

Do you have the vision to shape the future of South Lanarkshire?

Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Climate

£127,213 - £131,995

(Initial placement will reflect experience and competence)

Recruitment pack – FCR 5532 Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Climate



About us

South Lanarkshire is the fifth largest council in Scotland, as well as being one of its most diverse. Home to a population of around 334,030 and covering 180,000 hectares stretching from Glasgow to the Borders, South Lanarkshire thrives upon a mix of urban and rural communities.

Our Council Plan, Connect seeks to support all who live and work here – from the youngest to the oldest – through six key outcomes. It also outlines our vision and priorities to improve, sustain and enhance what matters most to them. Education, housing, sustainability, economic development, tackling deprivation and poverty, and looking after our most vulnerable, are top of the list.

This vision also strives to make South Lanarkshire one of the strongest and most dynamic economies in Scotland, where businesses, communities and residents can prosper and achieve their full potential.

Despite the financial challenges facing local government, we continue to deliver significant capital investment across our school estate, roads, town centres, leisure facilities, country parks and social housing, demonstrating our commitment to supporting communities and improving local infrastructure.

As a key partner in the Glasgow City Region City Deal, a £1.13 billion initiative focused on investing in infrastructure and economic development assets, we are committed to supporting and developing our business base and key sectors.

Working through the South Lanarkshire University Health and Social Care Partnership, the council has taken the opportunity to develop new strategic approaches to our care for the elderly, working with our NHS partners to provide the support this and future generations will need.

South Lanarkshire is also a listening council. Our membership of the Community Planning Partnership allows us to engage across the spectrum of services and those who use them.

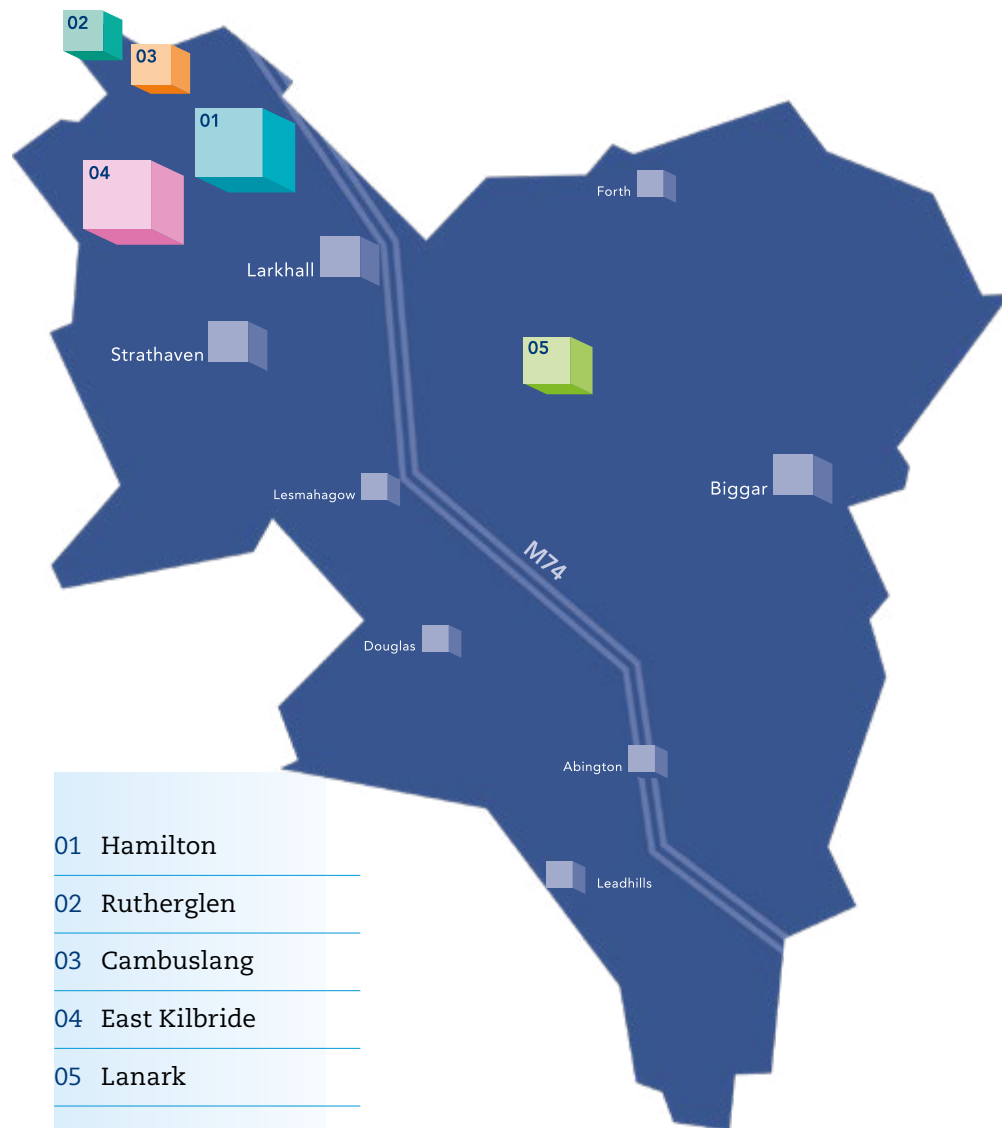
Here in South Lanarkshire citizens enjoy an excellent quality of life. Green spaces, cultural opportunities, enviable transport links and affordable housing make this an attractive place to live, work and bring up family.

