

Comhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin

Wicklow County Council



CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

ASSISTANT PLANNER

Ref: 27/2024

Closing Date for receipt of application:

Thursday, 11th July 2024 at 12 noon sharp





Wicklow County Council

County Wicklow is located in the province of Leinster, and has a population of 155,485, 9.2% growth persons as stated in the preliminary 2022 census figures on the CSO website

<https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/presspages/2022/censusofpopulation2022-preliminaryresults/>

Wicklow shares its border with four other counties and has a total land area of 2,027 km². The topography of Wicklow is largely mountainous, with the Wicklow Mountains being the largest continuous upland region in Ireland. Wicklow is the 13th largest of the Republic of Ireland's 26 Counties and is the 14th largest Local Authority area in terms of population.

Wicklow County Council is the Local Government Authority for County Wicklow and is responsible for the delivery of the full range of services. Wicklow County Council seeks to enhance the county's attraction as a place in which to invest, work, and live, and takes the lead role in shaping the strategic vision of the county. It provides a diverse, multi-layered and evolving range of services to both citizens and visitors to County Wicklow, which include the provision of housing, planning, development, environmental, roads and traffic, leisure and community services. It also has an enhanced role in leading out economic and community development in the County. The Council works in partnership with other state, public and private bodies in the delivery of critical infrastructure and shared services.

Wicklow County Council has an elected body comprising of 32 elected members and employs a workforce in excess of 800 employees, currently covering 5 Municipal Districts – Bray, Greystones, Wicklow, Arklow and Baltinglass. Our employees work in a dynamic and progressive local authority which promotes training and development of our employees who are our most valuable resource.

The 2024 annual revenue budget for the local authority is approximately €160 million. The Council also continues to invest in the infrastructure of the county and through its Capital Investment Programme.

The day to day running of the Council is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and the Management Team

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The Competition

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The Position

Wicklow County Council invites applications from suitably qualified persons who wish to be considered to be included for a panel that may be formed which any future Permanent and/or Temporary Assistant Planner positions maybe drawn.

Assistant Planners are responsible for implementing programmes of work in the Planning Department and for providing 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;
- Gathering and analysis of Statistics on Development

Qualifications

1 **Character**

Candidates shall be of good character.

2 **Health**

Candidates shall 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 requirement as to health, it may be necessary for each successful candidate, before they are appointed, to undergo at their expense, a medical examination by a qualified medical practitioner to be nominated by the Local Authority. On taking up employment, the expense of the medical examination will be refunded to the candidate.

3 **Education, training, experience, etc.**

Candidates must, on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms:

- a) Hold an honours degree (level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications) in Planning;
- b) Have at least two years satisfactory experience of planning work; and

- c) possess a high standard of technical training and experience;

At date of appointment holders of the office shall hold a full driving licence for class B vehicles free from endorsement and disqualification.

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 Local Government Acts 2001 and 2014, 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 general direction and control of the Chief Executive or of such other officer as the Chief Executive may from time to time determine, such appropriate professional/technical 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 servicing all committees that may be established by any such local authority or body. The holder of the office will, if required, act for an officer of a higher level.

Responsibilities of the Assistant Planner will include;

- (a) Strong written and verbal communication skills with excellent report writing analytical skills
- (b) To compete site inspections as part of his or her case load
- (c) Preparing responses to preplanning requests and holding preplanning discussions with prospective applicants
- (d) Preparing responses to appeals of Planning decisions
- (e) Preparing recommendations on compliance with Planning conditions
- (f) Carrying out survey work, research and analysis, drafting policies and proposals, preparing written statements and maps and other work as required on the agreed Forward Planning and work programme
- (g) To answer phone and email queries, including those received through the Councils Customer Relations Management System, dealing with members of the public in a courteous, prompt and efficient manner
- (h) To participate in continued professional development and training provided by the County Council
- (i) To provide assistance to other work colleagues; and liaise with other departments as required
- (j) Any other duties assigned from time to time

Desirable skills

An ability to demonstrate competence in the following areas –

- Good planning, operational and project management skills;
- An ability to work in a multi-disciplinary team

- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- An ability to prepare and make presentations to Area Committee meetings and Council meetings.
- Good knowledge of SEA, EIAR and AA.
- An ability to achieve delivery of competing demands within prescribed timelines and deadlines
- Good knowledge or the ability to quickly acquire some of local government functions, services and activities particularly in relation to planning and development
- Good working knowledge of planning legislation and the principles, practices and techniques of planning
- An ability to work under pressure and maintain a solution-oriented mindset in dealing with a wide range of issues
- Good report writing and IT skills (GIS skills desirable)
- An ability to achieve delivery of competing demands within prescribed timeframes and deadlines.

