



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

Please Read Carefully

Recruitment and Selection Campaign for the Position of Assistant Planner

CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS

4PM ON 18TH SEPTEMBER 2025

Important Notes:

- Please submit your application form inclusive of all other required documentation to hr@galwaycoco.ie as **ONE SINGLE document** (not individual scanned documents).
- Candidates must submit a copy of all declared qualifications and a copy of driving license with their application forms.
- Application forms must be fully completed. CVs will not be considered.

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The Competition:

Galway County Council is establishing a panel for the position of Assistant Planner from which permanent and/or temporary positions may be filled during the lifetime of the panel.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE POST

CHARACTER

Candidates must be of good character.

HEALTH

Candidates shall 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 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.

CITIZENSHIP:

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

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

- f) A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or the UK or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa

Qualifications:

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

- a) hold an honours degree (level 8 or higher 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

Candidate's must hold a full unendorsed Category B Driving Licence and have access to their own car.

***Non-Irish Qualifications must be accompanied by a determination from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to establish their comparability against the Irish National Framework of Qualifications, overseas qualifications must also be accompanied by a translation document.**

Duties and Responsibilities:

The ideal candidate should have a very good **technical knowledge base and experience of planning policy and practices** to include the following non exhaustive list of duties:

- An ability to engage a wide and varied planning application caseload;
- Assess and make recommendations on planning applications in line with all relevant national, regional and local plans and policies and in accordance with appropriate legislation and guidelines;
- Conduct pre-application consultations and provide planning advice to members of the public, internal departments and elected members;
- Undertake site visits related to planning applications, condition compliance planning enforcement, derelict sites, vacant sites etc. as required;
- Provide reports on enforcement cases, derelict sites, and vacant sites, as required;
- Prepare Development Plans and Local Area Plans and other planning policy reports and studies;
- Analyse spatial and demographic information to discern trends in population, land use employment etc., to inform policy development;

- Develop and implement measures to promote regeneration;
- Input to inter-disciplinary projects dealing with land-use, transport, environment etc;
- Represent the Council at meetings with staff, elected members, community/general interest groups, businesses and residents, as required;
- Build and maintain cooperative working relationships;
- Any other associated duties as may be assigned from time to time.

The Person

The ideal candidate should also have a very good technical knowledge base and experience of planning policy and practices to include the following:

- Development management and enforcement;
- Current and future planning issues facing Galway County Council and its wider region
- Awareness of and management of Health, Safety and Welfare in the workplace;
- Administration, report writing and putting across a well-researched and reasoned recommendations;
- Operating ICT systems, in particular word processing, presentation and GIS systems;
- Prioritising of work effectively;
- Acting on own initiative

Desirable Skills

The ideal candidate should have an ability to demonstrate competence in the following areas;

- Identifying Problems and Contributing to Solutions;
- Communicating Effectively and Delivering Quality Work and Services;
- An ability to work in a multi-disciplinary team;
- Good planning, operation and project management skills;
- Good communication and interpersonal skills;
- Good knowledge, 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

CANDIDATES AT INTERVIEW WILL BE ASSESSED AND MARKED ON THE FOLLOWING AREAS: (50% PASS MARK REQUIRED FOR EACH COMPETENCY)

Planning Policy & Practice	Performance through People	Personal Effectiveness	Delivering Results	Interpersonal skills and Communicating Effectively
200 Marks	200 Marks	200 Marks	200 Marks	200 Marks

Planning Policy & Practice	<p>Experience and detailed knowledge of the practical application of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Planning legislation and key relevant European Directives, including associated procedures • Planning issues relevant to Co. Galway and its wider region • Demonstrates an understanding of the role of Assistant Planner in the Local Authority context • Demonstrates the required specialist knowledge, understanding & training for the role • Historical, emerging and topical planning trends & issues in Ireland • Report writing and communication of a reasoned assessment or recommendation • Health and Safety legislation
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 that 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"> • Is self-motivated and maintains a positive constructive and enthusiastic attitude to their role. • Manages time and workload effectively with particular reference to statutory obligations and timeframes. • Demonstrates the required specialist technical knowledge, understanding and training for the role. • Personal Motivation, Initiative and Achievement; is enthusiastic about the role and sets challenging goals to achieve high quality outcomes. • Behaves in an honest, trustworthy and respectful manner and is transparent, fair and consistent in dealing with others.
Delivering Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem solving and decision making, particularly in situations of conflicting demands • Organising work programmes and implementing solutions, especially to deadlines • Managing resources and achieving efficiencies • Delivering Quality Outcomes
Interpersonal skills and 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 • Structure and organises their own work 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 communication a complex or technical message, using language appropriate to the audience

DETAILS AND PARTICULARS

Probation:

Where a person is appointed to Galway County Council, the following provisions shall apply –

- a) there shall be a period after appointment takes effect, during which such a person shall hold the position on probation;
- b) such period shall be one year but the Chief Executive may, at his discretion, extend such period;
- c) such a person shall cease to hold the position at the end of the period of probation, unless during this period the Chief Executive has certified that the service is satisfactory;
- d) the period at (a) above may be terminated on giving one weeks' notice as per the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts;
- e) there will be assessments during the probationary period.