The foundations have been solidly laid to enable us to continue to promote South Lanarkshire on a local, national and international stage, whilst ensuring our people can, and will, prosper.



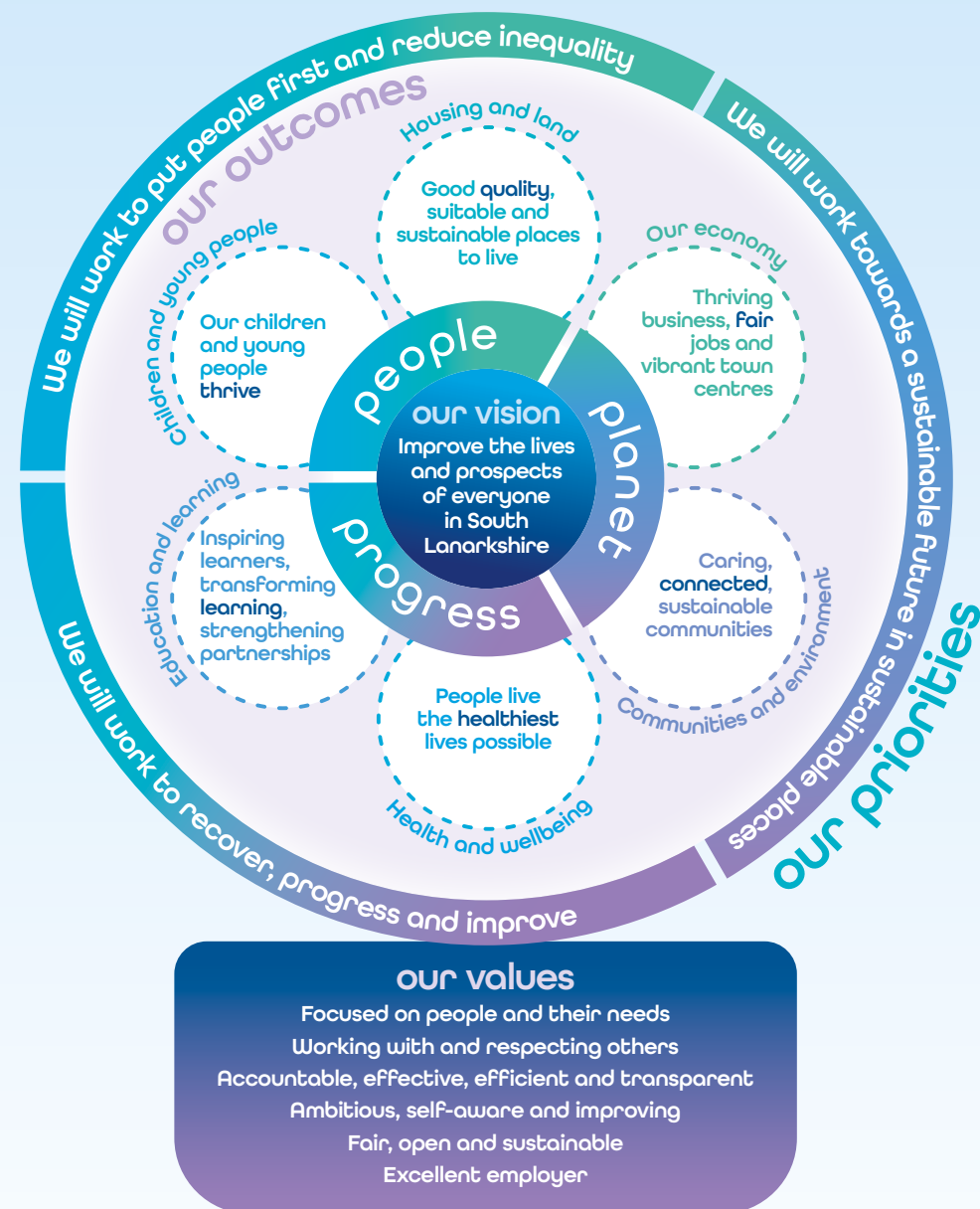
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About the area



