



## CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

### Panel for Post of ASSISTANT PLANNER (Permanent/Temporary Contracts)

**CLOSING DATE: 12 noon on FRIDAY 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**FOUR APPLICATION FORMS (one original completed signed copy and three full copies of the original) SHOULD BE RETURNED TO:**

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER  
HUMAN RESOURCES SECTION  
CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL  
COUNTY BUILDINGS  
ATHY ROAD  
CARLOW  
R93 E7R7

**CANDIDATES WHO SEND THEIR APPLICATIONS BY POST SHOULD ALLOW SUFFICIENT TIME TO ENSURE DELIVERY NOT LATER THAN THE LATEST TIME FOR ACCEPTANCE.**

**PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS:**

- A Curriculum Vitae or applications by email or fax will **NOT** be accepted
- All applications forms should be **TYPED** and before signing the form, please ensure that you have replied fully to all sections/questions.
- You should satisfy yourself that you are eligible under the regulations - **copy of your educational results should be submitted with your application to confirm your eligibility.** The Council cannot undertake to investigate the eligibility of candidates in advance of the interview and hence persons who are ineligible, but nevertheless, enter, may put themselves to unnecessary expense.
- Carlow County Council is not responsible for any expenses which may be incurred by the candidate in attendance for aptitude test or interview.
- Applications received after the closing date and time specified will **NOT** be accepted.
- Applications received that do not comply with the requirements set out in the booklet, i.e. typed application form, one original fully completed signed copy and 3 copies of the application form, copy of results where required, will **NOT** be accepted.
- Carlow County Council may decide, by reason of the number of persons seeking admission to the competition, to carry out a shortlisting procedure. Shortlisting will be based on qualifications, relevant experience and information submitted on the application form. The number of persons to be invited for interview shall be determined by Carlow County Council.

## **CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL - COMPLETING A COMPETENCY BASED APPLICATION FORM**

A Competency Based Application Form requires, you, as the candidate, to describe some of your personal achievements to date, to demonstrate certain competencies (necessary skills & qualities) required for the position you are applying for. All question areas must be answered, as you will be questioned on all areas should you be called for interview.

You should describe situation(s) from your own experience, which you think is the best example(s) of what you have done which demonstrates the specific competency. It is essential that you describe how you demonstrated the skill or quality in question. The example(s) may be drawn from your experience in various settings, including employment, community, sporting or voluntary. Please do not use the same example to illustrate your answer to more than two areas of competence. Please note the interview board may look for additional examples of where you demonstrated the skills required for the post.

Carlow County Council is seeking candidates that demonstrate strong administrative and communication skills. They must also be self-motivated and committed to delivering quality public services. Key Competencies for the post have been identified as essential for the role of Assistant Planner. These competencies will be assessed under the following headings:

### **Planning Policy & Practice:**

Experience and detailed knowledge of the practical application of:

- Irish Planning Legislation and key relevant European Directives including associated procedures
- Planning issues relevant to County Carlow and its wider region
- Historical, emerging and topical planning trends and issues in Ireland
- Report writing and communication of a reasoned assessment or recommendation
- Health and safety legislation

### **Delivering Results**

- Problem solving and decision making, particularly in situations of conflicting demands
- Organising work and implementing solutions, working to deadlines
- Excellent organisational skills to deliver the required results
- Helping to establish high quality service and customer care standards
- Delivering Quality Outcomes
- Strong ICT Skills

### **Performance Through People**

- Show motivation and positivity as part of a team
- Ability to communicate with a range of stakeholders
- Have effective written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills

### **Personal Effectiveness**

- Take initiative and be open to taking on new challenges or responsibilities
- Manage time and workload effectively
- Maintain a positive and constructive and enthusiastic attitude to their role
- Understanding the structures and environment within which the local authority sector operates
- Political awareness, integrity and public service values

## **Panel for the POST OF ASSISTANT PLANNER (Permanent/Temporary Contracts)**

### **QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE POST**

**1. CHARACTER:**

Candidates shall be of good character and references shall be sought.

