

OUR VISION: Creating quality places and opportunities

Regeneration & Planning Recruitment Resource Book



Updated August 2009

 **Hackney**

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Why work for London Borough of Hackney?

Message from the Mayor



Dear Candidate

Hackney is quite simply the most exciting place to be working in local government right now. As a host borough for 2012, with 30% of the Olympic precinct within our boundaries including the broadcast centre for 20,000 of the world's media, as well as finally getting onto the London Tube map with three new stations on the East London Line Extension, Hackney is at the heart of some of the most transformative regeneration projects in East London's history. We are looking for exceptional candidates to join our highly motivated and committed workforce, to work with us and help maximise the benefits from the exciting opportunities facing the borough.

With GCSE results up over 70%, crime falling faster than in any other London borough, recycling rates rocketing, and one of the strongest financial positions in London government, Hackney Council has achieved enormous progress in the past five years. The Audit Commission recognises us as a Council that is improving strongly and awarded us three stars in January 2008. Recent MORI surveys show residents and staff agree. Net resident satisfaction has risen by 50% since 2000 – the biggest increase in the country.

We recognise there is still much to do and are focusing on the key issues that really matter to residents: cleaner, safer streets; better and affordable housing and services for children and young people. We are committed to making Hackney a better place.

Hackney is a unique place and deserves exceptional staff to help it reach its full potential of economic prosperity, underpinned by first class public services. In the past, Hackney needed the best and went to great lengths to get them. Now we deserve the best because of the extraordinary opportunities we can provide. We are pleased that you are interested in working with us and our partners to deliver the next chapter in Hackney's story, to 2012 and beyond.

May I wish you all the best in your application with Hackney.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jules Pipe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jules Pipe
Mayor of Hackney

About Hackney

The London Borough of Hackney sits in the heart of East London, on the edge of the City. For centuries it has been a location where people from all over the world have settled, making it the culturally vibrant place it is today.

You can hear 100 different languages spoken and it is home to over 200,000 people.

There is something for everyone here: from the trendy bars and restaurants in Shoreditch in the south, to the tranquil parks and independent retailers of Stoke Newington in the north. There is a thriving arts and music scene, an array of street markets and the best cuisine from all over the globe.

There are a number of large scale regeneration projects on the go. The £1 billion scheme to regenerate Woodberry Down has just been approved and the East London Line extension will bring our first stations on the tube map, along with the opportunity and investment.

Hackney is a host borough for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Council has clear priorities. These include better public transport, securing the legacy and use of facilities, creating a new neighbourhood at Hackney Wick, delivering jobs for local people and work for local businesses, and making sure the Games help us positively change perceptions of Hackney.

The message is simple: Hackney – the place and its people – has a huge amount to offer.

Hackney the Council

We have an elected Mayor, Jules Pipe, who sets the Council priorities and budget.

Over the last 5 years Hackney Council has undergone a transformation and is now one of the most improved authorities in the country.

Major opportunities exist, and local expectations are high.

Hackney: Some Facts and Figures

Hackney pride: people love living, working and visiting here. More than 30,000 Hackney residents wear their 'I love Hackney' badge with pride.

The right direction: 91% of our key performance indicators have improved over the last 3 years.

Olympics: we are host to 30% of the Olympic zone including the International Broadcast Media Centre and Press Centre.

Regeneration and rebuilding: the Olympics, Dalston, Woodberry Down, new schools, reviving civic building and much more.

Safety first: crime in Hackney as dropped by 30% in the last three years, the fastest drop in London.

Park life: Hackney has more parks and green spaces than any other inner London borough.

London Fields Lido: our open air swimming in the heart of the capital is a splashing success.



Working for Regeneration and Planning

The Regeneration and Planning Division offers a unique opportunity to be at the heart of the great things happening in Hackney.