Principal Conditions of Employment

A panel may be formed from which future Assistant Planner positions may be filled. The position will be fulltime and pensionable.

A panel may be formed from which future positions may be filled. The successful candidate(s) may be assigned as required to any of the Municipal Districts/Directorates under the Chief Executive's control or to any premises/location in use by the Council now or in the future.

The office is wholetime, permanent and/or temporary and pensionable.

Probation

Where persons who are not already permanent officers of a Local Authority are appointed, the following provisions shall apply;

- a) there shall be a period after such appointments take effect, during which such persons shall hold office on probation;
- b) such period shall be six months this period may be extended at the Chief Executive discretion;
- c) such persons shall cease to hold such office at the end of the period of probation, unless during such period, the Chief Executive has certified that the service of such persons in satisfactory.

Salary: €45,302 - €70,480 per annum includes 2nd LSI EL 02/2024

The salary shall be fully inclusive and shall be as determined from time to time in line with national policy. The holder of the office shall pay to the local authority any fees or other monies (other than his/her 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. Starting pay shall be determined in accordance with appropriate Departmental Circular letters. New Entrants will be placed on the minimum of salary scale.

Hours of Work

The person appointed will be required to work a 35 hour week Monday to Friday, which equates to a 7 hour day to be accounted for within attendance hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. A Flexi Time System is in place and may apply to this position.

Travel

The holder of the office will be required to hold a valid Irish/EU full driving licence for class B vehicles or a licence acceptable to NDLS for exchange, free from endorsement and disqualification. They must be a competent driver and shall drive a motor car in the course of his/her duties and for this purpose, provide and maintain a car to the satisfaction of the Local Authority. The Local Authority must be indemnified on their insurance.

Garda Vetting

Candidates may be subject to Garda Vetting. Appointment(s) will be considered having regard to receipt of satisfactory Garda Vetting, particularly to determine suitability to work with children/vulnerable adults.

Health

For the purposes of satisfying the requirements as to health it will be necessary for successful candidates, before they are appointed, to undergo at their 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.

Residence

Holders of the office shall reside in the district in which their duties are to be performed or within a reasonable distance thereof.

Annual Leave

Annual leave entitlement will be 30 days per annum exclusive of public holidays and Good Friday.

Retirement Age

There is no mandatory retirement age for new entrants to the Public Service as defined in the Public Services Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004.

Persons who are NOT new entrants to the Public Service as defined in the Public Services Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2004 and the Public Service Superannuation (Age of Retirement) Act 2018, are subject to a compulsory retirement age of 70 years.

With effect from 1st January 2013, persons who are pensionable under the terms of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme will have a minimum retirement age of 66 years initially rising in line with the State Pension age changes. Members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme have a compulsory retirement age of 70 years.

Superannuation

Persons who become pensionable public servants on or after 1st January 2013 will become members of ASSISTANT PLANNER – Ref: 27/2024

the Single Public Service Pension Scheme and, as such, will be required to pay contributions of 3% of pensionable 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).

Persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority who are liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration plus 3.5% of the 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).

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.

All persons who become pensionable officers of a local authority will be required in respect of the Local Government (Spouses and Children's Contributory Pension) Scheme, to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration in accordance with the terms of the scheme.

Application Process

Application form

Application forms are available on our website.

Completed applications forms must be submitted to recruitment@wicklowcoco.ie or by post to Recruitment, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow town, on or before the closing date of Thursday, 11th July 2024 at 12 noon sharp. Late applications or any amendments to applications will not be accepted.

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 provide an example, giving consideration to the role and essential requirements outlined in the Candidate Information Booklet. **Responses should not exceed 600 words**. Please aim to provide your best evidence in this section, as the below information may be used for shortlisting and/or interview purposes.