**2. HEALTH:**

Each candidate must be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render an efficient service.

**3. CITIZENSHIP:**

Candidates must, by the date of any job offer, be:

- (a) A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- (b) A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or
- (c) A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- (d) A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or UK or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- (e) A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa; or
- (f) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or the UK or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa.

**4. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND 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 in the National Framework of Qualifications);
- (b) have at least two years satisfactory relevant experience of planning work; and
- (c) possess a high standard of technical training and experience

**5. DRIVING LICENCE:**

Must hold a current full driving licence in respect of category B vehicles and have use of personal transport for work, as there will be a requirement to travel to various Council premises and other locations.

## **The Role**

An Assistant Planner is responsible for working as part of a team implementing programmes of work in the Planning Department and for providing a multiplicity of planning services and related services. Assistant Planner positions are multi-faceted and may include some or all of the following key service areas:

- Development Management;
- Planning Enforcement;
- Forward Planning and Sustainable Development; and
- Gathering and analysis of Statistics on Development

## **The Ideal Candidate**

The successful candidate should be able to demonstrate the following:

- Good knowledge of planning legislation and the principals, practices and techniques of planning
- An ability to work positively as part a multi-disciplinary team;
- Good communication/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;
- Good report writing skills and strong IT skills;
- An ability to achieve delivery of competing demands within prescribed timelines and deadlines; and

The successful candidate will be expected to carry out their duties in a manner that enhances public trust and confidence and ensures impartial decision making.

## **Duties:**

The duties of the office are to give the local authority and

(a) such other local authorities or bodies for which the Chief Executive, for the purposes of the City and County Management Acts, is Chief Executive, and

(b) 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 (a) of this paragraph, under the direction and supervision of the appropriate officer, such planning and ancillary services of an advisory, supervisory or executive nature as may be required by any local authority or body hereinbefore mentioned in the exercise and performance of any of its powers, functions and duties including the duty of assisting any appropriate officer, in the supervision of the planning or ancillary services of any of the foregoing local authorities or bodies and, when required to do so, to perform the duty of acting for the appropriate professional officer of higher rank during the absence of such officer of higher rank.

***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 applications in line with all relevant national, regional and local plans/policies, and in accordance with the appropriate legislation and guidelines as required
- Preparing responses to planning appeals, attendance and input at oral hearings as necessary
- Preparing responses for submissions on compliance with planning conditions

- Input into the preparation of, management and administration of environmental assessments of planning applications and plans / programmes as required
- Advising on and preparation of recommendations on 'Section 5' exempted development declaration applications and other declarations as directed
- Giving planning advice on the preparation and processing of "Part 8" Local Authority development applications
- Carrying out site visits and preparing recommendations in relation to planning enforcement, vacant sites and derelict sites, including attendance at court cases and the giving of evidence
- Carrying out survey work, research, analysis, drafting policies and proposals, preparing written statements and maps and other work as required on the agreed Forward Planning work programme, including but not limited to, plans, other planning strategies and studies, urban and rural renewal strategies / plans, urban design / public realm strategies and provisions of the Residential Zoned Land Tax
- Assist in the procurement and management of consultants
- Assistance in organising and facilitating public consultation and participation including attendance at meetings and other public forums, making presentations and recording and responding to queries
- Assist in the preparation of planning studies including National / EU funded projects
- Dealing professionally and courteously with queries from members of the public and their agents
- Providing a high level of service to public representatives, including attendance at and presentations to the relevant Strategic Policy Committee and at meetings of the Council, including at Municipal District level.
- Maintaining and proactively developing a culture of Health and Safety in the workplace
- Engaging in Continuing Professional Development/Training
- Incorporating the use of IT and efficiencies into work practices
- Preparation for and attendance at staff meetings
- 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
- Responding to planning queries, completions of returns etc. from other Council departments and national and regional Government / statutory agencies, external bodies as directed
- To deputise for the Executive Planner/Senior Executive Planner or analogous grades as required
- To undertake any other duties of a similar level and responsibility, as may be required, or 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 Carlow County Council.

