**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE**

**LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Candidate Information Booklet**

**(Please read carefully)**

**Post of: Assistant Planner**

**Closing Date: 4.00 P.M.**

**Thursday 26th May 2022**

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

**Human Resources Department**

**Laois County Council**

**Aras an Chontae**

**Portlaoise**

**Co. Laois**

**And 1 copy emailed to** [**hr@laoiscoco.ie**](mailto:hr@laoiscoco.ie)

**Subject line: Ref 22/15 - Assistant Planner**

### COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE - LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

### POST OF: Assistant Planner

**THE COMPETITION**

Laois County Council is inviting applications from suitably qualified persons for the above competition. Laois County Council will, following the interview process, form a panel for the post of Assistant Planner.

**THE ROLE**

The Assistant Planner works as part of a multi-disciplinary team within Laois County Council’s Planning, Housing and Regeneration Directorates to deliver key local authority services, including forward planning, development management, planning enforcement and project-based areas.

The role requires a clear knowledge and understanding of local authority services and its key stakeholders and relationships, local government structures and its democratic role and mandate, current local government issues, future trends and strategic direction of the sector, management and implementation of change, and the future development of County Laois.

The Assistant Planner shall operate under the direction of and report to the Senior Executive Planner/Senior Planner (Supervisors) of the Planning section to which they are assigned. They must undertake those duties as assigned to them by their Supervisor.

Notwithstanding the requirements of the post successful applicants may be assigned to any service area/role within the Local Authority at an analogous level by the Chief Executive at any time.

# THE QUALIFICATIONS

1. **CHARACTER:**

Candidates shall be of good character.

1. **HEALTH:**

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render an efficient service. Successful candidates will be required to undergo a pre-employment medical examination carried out by the Council’s Occupational Medical advisor prior to appointment. On taking up appointment, the expense of the medical examination will be refunded to the candidate.

1. **EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE ETC:**

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

1. Hold a qualification in Planning (at least level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications).
2. Have at least two years’ satisfactory relevant experience of planning work.
3. Possess a high standard of technical training and expertise.

**The Ideal Candidate Shall:**

Demonstrate through their application form and at the interview that he/she has:

* Good planning, operational and project management skills
* Good communications/presentation and interpersonal skills
* Good knowledge, or the ability to quickly acquire same, of local government functions, services and activities, particularly in relation to planning and development
* A good working knowledge of planning legislation and the principals, practices and techniques of planning
* An ability to work under pressure and to think laterally, maintaining a solution orientated mindset while dealing with a wide range of issues
* An excellent understanding of Health and Safety legislation and regulations and their application in the workplace.
* Good report writing skills and strong IT skills
* An ability to prepare and present reports
* An ability to interpret and undertake critical analysis of scientific data
* Problem solving skills
* An ability to achieve delivery of completing demands within prescribed timelines and deadlines

**Key Duties:**

Details of Key Duties are outlined under ‘The Principal Terms and Conditions’ below.

**Competencies for the Post:**

Key Competencies for the post include the following and candidates will be expected to **demonstrate sufficient evidence within their application form** of competence under each of these. Please take particular note of these when completing the application form as any short-listing or interview processes will be based on the information provided by candidates:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strategic Management and Change** | * Displays the ability to think and act strategically * Can translate strategy into operational plans and outputs. * Demonstrates innovation and creativity to secure successful outcomes. * Has a clear understanding of the political reality and context of the organisation. * Develops and maintains positive and beneficial relationships with a range of stakeholders. * Builds networks of technical and professional contacts * Demonstrates flexibility and an openness to change. * Develops and initiates change management programmes to meet end objectives. * Influences others and fosters commitment to change |
| **Delivering Results** | **Promotes the achievement of quality outcomes in delivering services, with a focus on continuous improvement. Abides by the laws, regulations, policies and procedures affecting the discharge of your duties.**   * Organises the delivery of services to meet or exceed the required standard through collaborating with, instructing and motivating stakeholders and by managing human, financial, physical & information resources effectively. * Develops and implements quality assurance measures to achieve compliance with performance standards or benchmarks. * Critically evaluates outcomes and processes used to achieve them. * Is aware of and understands relevant legislation, regulations and policies that govern the Local Authority. * Ensures best value and efficiency in service delivery. * Intervenes in a timely manner if work activities go over timeframe/budget. * Managing resources and achieving efficiencies |
| **Performance through People** | **Builds and leads a positive, diverse and productive section/unit/team and communicates effectively. Recognises the value of and requirement to communicate effectively. Has effective verbal and written communication skills. Has good interpersonal skills.**   * Leads, motivates and engages others to achieve quality results. * Empowers and encourages people to deliver their part of the operational plan. * Recognises the value of and requirement of communicate effectively with all employees. * Presents ideas effectively to individuals and groups and delivers presentations suited to the nature and needs of the audience. * Is clear in all communications, considering the audience in getting the message across. Writes fluently, clearly structuring written communication. |
| **Personal Effectiveness** | **Is enthusiastic about the role and is motivated in the face of difficulties and obstacles. Adopts a positive attitude to work. Demonstrates an understanding of the role of Assistant Planner in local authority context**   * Enthusiasm and positivity about the role. * Initiative and creativity. * Resilience and personal well-being. * Personal Motivation. * 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 a 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. * Demonstrates a knowledge of current local government issues and advocates practical approaches to addressing them. |

**THE PRINCIPAL TERMS & CONDITIONS**

1. **PARTICULARS:**

**The position is wholetime, permanent and pensionable.**

The Council reserves the right to, at any time, re-assign an employee to any department now or in the future

1. **PROBATION:**

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

1. There shall be a period after appointment takes effect, during which such a person shall hold the position on probation;
2. Such period shall be ten months, but the Chief Executive may, at his/her discretion, extend such period;
3. 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;
4. 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.
5. REMUNERATION:

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 current annual pay-scale is: 40,422 – 63,365 LSI 2 (as per circular EL 01/2022).