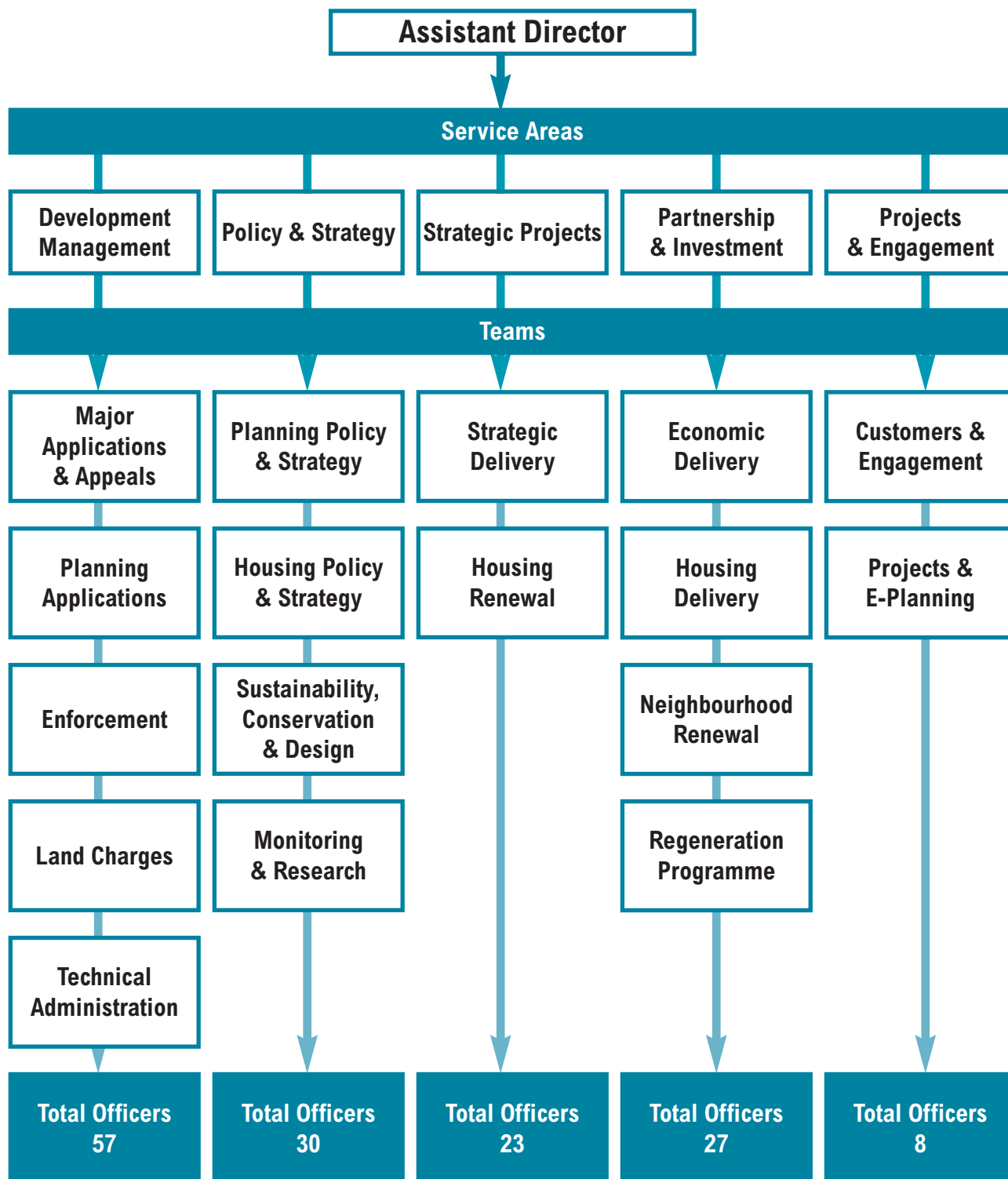
It brings together five complementary service areas. These are shown on the next page and their functions detailed in the following section.

Our vision is 'to create quality places and opportunities' for Hackney residents, businesses and visitors. These service areas are at the forefront of making the Council's vision – 'Making Hackney a Better Place' a reality.

Our Values and Ambitions

- Recruit, develop and retain high quality staff.
- Provide high quality services that are value for money.
- Make efficient use of the borough's land and other assets.
- Work effectively in an integrated way.
- Involve all stakeholders, internal and external, in our work and decision making processes.

Regeneration and Planning Structure



Service Area Functions

The Division includes five Service Areas who share a collective vision and an overall programme for the delivery of regeneration outcomes. The following provides a summary of these.

Development Management -The Development Management Service provides the Council's statutory responsibilities in respect of Development Control (processing planning applications, appeal and enforcement functions) and Land Charges. It facilitates a clear separation of the Council's regulatory functions from its promotional role.

Policy and Strategy - The Policy and Strategy Service is aimed at the delivery of statutory planning policy functions as well as leading on a range of strategic documents, for example, regeneration, affordable housing, visitor economy, economic development, and climate change strategies. It commissions evidence-based studies, undertakes research, and develops a fit-for-purpose combined housing and planning land use monitoring function. It includes a design team introducing expertise on climate change, sustainability, urban design and conservation.