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Our vision



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About the Resource

Community and Enterprise Resources touch the lives of everyone who lives, works, visits and invests in South Lanarkshire. Through our services, partnerships, and investment programmes we play a critical role in creating successful places, supporting sustainable economic growth, tackling inequalities, and improving the wellbeing of our communities.

South Lanarkshire is one of Scotland's largest and most diverse local authority areas. Our communities are ambitious, our economy is changing, and the expectations placed on local government continue to grow. We are responding to these challenges by modernising services, embracing innovation, and strengthening our focus on place-based working to ensure that our resources and investment deliver the greatest possible impact.

Community and Enterprise Resources comprises of four main areas:

- Roads, Transportation and Fleet Services
- Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services
- Planning, Regulatory Services and Climate
- Enterprise

The role of Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Climate sits at the heart of that ambition.

The resource employs just under 3,500 people, who together provide a wide range of services for local communities, including:

- Maintaining our road network to support safe and effective transport, and promoting active travel
- Procuring and managing the council's vehicle fleet, including refuse collection, roads maintenance, street sweeping and passenger transport
- Protecting public health through the delivery of environmental health service
- Providing trading standards to protect consumers and communities
- Providing planning and building standard services which guide and control physical development and land use in the area
- Promoting economic development recovery and delivering support for local businesses
- Supporting town centres and physical regeneration
- Delivering key services within schools and council offices, including cleaning, catering, receptionist, janitorial, concierge and crossing patrol services

- Keeping our streets clean and maintaining and developing playparks, gardens and open spaces
- Collecting and disposing of waste and encouraging recycling
- Providing bereavement services and
- Leading the council in developing and promoting sustainability



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Service Key Facts

- Processed over 2,000 planning applications and nearly 4,000 building warrant applications in 2025/26, representing £4.2 million of investment.
- Continued delivery of housing during the housing emergency, including continued output at Community Growth Areas and other major housing sites, resulting in the completion of over 1700 private and social rented new homes.
- Gained approval of the Evidence Report in 2026 that allowed work to begin on the third Local Development Plan.
- Developed a new approach for carrying out the Housing Land Audit that reflects the requirements of NPF4 and the preparation of LDP3.
- Historic assets and natural features include New Lanark World Heritage Site, 30 Conservation Areas, over 1,000 Listed Buildings, Natural sites and 45 sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- South Lanarkshire is a well-connected area through major road and rail networks which attracts a wide range of house builders and commercial development.
- Investigated and closed over 500 enforcement enquiries in 2025/26.
- Successfully completed the National Planning Improvement Framework (NPIF) Cohort 3 assessment, demonstrating performance across 12 quality indicators and 5 strategic themes. The review built on over 10 years of Customer Service Excellence accreditation and established a clear improvement programme.
- Invested in new technology and supporting roles including data analysts, continuous improvement and developer obligations, the use of ArcGIS and PowerBI systems.
- Representation on national planning and building standards agencies including Heads of Planning Sub Committees and Planning Aid Scotland, with members undertaking a lead role in national guidance and policy development.
- Introduced discretionary charging in 2026 for or existing planning processes to generate further income.
- Environmental Services comprises Environmental Health and Trading Standards and deliver the full range of statutory functions for these areas.
- Trading Standards regulate approximately 4000 businesses and in 2025/26 investigated over 500 consumer complaints.
- Trading Standards undertake consumer protection work and support vulnerable consumers to protect themselves from rogue traders.
- Environmental Health undertakes food safety work, monitoring over 3000 food businesses.
- During 2025/26 Environmental Health investigated over 3000 enquiries in relation to public health and private sector house conditions; almost 5000 enquiries relating to environmental crime and over 4000 enquiries relating to noise complaints
- Environmental Health has successfully managed the process to remove three areas across South Lanarkshire from Air Quality Management restrictions.
- Responsible for developing and coordinating delivery of the council's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy.
- Working across all council services to embed sustainability and climate considerations into strategic planning, policy development and investment decisions.
- Supporting delivery of the council's climate ambitions through partnership working at local, regional and national level.
- Leading the identification of opportunities for external funding, innovation and collaboration to support sustainability and climate resilience objectives.

