



Affordable Housing Enabling Officer

Salary: Band 8 - £36,363 to £39,151 p.a.

Hours per week: Your contractual hours are 37 per week, which are to be worked in accordance with the flexible working hours' scheme and the needs of the Service working Monday to Friday.

Office attendance is required minimum 2-days a week for full time staff, this remains flexible, subject to business needs which may mean additional days needed in the office. One of the days to be taken Tues-Thurs. Flexible working or pro-rata requirements will be considered and should be stated in any application.

Location: Civic Offices, Portsmouth. Role is office based however you will be required on occasion to visit development sites in Portsmouth, Havant, Gosport and Fareham.

Contract type: Permanent

The Service:

The Housing Neighbourhood and Building Services Directorates delivers a range of front-line services, including homelessness, waste management, building maintenance and housing services.

The Housing Needs, Advice and Supply service is responsible for all homelessness and rough sleeping services and has a role to play in the supply of residential accommodation used to meet the need.

The service deals with a range of housing issues, giving advice to customers, working to prevent or relieve homelessness, making assessments in accordance with the homelessness legislation and assessing housing and support needs in line with the city council's Allocation Scheme as well as the provision of commissioned accommodation and new council homes.

Housing Supply sits within the Housing Needs and Supply Service, ensuring a direct link between Housing and the delivery of housing solutions. The service is pivotal in creating the provision of accommodation needed to ensure the city has the right housing models for our residents.

What is the role?

The role will report directly to the Head of Housing Supply. There may be opportunities for line management for the Housing Supply Enabling Officer in time.

The primary purpose of this role is to lead the effective delivery of services that maximise the supply of social and affordable housing through the planning system and the strategic use of council resources. The postholder will have responsibility for housing delivery within the Local Planning Authority area, principally in Portsmouth, while also supporting delivery in neighbouring authorities where service level agreements apply, and within emerging combined authority areas as required.

The role will independently manage key housing needs relating to social and affordable housing. It will act as a central link between the council's Local Planning Authority and external specialists, such as viability consultants, providing advice on the level, type and suitability of affordable housing needed. The postholder will ensure that opportunities for delivering social and affordable housing, either on site or through financial contributions, are

fully maximised. Strong relationships and communication skills will be used to encourage partnership working and reduce affordable housing sites becoming stalled. Where appropriate, this could include appraising the viability and suitability for the council to acquire section 106 housing to unlock delivery and meet its housing needs.

As part of a small team, the role will be expected to work with minimal supervision while delivering its core responsibilities.

Key responsibilities include:

a) Social and Affordable Housing Delivery

- i. Act as the main point of contact for developers, landowners, builders, registered providers, housing associations, agents, investors and other stakeholders. The role will lead on complex negotiations and provide clear advice on affordable housing policy requirements to secure the right supply, mix and quality of homes.
- ii. Ensure that the affordable housing included in new developments, and secured through Section 106 agreements, meets local housing needs. The role will also ensure that appropriate processes are in place so that homes comply with the council's allocations policy or nomination agreements. This work supports the council's aims to reduce housing list pressures and the demand for temporary accommodation.
- iii. Review and provide clear advice, commentary and reports to the Local Planning Authority on pre-application proposals and planning applications. This includes identifying opportunities to maximise affordable housing by considering factors such as the size of homes, tenure mix, occupancy and layout. The role will attend meetings with applicants and other stakeholders as required, and provide written responses for applicants and for inclusion in planning officer reports prepared for committee.
- iv. Provide advice, commentary and support during negotiations on Section 106 legal agreements and Nomination Agreements to ensure that affordable and social housing is secured in line with the planning permission.
- v. Consider and re-negotiate, where appropriate requests from developers to review the affordable housing provisions within existing section 106 agreements against the governments guidelines to unlock stalled sites where all other options have been exhausted using all reasonable endeavours.
- vi. Utilise the Homes England Clearing Service to encourage registered providers to bid for Section 106 homes provided by developers. Request and consider the reasonableness of bids received by developers for uncontracted or stalled section 106 sites. Where required, commission independent professional advisors to help assess the viability and suitability of these bids, taking account of local market conditions, to determine whether the developer has acted reasonably in rejecting them.
- vii. Work in partnership with developers from the early planning stages to support the marketing of Section 106 homes to registered providers. Help identify and promote suitable marketing opportunities, including using local connections where appropriate, to reduce the risk of homes not being delivered or developers seeking to vary their Section 106 obligations.