Key Competencies for the post are set out as follows:

- **Delivering Quality Outcomes & Ensuring Compliance**
- **Communicating Effectively**
- **Performance through People**
- **Personal Effectiveness**

COMPETENCY	BEHAVIOURS
Delivering Quality outcomes & Ensuring Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 duties.• To deliver services to meet or exceed the required standard through collaborating with, instructing and motivating stakeholders and by managing resources effectively.• Is aware of and understands relevant legislation, regulations and

	<p>policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers to relevant professional documents as required. • Develops and implements quality assurance measures to achieve compliance with performance standards or benchmarks.
Communicating Effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes responsibility and is accountable for the delivery of agreed objectives • Recognises the value of and requirement to communicate effectively. Has effective verbal and written communication skills and good interpersonal skills. • Structures and organises their own and others work effectively • Is logical and pragmatic in approach, delivering the best possible results with the resources available • Applies appropriate systems/processes to enable quality checking of all activities at the same time • Presents ideas effectively to individuals and groups and delivers presentations suited to the nature and needs of the audience. • Is effective in communicating a complex or technical message, using language appropriate to the audience.
Performance through People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with the team to facilitate high performance, developing clear and realistic objectives and addressing performance issues if they arise • Manages the allocation, use and evaluation of resources to ensure they are used efficiently to deliver on operational plans. Drives and promotes reduction in costs and minimisation of waste. • Provides clear information and advice as to what is required of the team • Is flexible and willing to adapt, positively contributing to the implementation of change • Leads by example, coaching and supporting individuals as required
Personal Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates in a fluent, logical, clear and convincing manner verbally and in writing • Is able to listen effectively and develop a two-way dialogue quickly • Treats other with diplomacy, tact, courtesy and respect; even in challenging circumstances • Collaborates and supports colleagues to achieve organisational goals • Identifies areas for improvement and develops them further. • Keeps up to date with current development, trend and best practice in area of expertise and responsibility, keeps up to date with the qualifications and knowledge necessary for the role.

Selection Process

Selection shall be by means of a competition based on an interview conducted by or on behalf of the local authority. Panels may be formed on the basis of such interviews.

The Selection Process may include the following:

- Short-listing of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application;
- Preliminary interview, which may also include a presentation;
- Completion of an online questionnaire;
- Competitive interview, which may also include a presentation;

- Work sample/role play/media exercise, and any other tests or exercises that may be deemed appropriate.

** Please note that Wicklow County Council reserves the right to hold any part of the selection process by way of remote/video-call platform or other appropriate methodology.*

Before proceeding with this phase of the selection process you should satisfy yourself that you meet the minimum qualification criteria for the post as set out above. This will prevent you from incurring unnecessary expense in progressing in the competition.

Short-Listing

Wicklow County Council reserves the right to shortlist applications. The shortlisting process may take the form of either a desktop shortlisting process based on the information contained in the application forms or a shortlisting interview.

The information you supply in the application form will play a central part of the shortlisting process. Wicklow County Council's decision to include you on the shortlist of candidates going forward to the next stage of the process may be determined based on this information.

Where, by reason of the number of persons seeking admission to the competition and the standard of knowledge, training or experience in general of such persons, Wicklow County Council considers that it would be reasonable not to admit all the persons to the competition, Wicklow County Council may admit to the competition only persons who appear likely to it to attain in the competition a standard sufficient for selection and recommendation for appointment.

You will be contacted in relation to any interview dates and times. You may also be contacted in relation to the requirement to complete an online questionnaire should this be included in the selection process. The onus is on you to attend for interview on the dates and times allocated. Alternative dates and times cannot be facilitated. When attending for interview you must produce photographic identification when registering your attendance at the Human Resources Department.

Wicklow County Council reserves the right to shortlist candidates in the manner it deems most appropriate. **Shortlisting may be on the basis of information supplied on the application form and the likely number of vacancies to be filled. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/experience on the application form.** The candidates shortlisted will be invited to attend for interview.

Interviews may be held in person or by online process through Microsoft Teams. The Council will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by candidates in attending for interview.

Interview Stage

The interview is your opportunity to give evidence of your knowledge, skills and experience and the Local Authority's opportunity to assess your suitability for the role as advertised.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that Wicklow County Council is satisfied that such person fulfils the requirements of the Regulations or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important therefore for you to note, the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview. If you do not meet these essential entry requirements but nevertheless attend for interview you will be putting yourself to unnecessary expense, as Wicklow County Council will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred.

Wicklow County Council may at its discretion require candidates to attend a preliminary interview in which case admission to the competitive interview would be conditional on candidates reaching such a standard as Wicklow County Council considered appropriate in the preliminary interview.

Interviews shall be conducted by Board(s) set up by Wicklow County Council. The Board(s) will assess the merits of candidates (except insofar as they are assessed otherwise) in respect of matters referred to in the prescribed Qualifications and any other relevant matters. Only candidates who reach such a standard as Wicklow County Council considers satisfactory in the competitive interview shall be considered for selection and placed on a panel. The onus is on all applicants to make themselves available for interview.

