**MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL**

**BIODIVERSITY OFFICER**

**(3 Year Contract)**

**INFORMATION BOOKLET**

**Closing Date not later than 4.00p.m on Thursday 25th April 2024**

# MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL

# THE ORGANISATION

Mayo County Council is at the heart of the local community and is the key driver of economic and social development in Mayo.

As the democratic leader of the County, we represent the people while delivering vital public services to a population of over 130,000 citizens in the areas of housing, roads transportation, planning, environment, economic and community development, tourism, libraries, fire and emergency response, parks, amenities, heritage, and the arts.

With over 1,200 employees, we offer a wide range of excellent career opportunities for candidates with an interest and passion for working in the public service, both from our headquarters in Castlebar and various district/area offices throughout the County

**Our Mission**

To promote the well-being and quality of life of our citizens and communities in Mayo and to enhance the attractiveness of the County as a place in which to live, work, visit, invest in and enjoy.

**Our Vision**

A County that is Sustainable, Inclusive, Prosperous and Proud.

**Our Approach**

To continue to develop a team with the required culture, leadership, skills, drive and understanding to deliver key projects and programs.

* We aim to be citizen centred, reduce bureaucracy, and be responsive to competing needs.
* We build stable communities using an integrated approach to the development and implementation of Physical, Social and Economic Policies.
* Our policies are informed through meaningful engagement,

# BIODIVERSITY OFFICER

# THE ROLE

The Biodiversity Officer will promote, manage and co-ordinate biodiversity related activities in the county. 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 County Mayo and requires an ability to engage with the public as part of a team within Mayo County Council. The Biodiversity Officer will also be responsible for making funding applications and project delivery in relation to biodiversity.

# BIODIVERSITY OFFICER

# QUALIFICATIONS

1. **CHARACTER:**

Candidates shall be of good character.

1. **HEALTH:**

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

1. **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.

(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.

(c) possess a high standard of technical training relevant to the areas of natural sciences and natural resources management; and

(d) have a satisfactory knowledge of public service organisation or the ability to acquire such knowledge.

# BIODIVERSITY OFFICER

# PARTICULARS

1. **POSITION:**

This position is a 3-year contract. A panel will be formed from qualified candidates from which any permanent or temporary positions at this grade which arise during the lifetime of the panel may be filled. This is a pensionable whole-time position on the basis of a 35-hour 5 day week. The role may involve flexible working hours and may include evening and weekend work.

**2.** **SALARY:**

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

**SALARY SCALE:**

€55,519, €57,540, €59,560, €61,583, €63,607, €65,628, €67,652, €69,665, €71,698, €73,713, €76,038 LSI I (after 3 years satisfactory service at maximum) €77,176 LSI II (after 6 years satisfactory service at maximum).

The starting pay for new entrants will be at the minimum of the scale and the rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy.

**3. DUTIES:**

The duties of the employment are to give to:

Mayo County Council under the control of the Chief Executive or his nominee and to any other local authority or body with which an agreement has been made by the local authority, under the general direction and control of the  Chief Executive or of such other employee as the Chief Executive may from time to time determine, such appropriate  services of an administrative, technical, supervisory or management 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, and to exercise such powers, functions and duties as may be delegated to him or her by the Chief Executive from time to time including the duty of servicing all committees that may be established by any such local authority or body.  The holder of the employment will, if required, act for an employee of a higher level, if qualified to do so.

**Biodiversity Officer duties include but are not limited to the following:**

1. Prepare, manage, and implement a Local Authority Biodiversity Action Plan in parallel with the County Heritage Plan and with cross referencing to the County Climate Action Plan.
2. Establish a County Biodiversity Working Group.
3. 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.
4. Advise the Local Authority on biodiversity related issues and the Authority’s obligations in relation to protecting biodiversity (conducting Appropriate Assessments is beyond the scope of this role).
5. 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.
6. Assist Local Authority departments in integrating biodiversity into their actions and policies, for example through training, supporting information dissemination.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. Commission biodiversity related research, audits and surveys and provide data obtained to the NBDC and NPWS in a suitable format for reporting purposes.
10. Apply for and deliver biodiversity projects under the Heritage Council funding and National Biodiversity Action Plan and other sources available sources of funding.
11. 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.
12. 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 to him/her from time to time and to contribute to the development of the post while in office.