Strategic Projects -The Strategic Projects Service provides the expertise to facilitate and deliver major and strategic projects and capital programmes. These programmes include estate renewal schemes, town centre renewal, the delivery of a high quality Olympic legacy; and the review and effective use of the corporate portfolio. The Service includes statutory planning functions which deliver physical regeneration, such as planning briefs and masterplans and utilising CPO powers.

Partnership and Investment -This Partnership and Investment Service includes four primary delivery teams – economic, housing, neighbourhood renewal and regeneration. The Economic Delivery Team focuses on tackling worklessness and promoting business development. It takes responsibility with Team Hackney, our local strategic partnership for delivering Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets. The Housing Delivery team seeks to maximise housing investment to meet strategic housing targets, manages the social housing programme, delivers low cost home ownership initiatives, LAA targets, and services the Better Homes Partnership. The Neighbourhood Renewal Team establishes town centre initiatives and delivers area based and themed regeneration functions. The Regeneration Programme Team provides an expanded regeneration programme and accountable body functions, including monitoring Section 106.

Projects and Engagement - The Projects and Engagement Service provides support to the Division by implementing performance management, service planning and improvement plans, training and staff development. It provides publicity, service promotion, engagement and consultation, e-government, web development, business support; and leads on key divisional projects and initiatives.

Employee Benefits

Hackney Council provides a range of benefits to all permanent and fixed contract employees. These include:

Working Hours

The basic, full time, standard working week is 36 hours. Candidates need to be aware that the duties and responsibilities required of the post holder may require flexibility in their working patterns. Where it is envisaged that out of hours working will be required, this will be noted in the Person Specification for the post.

The council is rolling out a programme of 'New Ways of Working', which encourages staff to work flexibly. Options for flexible working include:

- Flexi-time: More choice about your working day by varying your start, finish and break times with the chance to take extra leave.
- Occasional home working: Ideal for those jobs when you need peace and quiet to concentrate away from the distractions and demands of the office.
- Compressed hours: Gives you the chance of more personal time or even longer weekends by fitting your working week into fewer days.
- Job sharing: Two minds and skills sets working on the job can bring twice the knowledge and energy as well as increased freedom for both workers.
- Reduced hours: For those times when you need to have more time away from work to handle unexpected life events.

Please note that not all these options are suitable for every post. All options need to be applied for and require the approval of your manager.

Leave Entitlement

The basic annual leave allowance is 27 days each year, plus Bank holidays. There is an additional leave entitlement of 5 days after 5 years of continuous local government service.

In addition:

- A maximum of five days dependency leave is available per annum.
- A maximum of five days nominated carers leave is available per annum, plus one day for the birth of the baby.
- For posts eligible for flexi leave, up to 12 days can be taken per annum. Eligibility is based on the requirements of your post and requires the approval of your manager.

Wellness Schemes

Bike to Work Scheme - This scheme allows you to save 33% – 40% on the cost of a bike and spread the payments over a 12 month period. The way the scheme works is that you give part of your salary in exchange for a loaned bicycle and safety equipment. At the end of the loan period the Council can sell the bike to you at a fair market value. The market value depends on when you leave the scheme – but after 12 months it should be around 5%. To find out more visit www.cyclescheme.co.uk or phone 01225 448933.

Health and Fitness

- The Bay Health Club - Discounts available for Council employees. Address - 1st Floor, 189 Stoke Newington High Street, N16 OLH. Website - www.thebayhealthclub.co.uk
- Energie Fitness Clubs - Discounts available for Council employees. Address - 1 Reading Lane, E8 1GQ. Email - hackney@energie-club.co.uk
- London Fields Cycles - Offers Council employees a 10% discount on accessories. Address - 281 Mare Street, Hackney, E8 1PJ. Phone - 020 8525 0077. Email - people@londonfieldscycles.co.uk

Leisure Centre Discounts - With climbing, sailing, squash, and outdoor swimming facilities, the leisure provision in Hackney is improving and expanding all the time. You can join any of the Council's leisure centres to qualify for discounted membership as a member of staff. All you have to do is speak to a membership adviser at any of the Council's centres at: Britannia Health & Fitness, Kings Hall Leisure Centre or London Fields Lido. The Council's leisure centres are run by a not-for-profit organisation GLL. For full details of discounts available visit www.gll.org. Discounts are also available at other local health and fitness businesses within Hackney, see below.

Financial Matters

Season Ticket Loans - Save on travel by investing in an annual season ticket rather than buying daily, weekly or monthly passes. With an annual season ticket the cost of the ticket is equivalent to 10 months rather than 12 months of travel each year and the loan repayments are spread evenly over 10 months. For further information contact Human Resources in your area.

