



**DÚN LAOGHAIRE - RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Comhairle Contae Dhún Laoghaire-Rath an Dúin**

**CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET**

**BIODIVERSITY OFFICER - OPEN**  
**(COMPETITION. I.D. (010388))**

**OIFIGEACH BITHÉAGSÚLACHTA - OSCAILTE**  
**(U.A. AN CHOMÓRTAIS 010388)**

**COMPLETED APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE CLOSING DATE**  
**12 NOON ON 29<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2023**

## **THE ROLE**

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council is seeking to establish a panel of Biodiversity Officers to fill permanent posts that arise during the life of the panel.

The Biodiversity Officer will promote, manage and co-ordinate biodiversity related activities in the county, guided by the DLR County Biodiversity Action Plan/s. The Biodiversity Officer will play a pivotal role in planning and development, including review of ecological assessments and as a minimum at Stage 1 (Screening for AA) and Stage 2 (Natura Impact Statement and/or Natura Impact Report) of the Appropriate Assessment process.

The role involves providing reviews of and advice on planning development files including appropriate assessment, ecological assessments and other ecological related reports. It will also involve activation of local communities, businesses, schools, and all interested stakeholders and raising awareness of biodiversity in Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and requires an ability to engage with the public as part of a team within Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council. The Biodiversity Officer will also be responsible for drafting and implementing any future plans in relation to biodiversity.

### **Main Responsibilities:**

The Biodiversity Officer will be part of the Parks Department of the Community and Cultural Development Directorate and will also work with colleagues in other Council departments. Duties will be assigned from time to time by the Senior Parks Superintendent, Heritage Officer or such designated Officer as may be assigned by Dún Laoghaire County Council.

The Biodiversity Officer's main role will be to assist with planning matters and planning files and will be expected to carry out the following non-exhaustive list of duties:

- Provide technical reviews of planning files including reviews of ecological assessments, appropriate assessment reports and biodiversity related matters in planning development that may be prioritized by a designated officer.
- Prepare, manage and implement the Local Authority Biodiversity Action Plan in parallel with the County Heritage Plan and cross referencing the County Climate Action Plan;
- Establish a County Biodiversity forum;
- Facilitate the implementation of government initiatives in relation to biodiversity and national plans and programmes that are developed to support the implementation of the National Biodiversity Plan, such as the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan;
- Advise the Local Authority on biodiversity related issues and the Authority's obligations in relation to protecting biodiversity;
- Work with Local Authority staff to assist in advancing the restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems and support ecosystem services in within the Local Authority Area;
- Assist Local Authority departments in integrating biodiversity into their actions and policies, for example through training, supporting information dissemination;
- Promote new biodiversity initiatives based on best conservation practice;
- Work with Local Authority led projects and provide advice to colleagues on the management of ecological resources such as urban woodlands, wetlands, parks, verges, wild flora grasslands and open areas in a biodiversity-friendly manner;
- Raise awareness of biodiversity, natural capital and ecosystems services and issues affecting biodiversity in the Local Authority, including climate change with a broad range of groups;
- Commission biodiversity related research, audits and surveys and provide data obtained to the NBDC and NPWS in a suitable format for reporting purposes;
- Apply for and deliver biodiversity projects under the Heritage Council funding and National Biodiversity Action Plan and other sources available sources of funding;

- Work closely with the County Heritage Office on a programme of public engagement for biodiversity through Field Clubs, Environmental Groups/NGOs, National Heritage Week, Summer Schools and other public events;
- Be an active participant/member in the County Heritage Forum, Creative Ireland team and Council climate action group.

The above specification is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all duties involved and consequently, the post holder may be required to perform other duties as appropriate to the post which may be assigned from time to time and to contribute to the development of the post while in office.

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**QUALIFICATIONS**

**1. CHARACTER:**

Candidates shall be of good character.

**2. HEALTH:**

Candidates must be 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 will 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.**

Each candidate must on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms:

- a) hold a recognised degree (at least level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications) in a subject relevant to biodiversity including but not limited to environmental science, ecology, earth/natural sciences, zoology, botany, or natural resources management, **and**
- b) after attaining the qualification referred to at (a) above, have at least five years relevant satisfactory experience of scientific work in biodiversity, sustainable development goals, biodiversity, energy and climate action; **and**
- c) possess a high standard of technical training relevant to the areas of natural sciences, biodiversity and natural resources management; **and**
- d) have a satisfactory knowledge of public service organisation or the ability to acquire such knowledge.

**4. DRIVING LICENCE:**

When required to do so holders of the office will be required to drive a motor car in the course of their duties and should therefore, hold a full driving licence for class B vehicles free from disqualification and medical limitations.

