

**East Cambridgeshire District
Council**

**INFORMATION
PACK FOR JOB
APPLICANTS**



**EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Welcome to East Cambridgeshire District Council

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A Message from the Chief Executive

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for considering making an application to join East Cambridgeshire District Council.

East Cambridgeshire is one of the fastest growing Districts in the country and at the heart of one of the most dynamic economic sub-regions in Europe.

As such, our Council always needs to be on the very top of its game. The Council was awarded a 'Good' status under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and strives to continually improve its quality of service and the wider role in the community.

The Council has recently adopted a new vision and corporate objectives stressing high quality and customer focused services, efficient use of resources and effective partnership as central to improving the quality of life for our community.

This agenda is ambitious for any Council – for East Cambridgeshire with around 200 employees, the need to maximise and focus our resources and those of our partners is even more crucial. As potentially one of our new staff, in whatever post you are applying for, you will play an important role in this agenda.

What we can offer as a Council is an organisation which places development and training at the top of its agenda and a pleasant and flexible working environment.

So far we are getting these things right – in being awarded Investors in People Standard for the whole organisation, the inspectors remarked, "this was the best local authority at their first assessment and would prove an exemplar to other public sector applicants."

Our staff have also had their say and in the last Staff Survey 87% said that they understood the overall aims and objectives of the Council. Equally importantly, over 90% believed that the Council had a friendly atmosphere.

The only final word is to wish you good luck in your application and if you are successful, I look forward to meeting you here at East Cambridgeshire.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Hill', with a large loop at the start and a horizontal line extending to the right.

John Hill, Chief Executive

About East Cambridgeshire

East Cambridgeshire is one of the five district authorities and one County authority which makes up the County of Cambridgeshire. It has a population of approximately 81,000 and it covers an area of almost 65,500 hectares. The district is predominantly rural in character and stretches from the Norfolk border in the north to within a few miles of Cambridge in the south; from the long straight stretch of the New Bedford River (or Hundred Foot Drain) in the west to a long border with Suffolk to the east.

The district has an outstanding built and natural heritage, including the internationally recognised Ely Cathedral, The National Stud, July Racecourse, and two National Trust properties – Wicken Fen and Anglesey Abbey. Close to Cambridge, the district enjoys excellent connections to the regional road and rail networks, as well as London Stansted Airport. It is an attractive location in which to live and work, combining the best of town, village and rural life.

Unemployment in the district is currently at 2.4% (as at May 2009) and the quality of life is good, with a high proportion of residents expressing satisfaction with the district as a place to live.

This is an exciting time for the district. The Ely Masterplan is promoting the vision of “Smarter Growth” which is seeking to widen housing choice alongside significant improvements to access and movement, local employment, leisure facilities and retail attractions. Housing growth in the settlements of Ely, Littleport and Soham for the period 2000-2021 has been set at 8,600 new dwellings.

About East Cambridgeshire District Council

The District Council was formed in 1974 and is based in Ely. The offices are within two minutes walking distance from leisure and shopping facilities.

It provides a number of services, including:

- leisure and tourism
- environmental services
- building control services
- planning and development control
- land charges
- licensing
- economic development and promotion
- strategic housing

The Council works in partnership with both the private and voluntary sector to provide a range of other services including refuse collection, recycling, street cleansing and leisure facilities. The Council is also a partner in the Anglia Revenues Partnership to deliver revenues and benefits services with two adjoining authorities in Norfolk and Suffolk. The Council has transferred its housing stock to a Housing Association.

The Council employs approximately 200 staff who work within the policies set by 39 councillors who are elected every four years. Currently, a Conservative administration has an overall majority; there are 24 Conservatives, 13 Liberal Democrats and 2 Independent members.

In May 2001 the Council moved to a streamlined committee system, in advance of adopting an "alternative arrangements" political arrangement system in September 2001.

