

## **School Place Planning and Finance Officer**

Salary: Band 10, **£41,510 to £45,718** per annum

Contract: **Permanent**

Hours: **Full time** (37 hours per week, Monday to Friday, flexible during office hours)

Location: Based in the **Civic Offices**, Portsmouth, with the option to work remotely (up to 3 days depending on the needs of the service)

### **The Service**

The Children, Families and Education Directorate is primarily focussed on delivering its statutory duties as well as a range of high-quality supporting traded services. Portsmouth City Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Within the Directorate, the Sufficiency and Resources Service supports school organisation, school management and school improvement through liaison with senior school leaders and other council teams. It also works directly with children and young people to improve attainment / progress, deliver positive outcomes, and to improve social and emotional wellbeing. It seeks to ensure that all services are of high quality and deliver effective support to meet the needs of internal and external partners.

### **The Team**

The priorities for the Sufficiency and Capital Strategy Team include:

- Meeting statutory requirements to provide sufficient school places in mainstream settings, and for children and young people with SEND or those requiring Alternative Provision.
- Pursuing opportunities to bid for capital funding and other investment.
- Leading the Education capital programme to deliver a range of schemes and priorities.
- Managing academy transfers in line with the agreed programme of conversions.
- Taking responsibility within Education for emerging property and building issues.

### **What is the Role?**

- To act as a senior advisor in relation to school organisation and place planning matters. Taking a lead in School Capacity (SCAP) data management and other DfE statutory returns associated with school capacity/planning and with capital and SEND grant expenditure, as well as School/Academy organisational change.
- Implement and develop appropriate systems to ensure the effective management of school, SEND and alternative provision place planning, including the modelling of pupil number projections in all planning areas across the city. Ensure relevant data is reported on an annual basis as required by the DfE.
- To lead on school organisation, managing consultations and statutory proposals for school organisation changes, supporting the Schools Capital and Sufficiency Programme Board (SCSPB) advising on pupil place planning, academy conversions and other school organisation issues.
- Monitor and report on the provision of school places.

- Ensure that the relevant information is provided to enable the local authority to meet its statutory obligations for school place planning.
- Maintain an understanding and overview of capital grant funding available to schools, including Basic Need, Schools Condition grant funding and associated Education capital programmes such as Free Schools and Schools Rebuilding Programmes.
- Working closely with the Sufficiency and Capital Strategy Project Officer establish suitable systems for budget monitoring purposes and payment processes associated with a range of capital and inclusion initiatives. This will include decision-making associated with the suitable expenditure within specific grant conditions.
- Improve and / or deliver new team processes to ensure a cost-effective, time-efficient and comprehensive service.
- To record and monitor potential and authorised capital expenditure, and support the Sufficiency and Capital Strategy Manager, the Head of Sufficiency and Resources and Finance colleagues to ensure the most appropriate use of available funds.
- To maintain confidentiality when dealing with staff, budgets, projects and other politically or commercially sensitive matters.

### **Key Tasks and Responsibilities**

- Conduct analysis of relevant data and develop projection methodologies which build a holistic, robust and accurate picture of the supply and demand for school places in Portsmouth.
- Contribute to the development of strategies and policies relating to the supply of school places and support a coordinated approach to education planning.
- Act as Project Manager co-ordinating Academy transfers/conversions in Portsmouth, being the central point of contact for Academy transfers, covering:
  - Preparation of project plans for each Academy transfer and co-ordination of the multi-disciplinary project team.
  - Preparation of academy transfer/update reports for relevant board.
  - Improvements to business processes to support improvements to the implementation of Academy transfers
  - Liaising with Academy sponsors/converter schools and DfE
  - Undertake briefings to Members, Governors, Headteachers etc. as required.
- Review statutory processes and consultation required by LA and distinguish change in role with Academies. i.e. Academies responsible for consultation.
- To lead in establishing and continuing to implement suitable approaches to budget monitoring and the processing of payments in line with the required procurement processes and any grant conditions.
- To deputise for the Service Head (Sufficiency and Resources) in relation to pupil place planning, capital and school organisation matters.
- To collate information and complete statutory returns to the DfE on school capacity and place planning, such as, the SCAP and other data collection activities related to sufficiency and school organisation.