Salary Scale:

€47,270 - €73,335 per annum - yearly performance-based increments will apply.

Point	01/08/2025
1	€47,270
2	€49,938
3	€51,906
4	€53,948
5	€56,040
6	€58,166
7	€60,312
8	€62,458
9	€64,604
10	€66,753
11	€68,914
LSI 1	€71,123
LSI 2	€73,335

Hours of Work:

35.10 hours per week

Annual Leave:

30 days per annum

Residence

The person holding the office must reside in, or at an address convenient to the Local Authority, as approved by the Chief Executive.

Garda Vetting

Garda vetting may be sought in respect of individuals who come under consideration for appointment.

Outside Employment

The position is whole-time and the officer may not engage in private practice or be connected with any outside business which would interfere with the performance of official duties.

Superannuation Contribution

A person who becomes a pensionable employee of a local authority who is liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 1.5% of 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 dependant or qualified children).

A person who becomes a pensionable employee of a local authority who is liable to pay the Class D rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of his/her superannuation to contribute to the local authority at the rate of 5% of pensionable remuneration.

A person paying Class D rate of PRSI who becomes a pensionable employee 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 pensionable remuneration in accordance with the terms of the scheme.

A person paying Class A rate of PRSI who becomes a pensionable employee 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 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).

Employees are admitted to the Superannuation Scheme in accordance with the terms of the Local Government Superannuation (Consolidation) Act, 1998 and the Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004, with effect from date of appointment. This scheme is contributory and provides pension, retirement and death gratuities.

In order for a new entrant to the scheme to qualify for a pension, he/she must have served a minimum of two years employment in a local authority.

For new entrants under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme, effective from 1st January 2013, superannuation contributions are as follows: 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration and 3% of pensionable remuneration. Pension and retirement lump sum will be based on career-average pay; pensions will be co-ordinated with the State Pension Contributory.

COMMUNICATIONS

Galway County Council will contact you when necessary at each stage of the competition by post /email/sms. It is strongly recommended that you do not change your email address or mobile phone number in the course of this recruitment competition, as any email/text message will be sent to the email address/telephone number originally supplied on your application form. It is important to note that the email address you provide when applying 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 throughout the recruitment and selection campaign. This can be done by emailing hr@galwaycoco.ie. The onus is also on each applicant to ensure that s/he is in receipt of all communication from the Galway County Council. Galway County Council does not accept responsibility for communications not accessed or received by an applicant.

-STAGE 1- SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FORM

- Applications may be submitted to hr@galwaycoco.ie or posted to Galway County Council, Human Resources Department, County Hall, Prospect Hill, Galway.
- Failure to submit all of the required documentation with your application will result in your application being invalid and you will not be permitted to proceed any further in the selection process.
- Application forms, once submitted, will be checked to ensure that they meet the required minimum criteria for the position.
- If your application form does not meet the minimum qualifications for the post as set out in this booklet then your application will be deemed invalid and you will not be permitted to proceed any further in the selection process.

The onus rests with the applicant to ensure that his/her application form and all required documentation is received by the Human Resources department.

-STAGE 2- SHORTLISTING

Galway 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 or other written, oral or practical tests appropriate to the position. You will be contacted 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.

-STAGE 3- FINAL INTERVIEW

Final Interview Process

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 of Assistant Planner. Interview may take place online via Microsoft Teams. The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend an interview, is not to be taken as implying that Galway 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 Galway County Council will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred.

Interviews shall be conducted by Board(s) set up by Galway 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 Galway County Council consider 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 the obligatory test(s) on the date(s) specified by Galway County Council and to make whatever arrangements are necessary to ensure that they receive communications sent to them at the postal or email address specified on their application form.

Candidates on the panel, who satisfy all the requirements for the post may be offered employment subject to:

- (i) their place, in order of merit, on the panel.
- (ii) the requirements of Galway County Council

Please note that interviews may take place via online platform.

-THE FINE PRINT-

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Galway County Council reserves the right to vary the number and sequence of each stage of the selection process as the competition progresses
2. Galway County Council will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.
3. The admission of a person to the competition, or invitation to partake or attend any element of the selection process, or a successful result letter, is not to be taken as implying that Galway County Council is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements.
4. Placement on any panel from this competition is no guarantee that a position will be offered.