Full Council meets at least three times a year. The majority of business is conducted by:

Policy Committees:	Policy and Resources Environment and Transport Community Services Strategic Development
Regulatory Committees:	Planning Licensing Personnel Standards Internal Overview and Scrutiny External Partnerships Review Committee

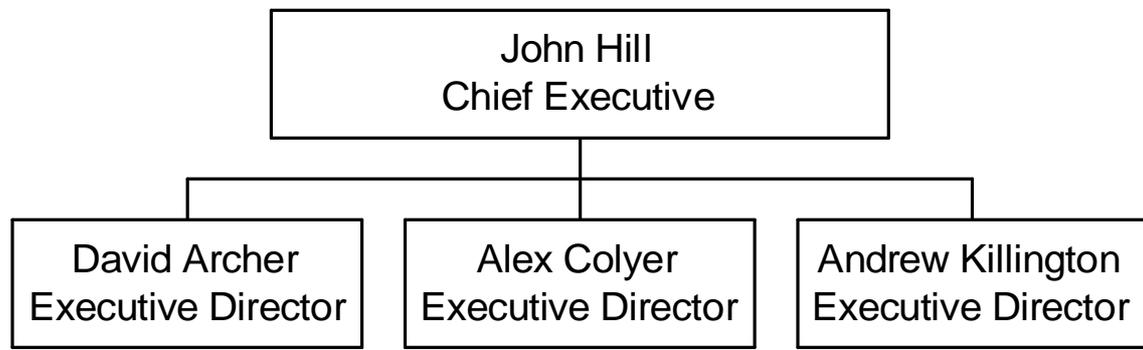
Normal Council office hours are:

Monday – Thursday 8.45 am – 12.45 pm and 1.30 pm – 5.00 pm &
Friday 8.45 am – 12.45 pm and 1.30 pm – 4.30 pm

The Council operates a flexi-time scheme. Wherever the service allows, employees will be given the opportunity of flexi-time working.

The Council operates a "Smoke Free" policy within its premises and grounds.

Management Structure & Department Overview



Press and Public Relations, Community Services and Policy and Performance (John Hill, Chief Executive)

The Community Services team are responsible for sports and leisure, tourism, recreation, arts development, active communities, community development, grants and town centre management. The Policy and Performance team work closely with the local public and voluntary bodies to promote community safety, community development and the local strategic partnership, and are responsible for supporting the Council's performance improvement and consultation.

Sustainable Development, Planning, Building Control and Housing (David Archer, Executive Director)

These teams provide the Council's sustainable development, transport, development control, enforcement, appeals, listed buildings and conservation, trees and landscaping, forward and local planning, housing and building control services for the district.

Finance, Legal, Democratic and Environmental Services (Alex Colyer, Executive Director)

These teams are responsible for all of the administration in relation to the Council's financial affairs, and for providing an effective and high quality legal, local land charges, elections, committee administration and member support services. The Environmental Services team ensure that environmental issues across the district are compliant with Government legislation.

HR, ICT, Customer Services and Facilities Management (Andrew Killington, Executive Director)

These teams are responsible for all issues relating to staffing and training, customer services, managing information technology within the Council, the maintenance of open spaces, management of the Council's offices, asset management and business continuity.

The Council's Strategy

The Council's three corporate objectives for the period 2008-2011 are described below:-

1. **High Quality Services**

To champion accessible public services to protect and enhance a high quality of life for all residents and ensuring effective and efficient use of resources.

2. **Partnership**

To work with our partners to deliver continuous improvement through effective challenge and learning and achieve the development of an informed, involved and united community.

3. **Sustainable Growth**

As one of the fastest growing districts in the country, we aim to stimulate and properly manage the social, economic and environmental impact of growth to meet the needs and aspirations of the whole community.

Beneath each of these corporate objectives are a series of priorities that reflect the national, regional and local challenges facing the Council.

The Council's progress against these priorities is measured by a suite of performance indicators within the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan.

The Local Strategic Partnership has identified five strategic aims for the district of East Cambridgeshire which are:

- To create safer and cleaner communities;
- To promote health and wellbeing;
- To encourage sustainable growth;
- To achieve better outcomes for children and young people;
- To support business, skills and enterprise development; and
- To promote involved communities.

Similarly, progress against these aims is measured through a series of objectives and performance indicators.

The Council is an active and committed participant of "Cambridgeshire Together", the Local Area Agreement Board.

Benefits for Employees

SALARY & PAY AWARD

▪ **Incremental Salary Scales**

Subject to fully acceptable performance, your salary will increase by one increment on 1st April each year until the maximum point of your scale is reached (subject to six months service in the grade).

▪ **Local Government Pay Award**

All employees will receive the local government pay award on 1st April each year to reflect cost of living rises.