Childcare Vouchers - Childcare Vouchers have become the recognised payment method for childcare. All eligible working parents, with children up to the age of 16, are entitled to Childcare Vouchers regardless of tax status.

Hackney Credit Union - Hackney Credit Union enables the local community to come together to save and borrow money at affordable rates, and is operated as a social enterprise with any surplus being returned as a dividend to its members. How could this benefit you?

- Council employees can save easily through the payroll system.
- A range of convenient saving plans to suit your needs.
- Free life insurance on savings and loans for every member.
- Access to flexible low-cost loans and a range of other financial services including insurance.
- Friendly and personal advice – no bank charges for cash savings and withdrawals.
- An ethical place to invest your money that supports the local community.
- Over 1,000 members have peace of mind that savings are regulated by the Financial Services Authority and covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.
- You're not just another customer, as a member you own the Credit Union so you have a say in how it's run.

Hackney Credit Union Limited 225 Mare Street, E8 3QE. Phone - 020 8986 6868.

Email - info@hackneycreditunion.co.uk

Welfare Loans - Welfare loans are available for officers facing domestic emergency or personal financial hardship. The maximum loan available is £300 repayable over a fixed six month repayment period.

Welfare loans are considered if you:

- Are going to be evicted,
- Have a court order,
- Are going to have your gas or electricity supply disconnected.

Employees already in debt to the Council do not qualify for welfare loans. Loans are not given for repaying overdrafts or credit cards, or for home improvements.

Pension – Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) - You will be brought into the LGPS automatically, unless you opt not to join. The scheme provides for a lump sum and pension on retirement, and certain lump sum grants and a pension for a married person's spouse should he/she predecease him/her.

A contribution, approximately 6.5%, is deducted from salary prior to tax. Additional benefits may be accrued by means of Additional Voluntary Contributions. A contracting-out certificate is in force with respect to the scheme. This means that the scheme has been approved by the Occupational Pensions Board and it applies in the place of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme.

Further details, together with information on the interchange arrangements between other schemes, in the public and private sector, can be obtained from Hackney Pensions Team on 01293 603085 or email hackney.pension@xafinitypaymaster.com

Other Considerations

Trade Union Membership - The Council as an employer supports the system of collective bargaining as a means of creating a harmonious working relationship between management and employees. Council recognises the right of employees to choose whether or not they wish to belong to trade unions. No pressure or discrimination will be extended to any employee or job applicant on the grounds of their membership or non-membership of trade unions.

Political Restrictions - All posts graded PO1 (Spinal Column Point 33 and above) and those posts regularly involved in giving advice to committee or sub-committee or speaking to the media on behalf of the Council will be part of the political restriction regulation introduced as part of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

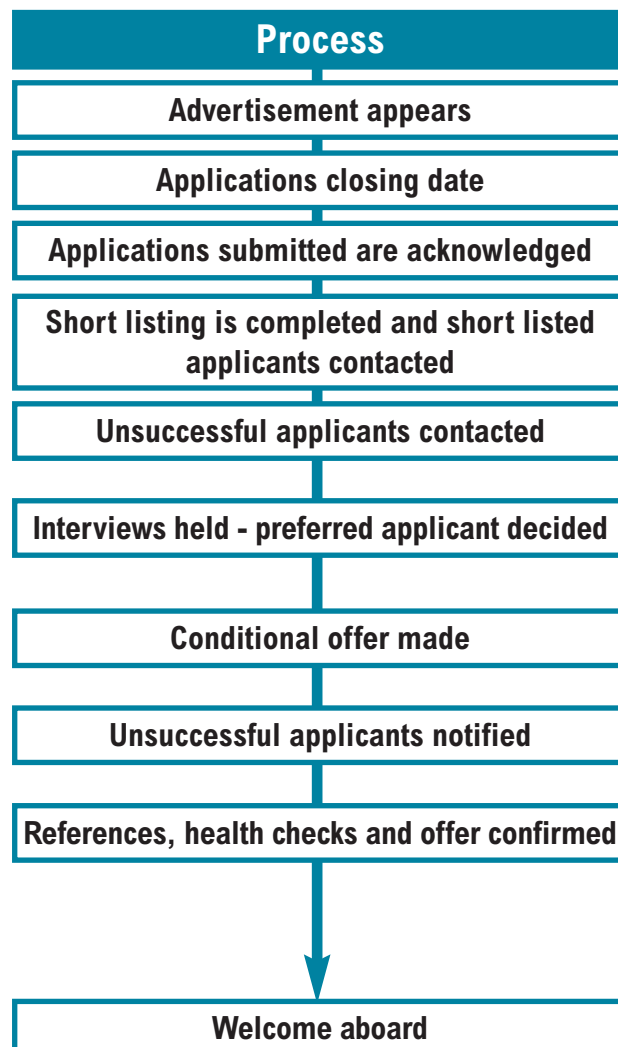
Where relevant, these restrictions in political activity are incorporated into the contract of employment of employees and care should be taken that they are not breached. If you may be potentially affected by these provisions you should seek advice during the recruitment process.