1. **COMPETENCIES:**

Candidates for the post must demonstrate that they have competency and skills in the following areas. Application forms should include two practical examples which demonstrates these competencies. Interviews will be competency based and marks will be awarded under these skills sets.

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| **Management & Change** | * Displays the ability to think and act strategically to ensure the local authority meets its purpose, mission, and vision. * Incorporates opportunities into the strategic planning process and identifies potential obstacles related to the objectives. * Uses a variety of methods (including research, external expertise, and environmental scanning) to understand how external factors may affect strategic objectives. * Evaluates and improves strategic performance through the use of Service Indicators, Internal Performance Indicators, benchmarking and continuous improvement. * Adjusts strategic direction and policy in response to critical new information. * Engages in departmental and cross-departmental consultation in the development and integration of the objectives. |
| **Delivering Quality Outcomes & Ensuring Compliance** | * Organises the delivery of services to meet or exceed the required standard through collaborating with, instructing and motivating stakeholders and by managing resources effectively. * Develops and implements quality assurance measures to achieve compliance with performance standards or benchmarks. * Critically evaluates outcomes and processes used to achieve them. * Is aware of and understands relevant legislation, regulations and policies. * Refers to relevant professional documents as required. |
| **Personal Effectiveness** | * Keeps up with current development, trends, and best practice in area of expertise and responsibility. * Demonstrates an understanding of the components of the role. * Uses appropriate strategies to address areas for development, including seeking new experiences and challenges. * Has effective verbal and written communication skills. * Has good interpersonal skills. * Identifies areas for improvement and develops them further. * Operates effectively in an environment with significant complexity and pace. |

**Candidates will also be assessed at interview on the basis of how they demonstrate their Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development**

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| **Specialist Knowledge,**  **Expertise and Self Development** | * Knowledge and understanding of the role of Biodiversity Officer. * Range and depth of experience relevant to the post. * Specialist knowledge, expertise in previous & current working environment. * Understanding of local government legislation, local government policy. * A clear understanding of Health and Safety Policy and Procedures. |

**5. RESIDENCE:**

Holders of the position shall reside in the district in which his/her duties are to be performed or within a reasonable distance thereof.

**6. ANNUAL LEAVE:**

Annual leave entitlement is **30** days per year.

**7. TRAVEL:**

Mayo County Council reserves the right to provide a van to enable you to carry out your duties. The provision of a van will be at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

**8.** **SHORTLISTING**:

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill existing and future vacancies to the position. While candidates may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, Mayo County Council may decide that a number only will be called to interview. A shortlisting process will apply whereby a group of applicants will be selected for interview who, based on an examination of the documents provided by each applicant, appear to be the most suitable for the position.

This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates who are, prima facie, better qualified and/or have more relevant experience.

In the event of a shortlisting exercise being employed, The shortlisting process can take the form of:

* Shortlisting of candidates on the basis of information contained in their application form (It is therefore in the interests of each candidate to provide a detailed and accurate account of his/her qualifications/ experience on the 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.

9. APPOINTMENT:

Candidates whose names are on a panel and who satisfy the Local Authority that they possess the qualifications declared for the position and that they are otherwise suitable for employment may within the life of the panel be employed as relevant vacancies arise. The life of the panel will be one year from the date of its establishment.

The local authority shall require a person to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month and if he/she fails to take up the appointment within such period or such longer period as the local authority in its absolute discretion may determine, the local authority shall not appoint him/her.

**10.** **REFERENCES/DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE:**

Each candidate will be required to submit as references the names and addresses of two responsible persons to whom they are well known but not related. Candidates will be required to submit documentary evidence to the Local Authority in support of their application.