b) Knowledge and relationships

- i. Maintain an up-to-date understanding of national and local planning policies and regulations. Keep informed about legislative changes, guidance and reports issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Homes England, partner agencies and industry publications relating to the delivery of social and affordable housing and wider housing market pressures.
- i. Maintain strong working relationships with teams across Housing Needs and Housing Supply to stay informed about the council's housing demand, pressures on the housing list and temporary accommodation, and the council's supply strategies and upcoming pipeline of supply.
- ii. To seek out and develop new working relationships with organisations that can support the council's ambitions and corporate priorities to deliver affordable housing to the city. Foster and maintain excellent partnerships with those and existing partners.
- iii. Attend and chair meetings with partner organisations, other local authorities, local stakeholder groups including registered providers to share insights and knowledge of local market considerations, legislative and funding changes and housing delivery pipelines to facilitate discussions that maximise housing and affordable housing supply to the city.
- iv. Encourage early engagement between developers and registered providers and the local planning authority to collaborate on matters of design, layout, specification, energy requirements and building safety/regulator standards to provide clarity on the standards section 106 homes must meet to ensure homes can be contracted and delivered and meet future tenants needs.
- v. Identify opportunities for innovative collaborative discussions and partnerships with other stakeholders or partners to encourage investment and funding that unlocks the delivery of Section 106 affordable housing to minimise the risk of non-delivery or delays to delivery.
- vi. Where required and working with the Local Planning Authority consider the appropriateness of procuring and appointing independent experts or legal advice to support a formal dispute between the Local Planning Authority and developer over affordable housing provisions linked to section 106.

c) Acquisition of section 106 affordable housing

- i. Consider where there may be suitable opportunities for the council to directly acquire affordable housing by purchasing uncontracted section 106 homes.
- ii. Prepare and complete financial appraisals to assess the viability and value of identified opportunities, including determining an appropriate purchase price for the council. Use external advisors and consultants as needed to support this work. Consider sensitivity analysis and long-term cash-flow modelling to ensure proposals are affordable, sustainable and represent value for money for the council.
- iii. Lead negotiations with developers and provide advice on commercial heads of terms, deal structures and associated risks. This includes considering local

market conditions, funding options and other relevant insights to shape the council's approach to the terms, price and timing of agreements.

- iv. Prepare and present to the Head of Housing Supply business cases and formal reports recommending acquisition opportunities, and support any required briefings and communication plans.
- v. Once approval is granted, ensure that full due diligence is carried out and that all legal agreements and contracts for purchase are completed. This includes working closely with internal departments and external providers through to completion.

d) Policy

- i. Stimulate innovative and creative approaches and best practice to securing and maximising social and affordable housing delivery on housing developments in the city and on behalf of other local authorities.
- ii. To assist and contribute to the development of council policies, plans and strategies designed to ensure the housing need and demand for different types of housing provision are met across the city.
- iii. Provide advice and recommendations to the leadership teams and elected members on significant policy decisions or legislative changes that may be complex and/or contentious, within the roles experience and expertise.
- iv. Identify examples of national and regional good practice within the affordable housing service area and take the lead on sharing that learning and seek to implement those best practices in the council.
- v. Consider government guidelines to unlock section 106 housing delivery and encourage standardisation of approaches across the market on the process for disposal of section 106 homes to increase developers' capacity to deliver.