Applying for a job with the Regeneration and Planning Division

The Regeneration and Planning Division is undertaking a major programme of recruitment following the restructure of the Division. This restructure has created around 40 new positions within the Division. Our aim is to recruit and retain high quality team members that are committed to achieving service excellence and providing top quality services to all our customers.

To realise this aim, we are committed to undertaking a comprehensive and consistent process for recruiting to these positions. The following information is provided to help you to have the best chance of being successful in your application and to make you aware of our commitment to delivery a fair and high quality recruitment process.

Recruitment Process Flowchart



Maximising Your Potential for Success

All recruitment to the Regeneration and Planning Division is undertaken through a merit based process that adheres to equal employment opportunity for all and best practice. Our process is based on assessment of the initial application and subsequent interview, against the Person Specification that is provided with the Job Description for the position.

What are the Job Description and Person Specification?

The **Job Description** outlines the role and responsibilities of the position.

The **Person Specification** states the skills you need to undertake the Job Description.

The Person Specification expresses the key selection criteria in a way that is commensurate with the level of the position and the skills required to undertake the position. In some instances mandatory criteria may be included on the Person Specification. This may include qualifications or membership of professional institutions.

Preparing Your Application

Closing dates for positions will generally allow 10 working days for you to submit your application. The advertisement and website will detail the closing date. If you have any questions regarding the position, feel free to contact us on 020 8356 3561 or email hrrecruitmentadmin@hackney.gov.uk

Your application submission must be provided on the Hackney Job Application Form. The form is available on the website in Word or PDF format for your use.

The **Personal Statement** section of the form provides you with an opportunity to demonstrate how your previous experience, skills, education and training have equipped you to meet the requirements of the post.

This section should be no longer than two pages and specifically –

1. Respond to the criteria identified for short listing in the Person Specification;
2. Provide detailed information in relation to mandatory criteria identified on the Person Specification. This may include qualifications, training or professional association memberships.

The Person Specification will list 3 or 4 short listing criteria. These will be used to assess your suitability for the position. You do not need to respond to any other criteria set out in the Person Specification. Taking particular care with completing the Personal Statement of your application will maximise your potential to achieve an interview.

Submitting Your Application

Finally, please ensure your application is submitted by the closing date. Unless requested, no other information or documentation should be provided. Only the Application Form can be used for interview short listing purposes.

Phone Number for Enquiries: 0845 313 3140

Return your application form to -

Post: Hackney Recruitment Team, (Regeneration and Planning Division), Tribal, The Clove Building, 4 Maguire Street, Butlers Wharf, London SE1 2NQ

Email: hackney@tribalresourcing.com

Interviews and Offers

If you are short listed for an interview, please bring examples that demonstrate your work experience. After the panel has asked the agreed set of questions you will have an opportunity to provide other information and ask questions, be prepared and make the most of the interview.

Reasonable out of pocket and travel expenses (standard class rail fare) will be reimbursed on submission of the appropriate receipts.