5. The Importance of Confidentiality

Candidates can expect that all enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings to the extent that they are managed by Galway County Council are treated as strictly confidential subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 & 2003.

6. Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not complete and submit any assessments before the specified date; or do not attend/ undertake any stage of the selection process as requested or do not furnish such evidence as requested in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

7. Data Protection

When your application is received, Galway County Council creates a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in Data Protection Legislation.

8. Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION-TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Your attention is drawn to this important information.

By submitting an application, accessing or attempting any assessment / test materials you are agreeing to be bound by the terms set out below:

1. All test and assessment materials are subject to copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of the tests/ assessment materials (including any text, questions and/or potential answer options) or associated materials (including practice and/ or familiarisation materials) may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, printing, photographing, recording, written or otherwise, at any stage. To do so is an offence and may result in you being excluded from the selection process.
2. Canvassing - Candidates should note that canvassing to enhance their candidature or encouraging others to do so will disqualify them and will result in their exclusion from the recruitment campaign.
3. Candidates in the recruitment process must not:
 - Knowingly or recklessly provide false information
 - Canvass any person, with or without inducements
 - Interfere with or compromise the process in any way.
4. A third party must not impersonate a candidate at any stage of the process.

If a person found guilty of such an offence was or is a candidate in a recruitment process, then:

 - Where s/he has not been appointed to a post, s/he will be disqualified as a candidate
 - Where s/he has been appointed subsequent to the recruitment process in question, s/he shall forfeit that appointment.
5. The admission of a person to the competition, or invitation to undertake any element of the selection process is not to be taken as implying that Galway County Council is satisfied that such a person fulfils the essential requirements.

CODE OF PRACTICE ON RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

This Code of Practice sets out the commitment by Galway County Council to comply with standards of best practice and integrity in its recruitment and selection procedures. It also outlines the obligations and responsibilities of persons who apply for employment with the Council, as well as their rights. It is based on the general principles of fairness and consistency in approach to all candidates, through competency-based selection procedures which are conducted in an open and transparent manner.

ADVERTISING

The Council is committed to ensuring that vacancies are communicated openly to afford equality of opportunity. Advertising mechanisms are selected which offer value for money and are appropriate to the vacancy under consideration. In general, vacancies are normally advertised in the national and local newspaper's, as well as the Council's website at www.galway.ie and the national website www.localgovernmentjobs.ie

LEGISLATION

The Council has regard to all relevant legislative requirements and considerations in its recruitment and selection processes, including;

- *Official Languages Act* – in accordance with government policy and having regard to our county's cultural identity, the Council conducts optional oral Irish interviews as part of its recruitment process, which awards an additional 3% / 6% of marks attained at main interview, to candidates who demonstrate a reasonable / very good knowledge of the Irish language. The Council is committed to achieving its obligations under the Official Languages Act on a planned basis.
- *Freedom Of Information* – all information received and processed by the Council is treated in confidence subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.
- *Data Protection Acts* – the information submitted with your application is used solely in processing your candidature, and such information is held subject to the rights and obligations of the Data Protection Acts. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018, replacing the existing data protection framework under the EU Data Protection Directive. When your application is received, Galway County Council creates a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your

candidature. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2018. Our general retention period for applications and interview notes is 2 years and documents are then securely destroyed. The Personnel Department may use external selection board members and these board members may receive, or have access to, candidate application data in order to assist in the determination of suitability for a specific role; selection board members have a duty to keep such information confidential and secure and selection board members are aware of this duty. To make a request to access your personal data please submit your request by email to: dpo@galwaycoco.ie ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record(s).

- *Equality Acts* – the interview process and Interview Boards have regard to all equality considerations. Employment opportunities are accessible to all potentially qualified applicants, including people with disabilities, for whom all appropriate facilities are provided to ensure that they have the opportunity to perform to their optimum at interview.

WHAT ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES?

- *Full Completion of Application Form* – applications must be made on the official application form and all sections of the form must be fully completed. When completing the form, it is essential that full details (e.g. Employment dates & duties) are given, as you may be shortlisted on the basis of information supplied.
- *Submission Prior to the Closing Date* – the completed application form must be forwarded to reach Galway County Council in hard or electronic copy, not later than the closing time and date for receipt of applications. An application form sent by post should be posted in sufficient time to ensure delivery by the deadline. Allegations of loss or delay will not be considered unless supported by a Certificate of Postage.
- *Attendance at Interview* – candidates who do not attend at interview or tests as required, or who do not, when requested, furnish evidence in relation to their candidature, will have no further claim for consideration in the recruitment process for that vacancy.
- *Integrity and Fairness* – this comprises four main issues:
 - Any attempt by a candidate, or by any person(s) acting on his/her instigation, directly or indirectly by means of written communication or otherwise, to canvass or otherwise influence in the candidate's favour, any member of staff of the County Council or person nominated by the Council to interview or examine applicants, will automatically disqualify the candidate for the position he/she is seeking.