FINAL SALARY PENSION SCHEME

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is a statutory, funded pension scheme and as such it is very secure because its benefits are defined and guaranteed in law. The benefits provided by the LGPS are as follows:

- A tax free lump sum when you retire.
- A guaranteed pension based on your final salary.
- The ability to increase your pension by paying extra contributions.
- A death in service lump sum of three times final pay.
- The index linking of benefits to ensure that they keep pace with inflation.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Through an annual training plan, developed from the Council's Corporate Objectives and performance appraisal scheme, the Council aims to provide training in the following important areas:

Corporate training	Including Induction, Health & Safety – Risk Assessment, Absence Management, Performance Management, Stress Management, Equal Opportunities and Budget Management.
In-house training	On core subjects, important to the Council and its objectives, such as time management, customer care, presentation skills, IT skills etc in order to provide both individual and team growth.
External professional training	Including a commitment to continuous professional development.
Professional qualifications	By, for example, day release, block release, distance learning, correspondence courses.
Specific individual training	Where a need has been identified.

PAYMENT OF PROFESSIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS/FEEES

Professional subscriptions/fees will be paid by the Council for staff who hold membership of a professional institute or body which is relevant to their occupation (maximum of one per staff member).

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

The Council recognises that every employee has a contribution to make towards its overall success and to develop this contribution, the Council is committed to a process of performance management. This includes reviewing individuals' progress, setting objectives and providing development opportunities. The Council requires that all staff are given the opportunity to have an annual appraisal. This is an opportunity to look at achievements and to set new objectives for the year ahead. Any training and development needs arising from the new objectives can be discussed and planned for the same time that the appraisal is carried out.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE (IIP)

The Council was awarded the prestigious National Standard for Investors in People for the second time, following a reassessment in December 2008. The IIP is a national standard designed to advance an organisation's performance through its people and is awarded to organisations that can demonstrate commitment to staff development and can show that systems are in place to enable this to take place.

FLEXI-TIME SCHEME

Wherever the service allows, employees will be given the opportunity of flexi-time working. The Council's flexi scheme operates from 7.30am – 6.30pm Monday to Friday. Unless specifically stated in contracts of employment, core hours of work will be 10.00am – 12.00pm and 2.00pm – 4.00pm. Hours worked outside of these core hours and at weekends will be subject to normal time of in lieu (TOIL) or overtime arrangements.

Providing sufficient flexi credit exists, one whole day or two half-days can be taken as flexi leave within each 4-week period (pro-rata for part-time staff).

FLEXIBLE WORKING

Whilst there is a legal obligation to allow working parents with a child of up to and including the age of 16 years, or 18 if disabled and carers of adults the right to request flexible working (i.e. part-time, annualised hours, compressed hours), the Council has extended this right to all employees (subject to qualifying conditions). All requests for flexible working will be considered and accommodated where the service allows.

ANNUAL LEAVE

The Council's annual leave entitlement is 22 working days each year, increasing to 27 after five years continuous local government service, plus 8 days statutory holiday each year (pro-rata for part-time staff). The leave year runs from 1st April to 31st March.

STAFF HEALTH AND WELFARE

- **Sick Pay**

The Council applies the scheme agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. This provides for payment of allowances in accordance with the scale related to length of service, subject to certain conditions being fulfilled. Full details of the scheme are given in the National Joint Council Scheme of Conditions of Service handbook (the 'Green Book').

- **Occupational Health Scheme**

The Council is committed to an on-going Occupational Health Scheme. An occupational health practitioner visits the Council once a month to carry out mini-medicals and to discuss both individual enquiries and to promote a healthy workforce generally.

- **Private Health Care Scheme**

All members of staff have the opportunity to join BUPA at a discounted rate.

- **Leisure Facilities & Health Sessions**

All members of staff are eligible for discounted rates at the local Council-owned swimming pool. Members of staff have access to Tai chi sessions which are held during the lunch period.

- **Dignity at Work**

All employees have the right to work in an environment that is safe, and to be protected from all forms of abuse, violence, harassment and bullying. The Council is committed to ensuring that all employees are treated with dignity and respect.

CHILDCARE SCHEME

Eligible employees can apply for a flat-rate monthly contribution from the Council (pro-rata for part time staff) towards the cost of childcare (for a child aged 12 or under) incurred during working hours. The allowance is increased in line with the agreed pay award each year.