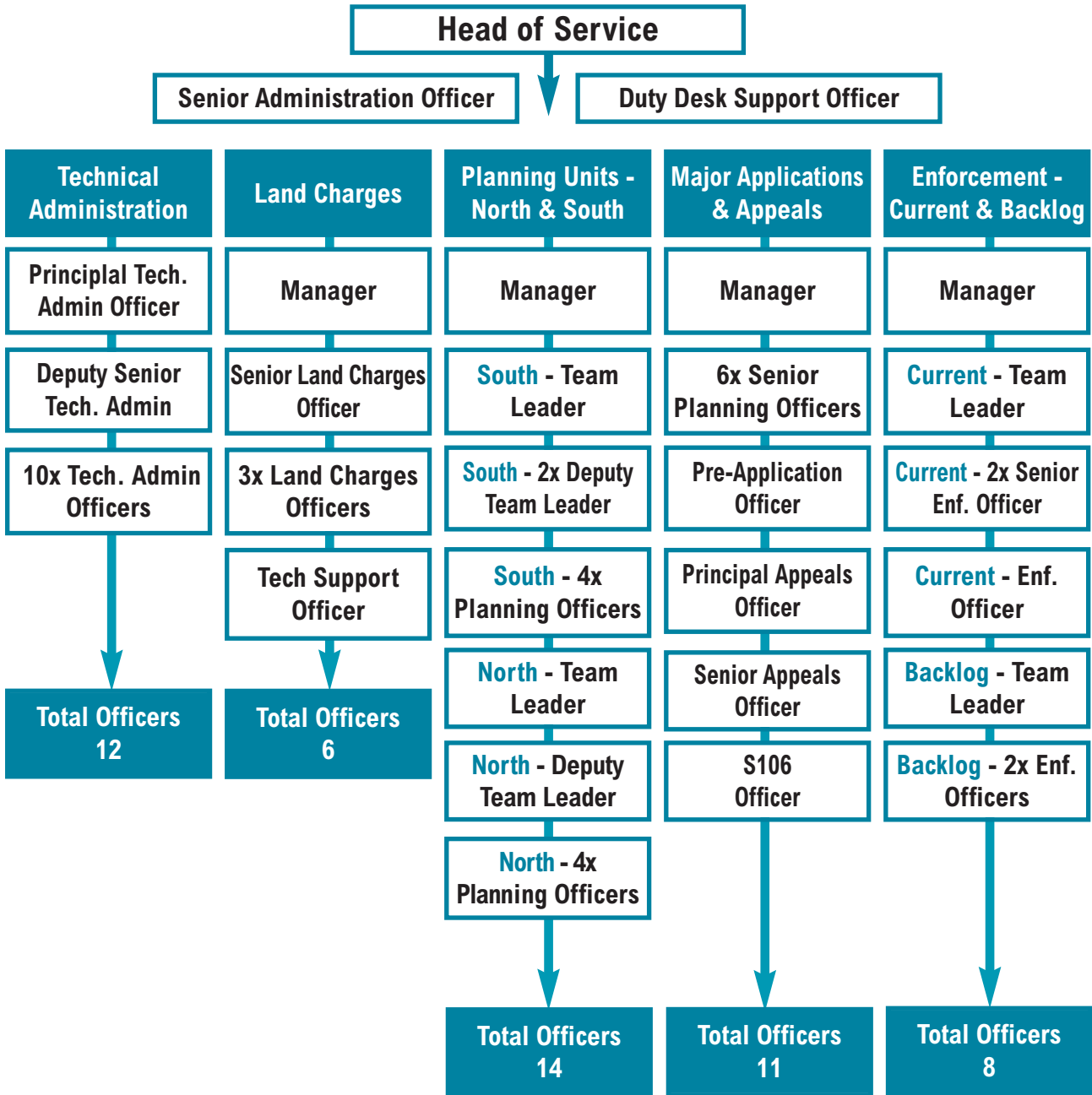
If you are successful at the interview you will be offered the position, subject to the following conditions:

- Satisfactory employment references – normally 2 written references are required. Our Recruitment Team will confirm with you who your referees are and will contact them to request the references.
- Medical clearance via the Occupational Health Service. You undertake this directly with that Service.
- Satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau disclosure checks, where appropriate. Generally for applicants whose work will bring them in direct contact with children, the elderly and other vulnerable adults.
- Proof of qualifications stated on the job application.
- Evidence of permission to work in the United Kingdom.
- Successful applicants (PO1 and above) will be required to complete and sign a declaration of personal and pecuniary interest questionnaire – all staff are required declare any personal or financial interests, and/or memberships they hold, which could potentially create a conflict of interests with your role or the day to day business of the Council, particularly where this could be against the Council's interest or weaken public confidence in the conduct of the Council's business.