**It is desirable that candidates demonstrate through their application form and at interview that they :**

- Have experience of habitat survey and mapping, data management and analysis methods, using a variety of software including Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Possess a high standard of technical training relevant to the areas of natural sciences, biodiversity and wildlife legislation (including Irish Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2021 as Amended and European Communities Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011-2021) and natural resources management;

- Have experience in Oral Hearings and be able to provide expertise on behalf of the Local Authority at hearings, is desirable.
- Have experience in the technical review of planning files.
- Have the ability to work within a multi-disciplinary team.
- Have the capability of working on their own initiative.
- Possess good interpersonal and communication skills and have the ability to engage with stakeholders.
- Possess good organisational skills.
- Possess good I.T. skills.
- Have a knowledge of health & safety legislation and safety regulations.
- Have an ability to manage deadlines and effectively handle multiple tasks.

## COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

This is a competency-based competition and the interviews will be competency based. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate **sufficient evidence at interview and within their application form** of competence under each competency.

**Please take particular note of these when completing the application form as any short-listing or interview process will be based on the information provided by candidates in the application form.**

COMPETENCY	BEHAVIOURS
<b>Management &amp; Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displays the ability to think and act strategically to ensure the local authority meets its purpose, mission, and vision.</li> <li>• Incorporates opportunities into the strategic planning process and identifies potential obstacles related to the objectives.</li> <li>• Uses a variety of methods (including research, external expertise, and environmental scanning) to understand how external factors may affect strategic objectives.</li> <li>• Evaluates and improves strategic performance through the use of Service Indicators, Internal Performance Indicators, benchmarking and continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Adjusts strategic direction and policy in response to critical new information.</li> <li>• Engages in departmental and cross-departmental consultation in the development and integration of the objectives.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Effectiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeps up with current development, trends, and best practice in area of expertise and responsibility.</li> <li>• Keeps up to date with the qualifications and knowledge necessary for the role.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the components of the job.</li> <li>• Uses appropriate strategies to address areas for development, including seeking new experiences and challenges.</li> <li>• Identifies areas for improvement and develops them further.</li> <li>• Anticipates situations and acts to pre-empt problems.</li> <li>• Operates effectively in an environment with significant complexity and pace.</li> </ul>
<b>Delivering Quality Outcomes and Ensuring Compliance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Organises the delivery of services to meet or exceed the required standard through collaborating with, instructing and motivating stakeholders and by managing resources effectively.</li> <li>• Develops and implements quality assurance measures to achieve compliance with performance standards or benchmarks.</li> <li>• Critically evaluates outcomes and processes used to achieve them.</li> <li>• Is aware of and understands relevant legislation, regulations and policies.</li> <li>• Refers to relevant professional documents as required.</li> </ul>
<b>Communicating Effectively</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognises the value of and requirement to communicate effectively. Has effective verbal and written communication skills.</li> <li>• Has good interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• Presents ideas effectively to individuals and groups and delivers presentations suited to the nature and needs of the audience.</li> <li>• Is clear in all communications, considering the audience in getting the message across.</li> <li>• Writes fluently, clearly structuring written communication.</li> <li>• Prepares for communication, carrying out the necessary research and speaking to the relevant people in advance.</li> <li>• Is effective in communicating a complex or technical message, using language appropriate to the audience.</li> </ul>

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**PARTICULARS OF THE POSITION**

1. The office is permanent, whole-time, and pensionable.

2. **SALARY:**

Salary Scale is as follows:

€54,699- €56,690- €58,680- €60,673- €62,667- €64,658- €66,652, €68,635-€70,638-€72,624 max pt.  
€74,914 (1<sup>st</sup> LSI) €76,035 (2<sup>nd</sup> LSI) (1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 Rate)

Entry point to this scale will be determined in accordance with Circulars issued by the Department of the Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Salary scale applicable as of 1 March 2023.

**In accordance with Departmental Circular letter EL 02/2011, a person who is not a serving local authority employee on or after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011, will enter the scale for the position at the minimum point.**

Rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government Policy.

The salary shall be fully inclusive and shall be as determined from time to time. Holders of the office shall pay to the Local Authority any fees or other monies (other than their inclusive salary) payable to or received by them by virtue of their office or in respect of any services, which they are required by or under any enactment to perform.

3. **SUPERANNUATION CONTRIBUTION:**

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 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 dependent 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 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.

## **RETIREMENT:**

New Entrants recruited to the Public Service on or after 1 January 2013

Pensionable public servants (new joiners) recruited to the Public Service for the first time on or after 1 January 2013 (the commencement date of the Single Scheme) will be members of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012.

### **Pension age**

Minimum pension age of 66 (rising to 67 and 68 in line with State Pension age changes).