RELOCATION SCHEME

The Council operates a Relocation Scheme which may be payable in approved cases to newly appointed employees requiring to relocate to the East Cambridgeshire District in order to take up the appointment (subject to conditions and eligibility).

CAR USER ALLOWANCE

Whether a post has 'essential' or 'casual' car user status, all new employees will be required to use their own vehicles for Council business and will need to be insured for business use.

- **Essential Car User**

Essential car users receive a lump sum* payment, paid monthly through the payroll, and a fixed rate* per business mile travelled depending on the engine size of the vehicle. Essential car users are eligible for parking on site at The Grange council offices.

- **Casual Car User**

Casual car users receive a fixed rate* per business mile travelled depending on the engine size of the vehicle. There is no provision for car parking at The Grange for casual car users, however there is free public car parking within easy walking distance of the Council offices.

* All rates agreed annually by the National Joint Council for local authority staff.

CAR LOAN

Officers deemed essential car users are eligible for financial assistance towards the purchase of a motor car for use in connection with their official business in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Car Loan Scheme.

TRAIN SEASON TICKET DISCOUNTS

The Council is a partner of the Travel for Work Partnership, and through the partnership employees are able to access a special discounted rate on season tickets for travel to work by train. Season tickets may be purchased for valid travel from any National Express East Anglia or selected First Capital Connect stations (North of Potters Bar) to either Cambridge or Huntingdon stations only. Full details on how to purchase tickets, sample fares and route maps can be found by downloading the following document: <http://www.tfw.org.uk/documents/TfWTrainDiscountPromotion.pdf>, or alternatively by contacting a member of the Council's HR team on 01353 665555.

Outline details can also be found on the Travel for Work web site at: <http://www.tfw.org.uk/services.php#Traindiscounts>.

Valuing Diversity & Promoting Equal Opportunities

The Council recognises that as a major employer and service provider it has a duty and legal responsibility to:

- i) eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- ii) promote equality of opportunity; and
- iii) promote good relations with all members of the community.

The Council believes that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. This applies not only to our workforce but members of our community and anybody to whom we deliver our services. The Council understands the importance of creating an environment in which services and employment are provided without fear of discrimination and is firmly committed to eliminating unfair discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Marital and family status
- Sexual orientation
- Transsexual/Transgendered
- Religion or belief
- Age
- Nationality
- Ethnic origin
- Trade union membership

The Council is committed to help those who are disadvantaged within the resources available, to ensure that we are a fair and equal employer and to work to ensure that every resident has a good quality of life.

The Application Process

- Applications should be marked "**Confidential**" and returned with the Equalities Monitoring Form and Criminal Records Declaration Form (if applicable) to:

**Mrs N Pema
Principal Human Resources Officer
East Cambridgeshire District Council
The Grange
Nutholt Lane
Ely
Cambs CB7 4EE**

- References **WILL** be taken up in the case of short-listed candidates unless you ask us not to do so.
- Any offer of appointment is subject to satisfactory evidence of medical fitness for the job. Applications from disabled people are welcome and they should not be deterred by the medical check as this **only** relates to fitness to do the job.
- (If applicable for the post) an offer of employment will also be subject to the relevant checks by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure Service. Please contact the Council's HR Department on 01353 665555 for a copy of the Council's Policy Statement on the use of the Disclosure Service or the Code of Practice for the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Criminal Record Bureau Disclosures and Disclosure information. The existence of a Disclosure will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position.
- Please refer to the copy of the job advertisement within this pack for details of the salary for the post, the closing date for receipt of completed applications and the interview date.
- **The Council is currently in the process of transferring to a new job evaluation scheme and implementing a new pay and grading structure. Please be advised that the salary offered to the successful candidate may change as a result of the review.**
- If you have not received notification of short-listing two working days before the interview date, please assume that on this occasion your application has been unsuccessful. Please note that details of unsuccessful candidates will be kept on file. If you do not wish for this to happen, you must contact the Council's HR section within two weeks of the closing date for this post.
- Interview expenses will be reimbursed for the actual cost of second class train or bus fares or for car travel. Claim forms will be issued following an interview which will need to be returned to the HR Section together with any relevant receipts. Please note that any overnight accommodation should be approved by the HR Section in advance.