e) Monitoring and performance

- i. Maintain an accurate record of developments, which are subject to Section 106 affordable housing or financial contribution and monitor their implementation to identify when triggers for payment of discharge of clauses in any legal agreement are met and notify the relevant service area/end recipient. Use the systems to identify and develop suitable key performance indicators and measures for reporting purposes and to inform housing supply strategies.
- ii. Evaluate and monitor performance information provided by third parties against legal and policy requirements. To include the monitoring of financial contributions for affordable housing to ensure the timely collection in accordance with the legal agreements.
- iii. Visit development sites and liaise with other directorates to check for commencement triggers.
- iv. As required by the Local Planning Authority, to represent the council as an expert witness on affordable housing matters and in the context of any assessments and advice provided where a planning application is subject to planning appeal, inquiry or hearing.

- v. Respond and deal with associated enquiries and complaints arising from related matters from the general public, freedom of information, MPs or members.
- vi. Provide reports for internal purposes and senior leadership teams to summarise key developments, schemes, overall affordable housing supply secured and what is being delivered against milestone dates to include budget monitoring for financial contributions and proposals to allocate.
- vii. To lead on periodic audits of the allocation of section 106 funding or collection.
- viii. Promote and exemplify robust decision making and assessment of affordable housing requirements in an open, transparent, inclusive and responsive way being flexible and supportive where appropriate and supports positive outcomes to the council and its residents.

Who is the person?

The role requires experience and knowledge of:

- Microsoft Office (Outlook, Teams, Powerpoint, Word (intermediate - mail merge, use of styles, references etc, Excel (Intermediate- trackers, Pivot tables, graphs, basic formulas, LOOKUPS, conditional formatting).
- Sharepoint - file management systems, One Note, Power BI (optional), whiteboard, CoPilot
- Substantial experience in housing or property related role with experience in a section 106 affordable housing role or comparable experience preferably with a local authority or registered provider.
- Experience of assessing Section 106 affordable housing contributions via on site delivery or financial contributions and undertaking complex negotiations over terms and legal agreements.
- Experience of managing, monitoring and collecting s106 affordable housing financial contributions and liability dates and conditions.
- Evidence of ongoing CPD.
- Desirable - Housing or property or planning related qualification.
- Essential - knowledge and experience of Land Registry, planning portal, hosted property information systems (Land Insight, gov. databases etc) property agency websites, Homes England clearing system.
- Understanding and working experience of Planning legislation at local and national level, housing legalisation including allocations, homelessness and temporary accommodation provision.
- Knowledge and experience of acquisition process specific to the disposal or acquisition of section 106 affordable housing between developers and registered providers.
- Knowledge and understanding of key housing initiatives, planning requirements and appropriate grant funding requirements.
- Awareness of heads of terms and key details to be negotiated in a S106 agreement or acquisition/disposal.
- Knowledge of what the key inputs are in a financial appraisal for assessing section 106 bids received by a developer or to prepare a purchase price.



- Knowledge of data needed to track and monitor performance of section 106 and affordable housing delivery.
- Experience of preparing advisory reports and presentations, collating complex sources of property information and communicating data to a senior management and leadership team.
- The role requires proficiency in many in-house IS and database systems including Microsoft Office, HNAS database, Northgate, GIS, Repairs & Maintenance database and Land Registry.
- Project management and organisational skills to deliver key objectives
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills for stakeholder engagement and establishing relationships with property owners/developers/agents etc.
- Work proactively, remain motivated, works on own initiative in coordinating multiple tasks with ability to work to deadlines with frequent task switching and competing priorities.
- Valid driving licence.

You will need to demonstrate that you have the Right to Work in the UK. No post will be offered without it.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Portsmouth City Council is the Data Controller of any personal information you provide when applying for a job. It will only be used in connection with the recruitment process and will not be kept for longer than necessary. For more detailed information you can access the Data Protection Privacy Notice on our [careers portal](#).