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Resource Structure



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Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Climate

Do you have the vision to shape the future of South Lanarkshire?

This is a unique opportunity to lead services that shape the places where people live, work and invest. The role brings together planning, regulation and climate leadership to help create sustainable, inclusive and resilient communities whilst supporting economic growth and protecting the natural and built environment.

Working closely with elected members, communities, partners and stakeholders, you will provide strategic leadership across planning, building standards, environmental services, trading standards and climate change and sustainability. You will champion a place-based approach, ensuring that policy, regulation, investment and environmental stewardship work together to improve outcomes for communities across South Lanarkshire.

The operating environment continues to evolve rapidly, influenced by climate change, demographic pressures, technological advancement, economic transition, changing community expectations and public sector reform. In response, the Council is increasingly focused on delivering sustainable places, reducing inequalities, supporting community wellbeing and achieving its climate ambitions alongside economic growth.

This is an opportunity for an exceptional leader to help shape that future.

If you have the vision, strategic insight and collaborative leadership skills to drive positive change, improve places and deliver lasting outcomes for our communities, we would welcome your application.

Key Areas of Responsibility

- Planning
- Building Standards
- Environmental Services
- Trading Standards
- Climate Change and Sustainability
- Place-Based Development and Sustainable Growth
- Strategic Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement
- Service Transformation and Continuous Improvement

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Job profile

Reports to: Executive Director, Community and Enterprise Resources

Location: South Lanarkshire Council, Council Headquarters, Almada Street, Hamilton ML3 0AA

Purpose of the job:

To provide strategic leadership, direction and management for Planning, Regulatory Services and Climate, ensuring the effective delivery of high-performing statutory services whilst shaping sustainable, inclusive and resilient places across South Lanarkshire.

Key tasks and responsibilities:

- Provide strategic leadership and direction for Planning, Regulatory Services and Climate, ensuring delivery of council priorities and statutory responsibilities.
- Lead the Council's planning, regulatory and climate functions to support sustainable economic growth, environmental sustainability, community wellbeing and the creation of successful places.
- Fulfil the statutory role of Chief Planning Officer and provide professional advice to elected members, senior officers and partner organisations on planning, regulatory and climate matters.
- Ensure the effective delivery of Planning, Building Standards, Environmental Services, Trading Standards and Climate Change and Sustainability functions in accordance with relevant legislation, policy and professional standards.
- Lead the development and implementation of strategies, policies and programmes that support place-making, sustainability, climate resilience and the reduction of inequalities.

- Drive continuous improvement, innovation and transformation across services to improve outcomes, customer experience and value for money.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with communities, elected members, public sector partners, businesses, developers and regulatory agencies.
- Ensure effective management of workforce, financial resources, together with appropriate governance, risk management and performance arrangements.
- Promote the positive reputation of South Lanarkshire Council through visible, collaborative and effective leadership.

Essential requirements:

- Educated to degree standard or equivalent in a discipline that is relevant to the functions or equivalent relative experience.
- Ability to demonstrate significant Head of Service or senior management/strategic management experience across a large complex public sector or local government organisation.
- Demonstrates experience of shaping and delivering strategic place-based initiatives, bringing together multiple partners, disciplines and stakeholders to improve outcomes for communities.
- Ability to lead and direct multi-functional teams across the Resource.
- Ability to provide strategic advice and professional leadership within a politically accountable environment.