Pre-Employment Checks

Before contracts of employment are entered into, various checks are undertaken. These include medicals, references and may include Garda Vetting. The Council will invite those successful candidates who accept an offer to fill a vacancy to attend a medical assessment. References for successful candidates will also be checked and Garda Vetting, if necessary, will be completed at this point.

Panel

Candidates whose names are on a Panel and who satisfy the local authority that they possess the qualifications declared for the office and that they are otherwise suitable for appointment may, within the life of the Panel, be appointed as appropriate vacancies arise.

The life of the Panel will be for one year from the date it is formed, it may be extended at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

Terms and Conditions

Wicklow County Council will require the person to whom appointment is offered to take up the appointment within a period of not more than **one month** and if the person fails to take up the appointment within such period or such longer period as Wicklow County Council in its absolute discretion may determine, Wicklow County Council will not appoint him/her.

Employment may be terminated by either side by giving at least one calendar months' notice. In the event that employment is terminated prior to the completion of any particular contract, the appointee shall co-operate with the Council in ensuring that all files/records are up-to-date and present in an acceptable manner.

It should be noted that the terms of Paragraph 13 of Circular Letter EL 02/09 - Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement may need to be considered in some instances. It is a condition of this scheme as set out in the Department of Finance Circular 12/2009 that retirees, under that Scheme, are debarred from applying for another position in the same employment or the same sector.

Furthermore, persons who have availed of a Redundancy Payment Scheme should not that 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. Thereafter the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform will be required prior to re-employment.

Applicants will be required to declare whether they have previously availed of either of the above schemes.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SHORTLIST CANDIDATES IN THE MANNER IT DEEMS MOST APPROPRIATE.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Who can I contact if I have a query in relation the Recruitment Campaign?*

If you are unclear in relation to any aspect of the recruitment and selection process, please read the briefing document and frequently asked questions carefully before contacting Wicklow County Council's Human Resources Department. If you still need to contact the Human Resources Department please send your query via email in the first instance to recruitment@wicklowcoco.ie.

2. *What happens if I cannot attend a particular stage of the competition?*

The onus is on you to attend for all stages of the recruitment competition at the locations, dates and times notified. Wicklow County Council cannot change dates and times of any particular stage of the process.

3. *I have submitted my CV. What happens next?*

Wicklow County Council will carry out an eligibility check on all CV's to ensure that they meet the minimum qualifications for the post. You do not need to contact the HR Department. If you do not meet the minimum eligibility requirements for the post based on the information submitted on your application form, you will not be invited to interview.

Depending on the number of candidates remaining at this stage of the competition it may be necessary to hold a shortlisting process. The shortlisting process may take the form of either a desktop shortlisting process based on the information contained in the application forms or a shortlisting interview/assessment. You will be contacted by email in relation to any interview dates and times. The onus is on you to attend for interview on the dates and times allocated. Alternative dates and times cannot be facilitated. When attending for interview you must produce photographic identification when registering your attendance at the Human Resources Department.

4. *What happens on completion of the shortlisting process?*

Wicklow County Council will contact all applicants advising them of the results of the shortlisting process. If you have been successful at this stage you will be invited for a final interview.

5. *What happens after undertaking the final interview?*

If you qualify at final interview stage you will be placed on a panel and ranked in order of merit. Vacancies may be filled from this panel as they arise and in order of merit. Please note that being placed on a panel is not a guarantee that you will be appointed to the position.

6. *How will Wicklow County Council communicate with me throughout the Recruitment and Selection Campaign?*

Wicklow County Council will contact you when necessary at each stage of the competition by email. It is strongly recommended that you do not change your email address in the course of this recruitment campaign, as any email will be sent to the email address originally supplied with your application form. It is important to note that the email address you provide when submitting your application form must be one that you can access at all times.

The onus is on the applicant to inform the Human Resources Department of any change in postal address, email address or mobile telephone number throughout the recruitment and selection campaign. This can be done by emailing recruitment@wicklowcoco.ie

The onus is on each applicant to ensure that s/he is in receipt of all communication from Wicklow County Council. Wicklow County Council accepts no responsibility for communication not accessed or received by an applicant.



www.wicklow.ie

recruitment@wicklowcoco.ie



@wicklowcoco



<https://www.facebook.com/WicklowCountyCouncil/>