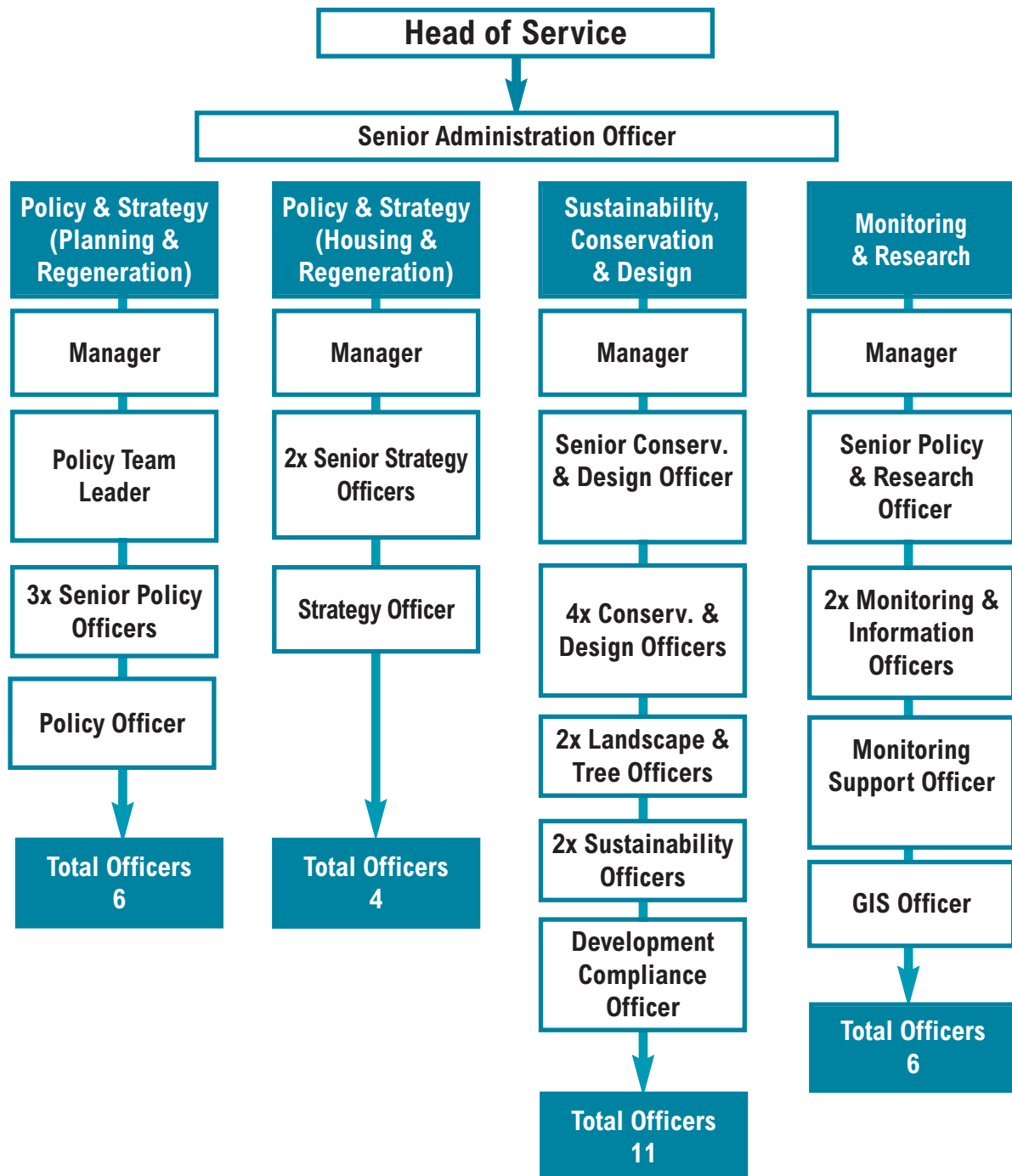
If you are unsuccessful, either at the short listing phase or interview phase, you have the ability to discuss the matter with the Interview Panel Lead Officer.