### **Compulsory retirement age**

Scheme members must retire at the age of 70.

In all other cases, staff recruited on or after 1 January 2013 who were employed in the Public Service on 31 December 2012 or within a period prior to 31 December 2012 not exceeding 26 weeks will retain their existing pension scheme terms and conditions.

In certain circumstances, e.g. where the public servant was on secondment or approved leave or remains on the same contract of employment, the 26-week rule does not apply.

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

It is a condition of the Incentivized Scheme for Early Retirement (ISER) as set out in Department 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.

## **4. HOURS OF WORK**

New entrants to the Local Authority sector and any individuals on new appointments or promotion will work 35 hours per week. The standard working week is 35 hours on a five-day week basis. However, the position of Biodiversity Officer may involve additional hours in excess of the standard working week, without additional remuneration. Payment of overtime is not permissible to professional staff and to staff at Senior Executive Officer level and analogous posts or above.

## **5. ANNUAL LEAVE**

Annual leave entitlement for the position of Biodiversity Officer is 30 days per annum in accordance with Department of Environment, Community and Local Government Circular LG(P) 07/2011.

## **6. PROBATION:**

When a person is not already a permanent officer of a Local Authority and is appointed to a permanent office the following provisions shall apply, that is to say

- a) There shall be a period after such appointment takes effect during which such person shall hold office on probation;
- b) Such period shall be one year, but the Chief Executive may, at their discretion, extend such period;
- c) Such person 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 person in such office is satisfactory.



## 7. 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 the authorities or bodies mentioned in sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, under the direction and supervision of the appropriate professional officer, such planning or ancillary services of an advisory, administrative, 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 the Director of Services or other authorised officer, as appropriate, in the supervision of the 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.

## 8. LOCATION & RESIDENCE

Holders of the office shall reside in the district in which their duties are to be performed or within a reasonable distance thereof. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council reserves the right to assign Employees to any premises in use by the Council, now or in the future subject to reasonable notice.

## 9. RECRUITMENT:

Pursuant to article 8 of the Local Government (Appointment of Officers) Regulation, 1974, the Minister has given directions as follows:

- i. Selection of candidates for appointment shall be by means of a competition based on an interview conducted by or behalf of the Local Authority. The interview will be competency based and marks will be awarded under the following skill sets identified for the position of Biodiversity Officer as outlined above
- ii. DL RCC reserves its right to shortlist candidates, in the manner it deems most appropriate, to proceed to the interview stage of the competition. Shortlisting will be completed 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 shortlisting process will provide for the assessment of each applicant's application form against predetermined criteria that reflect the skills and depth of experience considered to be essential for a position at this level.
- iii. Panels may be formed on the basis of such interviews. Candidates whose names are on a panel and who satisfy the Local Authority 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 not be more than one year reckoned from the date of the formation of the panel unless extended.
- iv. The Local Authority shall require persons to whom appointments are offered to take up such appointments within a period of not more than one month and if they fail to take up the appointments within such period or such longer period as the Local Authority in its absolute discretion may determine, the Local Authority shall not appoint them.
- v. An applicant who withdraws their application at any stage of the competition will not be permitted to re-enter the competition at a later stage. Any claim in relation to the late receipt of application forms will not be entertained.

### **ADDITIONAL RELEVANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

- The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 to 2016 came into effect on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2016. The Act places a statutory obligation on DLRCC to ensure that ‘any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of a person having access to or contact with children or vulnerable persons will be subject of Garda Vetting.’
- Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence.
- It is important to remember that this is a competitive process for a role where integrity is paramount. Sharing information on the selection / interview process e.g., through social media or any other means, may result in a candidate being disqualified from the competition.
- DLRCC does not allow the unsanctioned use of any type of recording equipment on its premises. This applies to any form of sound recording and any type of still picture or video recording, whether including sound recording or not, and covers any type of device used for these purposes.
- An applicant who is found to be ineligible at any stage of the competition will not be further considered. Provision of inaccurate, untrue, or misleading information will lead to disqualification from the competition, withdrawal of employment offer or dismissal.
- A candidate who does not attend for interview when and where required by the Council, or who does not, when requested, furnish such evidence as Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will no longer be considered for selection.

#### **Note Re Canvassing:**

Any attempt by a candidate themselves, or by any person(s) acting at their instigation, directly or indirectly by means of written communication or otherwise, to canvas or otherwise influence in the candidate's Favour, any member of the staff of the County Council, or person nominated by the County Council to interview or examine applicants will automatically disqualify the candidate for the position they are seeking.

Completed applications on the official form should be e-mailed to [careers@dlrcoco.ie](mailto:careers@dlrcoco.ie) not later than **12 noon on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June**

**Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and encourages applications under all nine grounds of the Employment Equality Act**