- Liaise with internal teams within Portsmouth City Council (e.g. Planning and Housing) to obtain data and intelligence on current and future numbers of young people needing education.
- To lead in carrying out the Authority's statutory consultations and proposals for school organisation changes.
- Communicate complex information effectively to a wide range of audiences and settings (e.g. council members, senior officers, head teachers, parents) in a variety of formats (e.g. formal reports, presentations).
- Promote, develop and manage effective partnership working with internal and external stakeholders and support the resolution of any disputes.
- To represent the budget-holding department's closest contact with commissioned works, providing advice and input to inform decisions made by the Board or senior management.
- To ensure that activities within the service are carried out to agreed standards within available resources, and in line with legislative, regulatory, and national minimum standard requirements. Set collective and individual targets for improving performance and quality. Develop effective means of monitoring and evaluating operational performance.
- To assist the Team Manager in devising the annual team plan in relation to school organisation and place planning.
- To maintain an up to date understanding of key educational issues and developments around the statutory responsibilities for school place planning and school admissions.
- To ensure the appropriate use of information technology in the management and delivery of the service.
- To undertake other duties of a similar nature commensurate with the grade as may be required from time to time.

### **Who is the person?**

### **You have experience of ...**

- Knowledge and experience of pupil place planning, school organisation, benchmarking, school capital funding requirements and ideally Academy transfers, at a senior level
- Experience of data management and analysis
- Experience of preparing and writing reports and briefing notes.
- Experience of successfully working with a variety of stakeholders involved in projects at a senior or strategic level
- Experience of supporting the delivery of complex programmes and projects.
- Experience of developing, establishing, and maintaining electronic knowledge and information tracking systems.

## **You have ...**

- Strong communication and influencing skills – able to work effectively across a large and complex organisation; able to hold high level meetings with senior officials, both internally and externally, such as DfE officers, and the Office for the Schools Adjudicator (OSA). Able to work effectively with Headteachers and Governing Bodies of Secondary, Special and Primary Schools.
- Excellent project management and contract management skills.
- Ability to develop strong working relationships to engage and influence a variety of stakeholders.
- Ability to prioritise and organise own workload and that of others in a complex changing environment.
- Ability to produce (and support others in delivering) high quality written work.
- Ability to meet tight deadlines using personal time management and organisation skills.
- Ability to objectively analyse problems, reach logical conclusions and investigate wider impact outside own work area.
- Ability to deliver presentations to service colleagues, headteachers, school staff and internal colleagues.
- Working in complex and changing environments, within budget and to timescales.
- Administering tasks and resources, and leading meetings, at a senior / Board level.
- Negotiating and influencing effectively to secure the actions and resources necessary to deliver the commissioned projects and other team objectives.
- Work under your own initiative, while being willing to seek guidance and assistance from other members of staff if appropriate.
- Review issues independently and objectively, investigate problems, identify solutions and escalate matters appropriately.
- Plan, organise and prioritise your own workload across competing agendas, working flexibly to meet the requirements of the team and wider service.
- Educated to Level 4 or equivalent experience.

## **Knowledge /qualifications**

- Highly IT literate with the ability to use data analysis software such as Excel.
- Advanced knowledge and experience of statistical analysis and projection methodologies.
- Excellent analytical skills.
- A recognised project management qualification (desirable)
- Knowledge and practical experience of managing school transformation and re-organisation (desirable)
- Understanding and committed to the principles of equality and inclusion, ensuring the design of services to meet the needs of all children and young people.

## **You are ...**

- Innovative and open to new ways of doing things.
- Interested in best practice - able to guide others and drive change, as well as being prepared to learn from others.
- An excellent team player who understands and appreciates the benefits of a diverse workforce and recognises the value in different styles, approaches and contributions.

**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)**

As part of any recruitment process, Portsmouth City Council collects and processes personal data relating to job applicants. Portsmouth City Council is committed to being transparent about how it collects and uses that data and to meeting its data protection obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Completing and sending an application in for a vacancy is your consent for us to process your data for the purpose of recruitment. Your data is not used in any other way, and you can withdraw your consent at any point in the recruitment process and we will destroy or delete your information.

For more detailed information on what we collect, how we use, store, delete data and your rights you can access a privacy statement on our Job board.