept on computer.

Sharing of Information

Outside of the relevant recruitment team, the information provided in your application form will only be shared for progressing the competition for which you have applied for, with a designated short listing and/or interview board. If, following the competition, you are placed on a panel and offered a position, the information provided in your application form will form part of your Personnel File and may be used for deciding the post to which you are assigned. Furthermore, should you be offered a position and subsequently confirm your interest in the position, the information provided on your application form

will be used to request service records, employment references and/or character references as required.

Storage period

Your application will be retained for one year from the date a panel for this position is formed. In exceptional circumstances panels can be extended for an additional year and your personal data will be kept until the extension has expired (usually a further one year, rarely two years). You will be notified if the panel has been extended after one year and the new expiry date of the panel. Applications which are unsuccessful at interview stage will be retained for one year. Applications that are not progressed to interview stage will be destroyed post competition. If you do not furnish the personal data requested, Laois County Council will not be able to progress your application form for the competition for which you are applying. Laois County Council's Privacy Statement can be assessed at: <https://laois.ie/privacy-statement/>

Any attempt by a candidate, or by any person(s) acting at the candidate's instigation, directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise influence in the candidate's favour, any member or employee of the Council or person nominated by the County Council to interview or examine applicants, will automatically disqualify the candidate for the position being sought. Expenses incurred by candidates in attending interview etc., will be at the candidates own expense.

Laois County Council is an equal opportunities employer.

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