- Can demonstrate substantial leadership and change management experience, showing excellent strategic, operational and financial management skills across a complex public sector or local government organisation.
- Demonstrates a customer focused approach to service design and delivery aligned to legislative requirements.
- Ability to build effective relationships and work collaboratively with employees, customers and stakeholders to promote a culture of teamwork, accountability and success.
- Shows a strong personal commitment to improving local public services.
- Acts with honesty, integrity and transparency; treats people consistently, fairly and with respect.
- Persistent, tenacious, highly motivated and not easily discouraged.
- Inclusive and supportive team player.
- Works in a flexible, adaptable manner; acts with discretion and tact.

Desirable requirements:

- Chartered Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) or similar accredited professional body relevant to the duties and functions of the post.
- Experience of leading regional or national partnership initiatives.

Behaviours framework

Efficient

- Drives service improvement and innovation by communicating vision and a sense of purpose across area of responsibility.
- Achieves efficiency savings taking account of council objectives and workforce planning requirements whilst improving outcomes for the communities of South Lanarkshire Council.
- Develop services which have a positive impact on the physical environment of South Lanarkshire Council ensuring sustainability of resources.
- Adopt a non bureaucratic approach to service delivery and encourage others to seek simple solutions to achieve objectives.
- Adopt a project management approach when reviewing services and delivering change

Flexible

- Plans for the variability of service demand and resource availability ensuring the system has the resilience and capacity to cope with uncertainty.
- Leads creative approaches in designing services and developing new ways of working which achieve efficiency and improvement.
- Views and presents change as an opportunity to modernise and 'future proof' services.
- Drives change by persuading and influencing others.
- Understands the impact on change on others and becomes a focal point of support and guidance in times of uncertainty.
- Takes responsibility for change and coaches others to do the same.
- Communicates facts to dispel rumours.

Performing

- Focus on strategic long term outcomes, anticipate changes in working practices and effectively manage transitions.
- Works to achieve and vision of customer focus, improvement and excellence within the council, as well as with partners and other stakeholders.
- Gives teams defined structures and clear direction, enabling a strong sense of ownership and personal responsibility for the delivery of outcomes and objectives.
- Health, safety and wellbeing are at the heart of approach and ensure that these principles are understood in the application of your strategic responsibilities.

Working with others

- Spends time building relationships with partners.
- Facilitates elected member involvement and consults with representative groups when formulating strategies.
- Inspires a 'one team' culture.
- Builds networks, locally regionally and nationally to help provide support and expertise by shaping and driving forward agendas and addressing concerns.
- Role models inclusive leadership; respecting colleagues, partners and customers and treating people according to their needs.
- Engages with communities, internal and external partners ensuring the full range of views are taken into account.
- Understands the importance of communication, evaluates its effectiveness and takes steps to improve; leading and encouraging open communication at all levels in the organisation.
- Understand respectful challenge and makes own case whilst recognising the concerns of others.

Leading

- Visible and accessible to employees within your service/area of responsibility.
- Role model for inspirational leadership.
- Builds commitment and engagement to improve team cohesion and outputs.
- Demonstrates sensitivity and good judgement in decision making and relationships.
- Is able to take difficult decisions in complex and challenging situations for the best interests of the service and the council.
- Evaluates resources, options and consequences in decision making.
- Communicates positive messages about the organisation, acting in its best interests and being an ambassador for South Lanarkshire Council.
- Understands the power and authority that comes with the senior manager role and adapts behaviour to ensure interactions with others are positive and empowering.
- Coaches and mentors others and has continuous learning and development as a key priority for the service.

Position requirements

Additional Post requirements

This post has been politically restricted in terms of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

This post is excepted in terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 2003.

Safer recruitment checks

In line with statutory requirements and safer recruitment obligations, we carry out a number of pre-employment checks:

- Asylum and Immigration: right to work in the UK.
- Reference check: external candidates require 2 references, one of which must be from their present or most recent employer; Internal candidates require 1 reference from their current line manager.
- Candidate Disclosure Scotland check (where applicable.)

Recruitment checks

To support an efficient recruitment process, candidates are asked to provide any requested information or documentation as soon as possible.

All applications for this post are online

Please note all correspondence will be sent to your email address.



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Further information

You can find more detailed information about the council, its priorities and its policies by following these links:

[South Lanarkshire Council website](#)

[Council departments](#)

[Council performance](#)

[Connect – council plan](#)

[Plans and policies](#)

[South Lanarkshire councillors and committees](#)

[South Lanarkshire View](#)

[South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture](#)

[South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership](#)

[South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership](#)



If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

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