**11.** **SUPERANNUATION:**

As an employee of Mayo County Council, you will be assessed in terms of which Pension Scheme is applicable to you. You will become a member and contribute to the relevant scheme as outlined below:

1. Persons who become pensionable employees of a local authority under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration and 3% of pensionable remuneration.
2. Persons who become pensionable employees of a local authority under the Local Government (superannuation) (consolidation) scheme, 1998 and who are liable to pay 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 State Pension Contributory payable at the maximum rate to a person with no adult dependant or qualified children).
3. Persons who become pensionable employees of a local authority under the Local Government (superannuation) (consolidation) scheme, 1998 and who are liable to pay 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.

Persons who become pensionable employees of a local authority under the Local Government (superannuation) (consolidation) scheme, 1998 may be required to contribute to the Dependants Pension Scheme.

In order, to qualify for a pension, they must have served a minimum of two years (24 months) employment in an approved public body.

**12.**  **RETIREMENT AGE:**

**CLASS A PRSI**

Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012:

The compulsory retirement age for new entrants as defined by the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 is 70 years. Minimum pension age of 66 years, in line with State Pension age.

Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2004:

There is no mandatory retirement age for ‘New Entrants’ (from 1st April, 2004 and before January 2013) to the Public service as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2004. The minimum age at which a person may retire is 65. As a ‘New Entrant’ to the public service, under the terms of this legislation, new entrants will not be required to retire on grounds of age.

Anyone who is not a New Entrant to the public service, as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (miscellaneous provisions) Act 2004, who has joined before 1st April 2004, is subject to a compulsory retirement age of 70 as per CLS2/2019 but can retire from 60 years of age.

**CLASS D PRSI**

Minimum retirement age will be 60 years with compulsory retirement age of 70 years.

**13.** **BASE:**

Assignment of base shall be at the absolute discretion of Mayo County Council.

**14. REQUIREMENT TO DRIVE**

Candidates shall be required to possess a full current category B Driving Licence without any endorsements.

**15. PROBATION:**

Where a person who is not already a permanent employee of a Local Authority is employed, the following provisions shall apply:

1. there shall be a period after such employment takes effect during which such person shall hold such position on probation.
2. such period shall be for six months, but the Chief Executive may at his or her discretion extend such period.
3. such person will cease to hold such position at the end of the period of probation unless during such period the Chief Executive has certified that the service of such person is satisfactory.
4. the period at (a) above may be terminated on giving one weeks’ notice as per the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts.
5. there may be assessment(s) during the probationary period.

**16. MEDICALS:**

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.

**17.** **GARDA VETTING:**

Offer of employment may be subject to a Garda vetting process. Failure to pass Garda vetting will result in employment being terminated with immediate effect.

**18. CANVASSING WILL DISQUALIFY:**

Any attempt by a candidate (or by any persons acting on their behalf) to canvass or other otherwise influence any officer of the Council (or persons nominated by it to interview or examine applicants) in the candidates’ favour either directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise, will automatically disqualify the applicant for consideration for the position.

**19. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION:**

Mayo County Council is committed to protecting your personal data and we comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Acts, 1988 – 2018, and the General Data Protection Regulation.

**Basis for Processing your Personal Information**

The basis for processing your personal data is to process your application for the position you have applied for with Mayo County Council under the Terms of the Employment (Information) Act 1994 and Human Resources Department policies and procedures.

When your application form is received, we create a computer record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied on our application form. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. You are entitled to obtain at any time, a copy of information about you, which is kept on record.

**Sharing of Information**

Outside of the HR recruitment team, the information provided in your application form will only be shared for progressing the competition for which you have applied for, with a designated shortlisting and/or interview board.

If, following the competition, you are deemed a qualified candidate and offered a position, the information provided in your application form will form part of your Personnel File.

Furthermore, should you be offered a position and subsequently confirm your interest in the position, the information provided on your application form will be used to request service record and employment references.

**Storage Period**

Your application will be retained for two years from the date of the competition. Applications that are not progressed to interview stage will be destroyed.

**NOTES:**

Applicants are reminded that any attempt by themselves or by any persons acting on their behalf directly or indirectly by means of written communication or otherwise to canvass or otherwise influence in the applicants favour any employee of the County Council or persons nominated by the Chief Executive to interview or examine applicants, will automatically disqualify the applicant for the position they are seeking.