**The ideal candidate for this position should possess the following competencies:**

- Planning Policy and Practice

- Delivering Results
- Performance Through People
- Personal Effectiveness

## **PARTICULARS OF OFFICE**

1. The positions may be permanent wholetime or temporary wholetime and are pensionable.
2. **PROBATION:**  
Where persons who are not already permanent employees of a local authority are appointed, the following provisions shall apply:
  - (a) there shall be a period after such appointment takes effect during which such persons shall hold such position on probation,
  - (b) such period shall be 12 months, but the Chief Executive may at his or her discretion extend such period,
  - (c) such persons shall cease to hold such position at the end of the period of probation unless during such period the Chief Executive has certified that the service of such persons is satisfactory,
  - (d) the period at (a) above may be terminated on giving one week's notice as per the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts,
  - (e) there will be assessments during the probationary period.
3. **SALARY:**  
The salary shall be fully inclusive and shall be as determined from time to time. The holder of the office shall pay to the local authority any fees or other monies (other than inclusive salary) payable to and received by him/her by virtue of his/her office or in respect of services which he/she is required by or under any enactment to perform.  
  
Salary: €45,302 - €47,944 - €49,884 - €51,849 - €53,858 - €55,902 - €57,964 - €60,027 - €62,089 - €64,154 - €66,232 – LSI 1 €68,354 – LSI 2 70,480  
  
Holders of the post will be paid at the appropriate point on the salary scale in accordance with the relevant Department Circulars. The starting pay for new entrants to the public service will be at the minimum of the scale. The salary shall be fully inclusive and shall be as determined from time to time. The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.  
  
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4. **HOURS OF WORK:**  
The working hours at present provide for a five day, thirty-five hours working week, hours may vary from time to time. Carlow County Council operate a flexible time scheme with the earliest start

time of 8.30 a.m. and a latest start time of 10.00 a.m. and the earliest finishing time of 16.30 p.m. and the latest finishing time of 18.00 p.m. Lunch break consisting of a minimum of 30 minutes to a maximum of 2 hours must be taken between 12.30 p.m. and 14.30 p.m. The Flexi Leave Scheme is available, on request.

The post may require flexibility in working outside of normal hours, including at weekends, as necessary. No additional remuneration will be paid in respect of such activities and Time in Lieu on a time for time basis will apply. Overtime does not apply to this post. All hours of work will be subject to and recorded in accordance with the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 and the Organisation of Working Time Act (Regulations) 2001. The working hours may be reviewed at any time and the Council reserves the right to vary the hours or days as required.

**5. DUTIES:**

The duties shall be such as may be assigned to the employees from time to time by the local authority and shall include the duty of deputising for other officers of the local authority, when required, and such duties as may be assigned to them in relation to the area of any other local authority.

**6. ANNUAL LEAVE:**

The annual leave entitlement for the position of Assistant Planner is 30 days per annum.

**7. SICK LEAVE:**

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

**8. HEALTH:**

For the purposes of satisfying the requirement as to health it will be necessary for each successful candidate, before he/she is appointed, to undergo a medical examination by a qualified medical practitioner to be nominated by the local authority.

**9. REFERENCES:**

Applicants are required to advise the names of two responsible persons to whom they are well known but not related (at least one of the referees should be an existing or former employer).

In advance of any offer of employment, Carlow County Council reserves the right to seek both written and verbal references from current and previous employers, educational institutions or any other organisations with which the candidate has been associated. The Council reserves the right to determine the merit, appropriateness and relevance of such references and referees.

**10. LOCATION/WORK BASE/REMOTE WORKING:**

The successful candidate will be based at County Buildings, Carlow or other Council facilities within the County. Carlow County Council reserves the right to assign you to any premises in use by the Council, now or in the future. Changes in location of employment will not result in payment of disturbance money or other compensation. The person appointed will be required to provide him/herself at his/her own expense with the necessary mode of travel to and from work.