Holders of the post will be paid at the appropriate point on the salary scale in accordance with the relevant Department circular. New entrants will commence on the minimum point of the scale.

1. **DUTIES:**

The duties of the office are to give to:

1. the local authority and
2. Such other local authorities or bodies for which the Chief Executive, for the purposes of the Local Government Acts, is Chief Executive, and
3. to any other local authority or body with which an agreement has been made by the local authority or by any of the authorities or bodies mentioned in sub-paragraph (b) of this paragraph, such appropriate services - of an engineering, technical, scientific, executive, administrative or management nature - as are required for the exercise and performance of any of its powers, duties and functions under the general direction and control of the Chief Executive or of such other officers as the Chief Executive may from time to time determine and as may be allocated or delegated to him or her by the Chief Executive from time to time including the duty of servicing committees that may be established by the local authority and such duties as may be required in relation to the area of any local authority. The holder of the office, will, if required, act for an officer of a higher level.

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

* Assessment and making of recommendations on planning application in line with all relevant national, regional and local plans/policies, and in accordance with the appropriate legislation and guidelines as required.
* Conducting of pre-application consultations and provision of planning advice to member of the public, internal departments and to the elected member in an efficient and flexible manner.
* Preparation and implementation of the County Development Plan, local area plans, planning schemes and other planning related reports as required.
* Liaising and working with neighbouring planning authorities and other public authorities on all aspects of implementation.
* Monitoring and reporting on implementation progress, including gathering/analysis of development and market activity.
* Preparation of policy and reports as required on a wide variety of planning matters.
* Any other associated duties as may be assigned from time to time.
* The particular duties and responsibilities attached to the post may vary from time to time, without changing the general character of the duties or level of responsibilities entailed. The post holder may therefore be required to perform duties appropriate to the post, other than those detailed above, and to take instructions from and report to, an appropriate Officer or such designated Officer as may be assigned from time to time by Laois County Council.

1. **SELECTION PROCESS:**

Candidates will initially be assessed to ensure that they meet the minimum specified eligibility criteria for the position.

* 1. **Shortlisting**

Shortlisting may apply based on the information supplied on application forms and the requirements of

the position as set out. It is expected that given the qualifications and experience of prospective

applicants the short-listing requirements may be significantly higher than the minimum qualifications

and experience requirements set out for the post.

**b. Competitive Interview**

Selection of candidates for appointment shall be by means of a competitive interview, 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 qualifications, 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 as described on page 2, the duration of which is at the discretion of the Council. While a panel remains in force, offers of temporary employment may be made and will be the subject of confirmation of qualifications and satisfying clauses in relation to health, character or other requirements of this 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 is well known to them but not related. Candidates may be required to submit documentary evidence to the local authority in support of their application.

1. **RETIREMENT AGE**:

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 introduced new pension and retirement provisions for **new entrants** to the public service appointed on or after 1st January 2013. The normal retirement age under the Single Pension Scheme is the same as the age at which you can claim the Contributory State Pension from the Department of Social Protection which is currently 66 years of age with a compulsory retirement age of 70. Otherwise, the retirement age of the relevant pension. It should be noted that candidates who are in receipt of a Public Service Pension and are re-hired 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.

1. **RESIDENCE**:

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

**8. SUPERANNUATION:**

The superannuation contributions of relevant scheme will apply.

**9. SICK LEAVE:**

The terms of the Public Service Sick Pay Scheme will prevail.

10. DRIVING LICENCE:

When required to do so, holders of the office shall possess a current full driving licence in respect of Category B vehicles or equivalent in the EU Model Driving Licence and have access to a car. If, during your employment, your licence is revoked, even temporarily, or if you receive endorsements on your licence which may affect your duties you are obliged to notify the Council immediately.

**11.** **SAFEPASS**

The Assistant Planner shall have on his/her person, at all times, a valid Safepass card. Should the successful candidate not hold a valid Safepass card, he/she must obtain a Safepass card within a specified period of time, prior to taking up appointment.

12. Right to Information and Review:

The Council is committed to offering feedback and information to candidates. Any candidate who wishes to do so may request to have a decision or the process reviewed. Any such request must be submitted in writing, stating the grounds of the request and this must be submitted to [hr@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:hr@laoiscoco.ie) within five working days of the date of notification of a relevant decision.

**13. Confidentiality:**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence.

**14. Other:**

Appointments to the Council are subject to satisfactory checks with regard to references, qualifications, medical examinations, and Garda Vetting, as applicable.

**15. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION**

**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/>

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**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**