- Candidates must not knowingly provide false information on their application.
- No other person may impersonate or represent a candidate at any stage of a selection process.
- Candidates must not interfere with or compromise the process in any way.
- Any candidate found to carry out any of the above and who was/is a candidate in the recruitment process, may be disqualified as a candidate or if appointed, may forfeit the appointment.

APPOINTMENT ON MERIT

- *Eligibility* – specific requirements for posts may be set down by the appropriate Minister/Body, such as academic/professional qualifications, minimum amount and type of experience and/or knowledge, and in some cases, other factors such as health/fitness, security clearance considerations, etc. Candidates are advised as soon as possible after the closing date of the decision regarding their eligibility for the post. However, admission to a competition or invitation to interview is not to be taken as implying that the Council is satisfied that the candidate fulfils all requirements or is not disqualified by law from holding the position, and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. Therefore, the onus is on the candidate to ensure that they meet the eligibility requirements before attending for interview, as candidates attend for interview at their own expense.
- *Shortlisting* – where a large number of persons apply for a post, the Council reserve the right to admit to the competition, only candidates who appear to be likely to possess a standard sufficient for appointment. The shortlisting process can take the form of:-
 - Shortlisting of candidates on the basis of information contained in their application form;
 - Other written, oral or practical tests appropriate to the position;
 - Preliminary interviews to reduce the number of candidates to a more manageable number for the final Interview Board **or**
 - Preliminary interviews to determine qualified candidates, after which a selected number of the qualified candidates are called back for final interview.
- *Main Interview* – the Council is committed to a process of selection on merit, based on fair and open competition. The criteria for judging suitability and ranking will be

related directly to the qualification, attributes and skills required to undertake the duties and responsibilities to the standard required in the post.

- *Interview Board* – the Interview Board are selected and convened having regard to their training, experience and expertise in the particular functional area. Gender representation is also taken into consideration when constituting a board, subject to availability. Interview Board Members have regard to their responsibilities under Equality and Freedom of Information legislation in the conducting of interviews.
- *Panel* – following completion of interviews, a panel may be formed, the duration of which is at the discretion of the Council. While a panel remains in force, offers of temporary or permanent employment may be made subject to confirmation of qualifications and satisfying clauses in relation to health, character or other requirements of the particular post. Persons to whom an offer of employment is made must take up duty within 1 month from the date of offer, or such extended period as the Council may agree, otherwise, the Council may decide not to appoint them.

YOUR RIGHT TO INFORMATION AND TO APPEAL

The Council is committed to offering meaningful feedback to candidates who request it, and to dealing with such requests in a timely and efficient manner. A request for marks awarded at interview and comments made by the Interview Board, may be made in writing to the Freedom of Information Officer, under the Freedom of Information Act.

The Council will consider appeals in relation to eligibility and shortlisting decisions. Such appeals must be made by candidates in writing within 5 working days of notification of the relevant decision. On receipt of appeal, the selection decisions will be re-visited and the candidate will be informed of the outcome of this review.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

Application Form Checklist

✓ All application forms must be submitted fully completed and inclusive of all the requested documentation (Educational Qualification Documents and Driving Licence). All <u>incomplete applications</u> will be returned as <u>invalid</u> and will not be included in the competition.
✓ <i>Your application form inclusive of all other required documentation must be emailed to hr@galwaycoco.ie as <u>ONE SINGLE document</u> (not individual scanned documents).</i>
✓ All information must only be provided on the formal application form. Additional information via Curriculum Vitae will not be considered.
✓ Ensure that you have answered all questions fully.
✓ Copies of Educational qualifications & driving licence (not originals), i.e. Leaving Certificate, degree etc., whichever is applicable in your case, must be submitted with your application. Original certificates will be required prior to any appointment.
✓ Applications may be submitted by email to hr@galwaycoco.ie providing all required information is included on the application (i.e. scanned copy of educational qualifications, driving licence etc.)
✓ Applications will be short-listed on the basis of the information provided on the application form and therefore you should ensure that you have fully completed your application and all documentation requested is submitted.
✓ The responsibility rests with the applicant to ensure the application form, in full, along with all requested documentation is <u>received</u> by the Human Resources Department, Galway County Council.
✓ Claims that any application form or letter relating to it has been lost or delayed in the post will not be considered unless a Post Office Certificate of posting is produced in support of such claims. The responsibility to make contact with An Post regarding any delays rests with the applicant.
✓ Please notify the Human Resources Department of any change of address.
✓ Please include your contact telephone numbers and email address with your application form.

The onus rests with the applicant to ensure that his/her application form and all required documentation is received by the Human Resources prior to the competition closing date.