Carlow County Council is implementing its Remote/Blended Working Policy and some elements of this role may be considered for remote/blended working at the discretion of the Line Manager.

**11. TRAVEL:**

Holders of the post shall hold a full driving licence for class B vehicles and shall drive a motor car in the course of their duties and for this purpose, provide and maintain a car to the satisfaction of the local authority. Travelling expenses and subsistence expenses necessarily incurred in the course of official duties will be refunded in accordance with appropriate rates in line with the relevant Department Circulars and Local Authority Travel and Subsistence Policy.

Carlow County Council, as employer, must be indemnified on your insurance policy. 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.

**12. HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

The holder of the post shall co-operate with the terms of Carlow County Council's Safety Statement and Major Emergency Plan. He/She shall familiarise him/herself with the safety rules and procedures and make proper use of all safety, clothing and equipment. Failure to comply with the terms of the Safety Statement may result in a disciplinary action.

If required, the successful candidate shall wear protective clothing and have on his/her person at all times a valid SafePass card. Should he/she not hold a valid SafePass card, a course shall be undertaken to attain the card.

**13. TRAINING:**

It is a condition of employment that successful candidates will be required to participate in training programmes relevant to the skills necessary for the performance of the duties attaching to the post.

**14. 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.

**15. GARDA VETTING:**

Garda vetting is required for certain roles within Carlow County Council. Failure to complete a Garda vetting form on request may prevent your employment with Carlow County Council. In the event of an unsatisfactory Garda declaration being received Carlow County Council reserves the right not to commence employment. In the event of an existing employee changing role as a result of promotion or otherwise to a role that requires Garda Vetting and an unsatisfactory disclosure being returned, Carlow County Council reserves the right to withhold promotion, and also to investigate if further sanction/disciplinary action is warranted on foot of disclosure on a case by case basis.

**16. SUPERANNUATION & RETIREMENT:**

If you are pensionable under the Local Government (Superannuation) (Consolidation) Scheme 1998 and are liable to pay Class A PRSI contributions, you would be required in respect of superannuation to make contributions at the rate of 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of social insurance old age contributory pension payable at the maximum rate to a person with no adult dependant or qualified children) plus 1.5% of full pensionable remuneration. You are required in respect of spouses' and children's pension benefit to



contribute at the rate of 1.5% of full pensionable remuneration in accordance with the terms of schemes made under the Local Government (Superannuation) (Consolidation) Scheme 1998. Maximum retirement age is 70.

If the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 applies to your employment, 65 is the minimum age at which your pension may be paid. As a new entrant to the public service, under the terms of this legislation you will not be required to retire on grounds of age. Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority who are liable to pay the Class D rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 5% of their pensionable remuneration. You may also be required to pay Spouses and Children/ Widows and Orphans contributions at the rate of 1.5% of gross pay. Maximum retirement age is 70.

Persons who become pensionable staff of a local authority for the first time on or after 01 January 2013 are assigned to the Single Public Service Pension Scheme with effect from the date of appointment. The scheme is contributory and provides pension, retirement gratuity, death gratuity and survivors benefits. If you are pensionable under the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and other provisions) Act 2012, you are liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contribution. You are required to pay contributions as follows: 3% of gross remuneration and 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of social insurance old age contributory pension payable at the maximum rate to a person with no adult dependant or qualified children). The minimum age at which you may retire is allied with the State Contributory Pension age (currently 66, rising to 67 in 2021 and 68 in 2028). The maximum retirement age is 70. To qualify for a pension the successful candidate must have served a minimum of two years employment in a local authority. You are reminded that under this agreement the Council may refer you to a medical advisor at any time to determine fitness for carrying out the duties to which you have been assigned. Further information is available from the Human Resources Department.