Service Area Structure Charts

Development Management



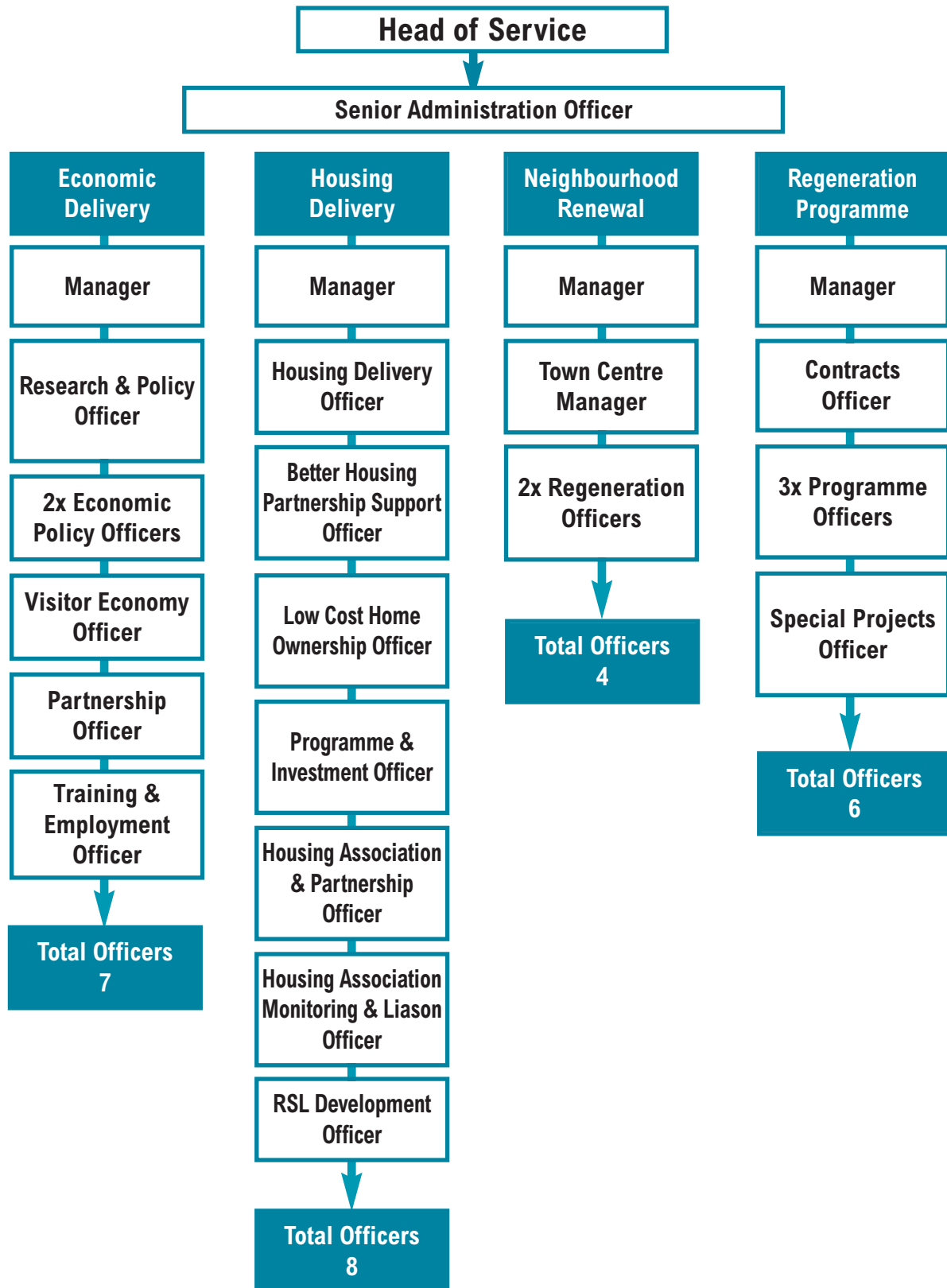
Policy and Strategy Service Area



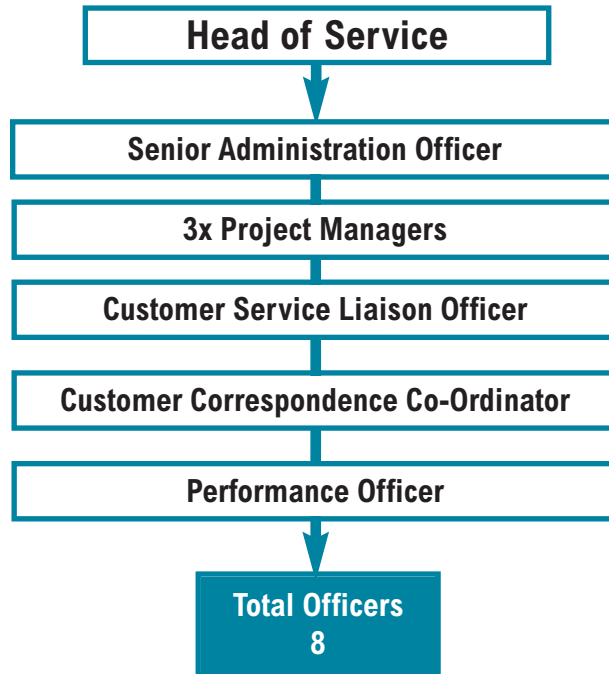
Strategic Projects Service



Partnership and Investment Service Area



Projects and Engagement Service Area



Regeneration and Planning Division

Web: www.hackney.gov.uk/regen-planning

Email: hrrecruitmentadmin@hackney.gov.uk

General Enquiries: 020 8356 3000

Recruitment Enquiries: 020 8356 3561