### ***Pension Accrual***

A 40-year limit on total service that can be counted towards pension where a person has been a member of more than one existing public service pension scheme would apply. This 40-year limit, which is provided for in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 came into effect on 28 July 2012. This may have implications for any appointee who has acquired pension rights in a previous public service employment

### ***Pension Abatement***

If the appointee has previously been employed in the Civil or Public Service and is in receipt of a pension from the Civil or Public Service or where a Civil/Public Service pension comes into payment during his/her reemployment that pension **will be subject to abatement** in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012.

### ***Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER)***

It is a condition of the Incentivised Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department of Finance Circular 12/09 that retirees, under that Scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment or the same sector. Therefore, such retirees may not apply for this position.

***Department of Health and Children Circular (7/2010)***

The Department of Health Circular 7/2010 dated 1 November 2010 introduced a Targeted Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Scheme and Voluntary Redundancy Schemes (VRS). It is a condition of the VER scheme that persons availing of the scheme will not be eligible for re-employment in the public health sector or in the wider Public Service or in a body wholly or mainly funded from public moneys. The same prohibition on re-employment applies under the VRS, except that the prohibition is for a period of 7 years. People who availed of the VER are not eligible to compete in this competition. People who availed of VRS scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility)

***Collective Agreement: Redundancy Payments to Public Servants***

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform letter dated 28th June 2012 to Personnel Officers introduced, with effect from 1st June 2012, a Collective Agreement which had been reached between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Services Committee of the ICTU in relation to ex-gratia Redundancy Payments to Public Servants. It is a condition of the Collective Agreement that persons availing of the agreement will not be eligible for re-employment in the public service by any public service body (as defined by the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Acts 2009 – 2011) for a period of 2 years from termination of the employment. People who availed of this scheme and who may be successful in this competition will have to prove their eligibility (expiry of period of non-eligibility).

**17. DATA PROTECTION:**

***Basis for Processing your Personal Information***

The basis for processing your personal data is to progress your application for the position you have applied for with Carlow County Council under the Terms of the Employment (Information) Act 1994 and Human Resources policies and procedures. Personal data sought for the purpose of recruitment will include your name, your contact details including email address and mobile phone number, particulars of education, details regarding your record of employment and confirmation if you require an employment permit / visa / or work authorisation.

***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, with a designated shortlisting 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.

***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. Applications that 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 Carlow County Council will not be able to progress your application form for the competition.

When your application is received, Carlow County Council creates a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003 and will be destroyed following the expiry of any panel put in place in respect of this competition.

## **RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

Candidates will initially be assessed to ensure that they meet the minimum specified eligibility criteria for the position. All applications must be **TYPED** and the form filled out in full. Handwritten submissions will **NOT** be accepted. When completing the application form, accuracy is essential as the information supplied in the form will play a central part in the selection process. **Submission of an application for employment is regarded as consent to share your information for the purposes of short-listing and recruitment.**

### ***Shortlisting***

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, Carlow County Council may decide that a number only will be called to interview. In this respect, Carlow County Council may provide for a shortlisting process to select a group for interview who, based on an examination of the application forms, appear to be the most suitable for the position. An expert board will examine the application forms against pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/experience on the application form.

### ***Canvassing***

Applicants are reminded that any attempt by themselves or by any persons acting on their behalf directly or indirectly by means of written communication or otherwise to canvass or otherwise influence in the candidate's favour any officer of the County Council or persons nominated by the Chief Executive to interview or examine applicants, will automatically disqualify the applicant for the position they are seeking.

### ***Competitive Interview***

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

***Panels***

Following completion of interviews, a panel 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.

***After the Interview***

Carlow County Council will automatically advise you of the result of the interview. This may be done by letter and will include a copy of your individual marking sheet which will include the marks awarded to you for the various competencies at interview and any comments made by the Interview Board.

***Taking up Appointment***

The local authority shall require a person to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of four weeks 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.

***Carlow County Council is an Equal Opportunities Employer***