

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Head of Place Strategy
MANAGED BY:	Head of Strategy & Innovation
GRADE:	HoS 1

BACKGROUND

The West of England Combined Authority is seeking to appoint a Head of Place Strategy to join the Strategy & Innovation team.

This is an exciting time to join the West of England Combined Authority. In the last year nearly three quarters of a billion pounds of new investment has been secured for the region. New plans are in place to deliver on Mayoral priorities to improve transport, skills and housing for our residents, take decisive action to tackle the climate emergency, and to support communities facing the cost-of-living crisis. There is a relentless focus on delivery to put the West of England on the map for regional, national and global success.

Led by the regional Metro Mayor, the West of England Combined Authority brings together three local councils, the Local Enterprise Partnership and works with communities, other public services, and industry to deliver for the region.

Come and help shape the future of the West of England, a place so many people are proud to call home.

THE ROLE

Reporting into the Head of Strategy & Innovation, the Head of Place Strategy will lead the development of the spatial approach to delivering the region's ambition to deliver improvements for people and communities across the West of England, strengthening our economic resilience and ensuring we meet our environmental ambitions.

They will:

- Lead work to ensure the different challenges and opportunities of the places that make up the West of England are reflected in our ambitions for the region.
- Lead delivery of the Metro Mayor's priorities on housing and identify opportunities to ensure spatial planning is appropriately reflected in delivery of mayoral priorities around environment, transport, business, and skills.
- Working with the Environment Directorate to develop existing and new activity to set the strategic direction for housing, planning and land-use to address the

challenges we face in supporting sustainable growth, affordable housing development and liveable communities.

- Work flexibly across projects liaising with colleagues across the Combined Authority and in central and local government.
- Work with the Unitary Authority housing and spatial planning leads at Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire to support and develop a strategic approach the housing and planning across the region.
- Work with the Business & Skills directorate to develop thinking around high street regeneration and set the direction for future investment decisions.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategy development & project management

- Developing the Combined Authority's strategic approach to housing, planning and regeneration (including of high streets) to deliver the Metro Mayor's priorities in this area.
- Identifying synergies and developing opportunities to drive forward wider priorities through the housing and planning agenda including environment, transport, business and skills.
- Providing oversight for programmes led within Strategy & Innovation with a focus on housing and planning.
- Project management of our core housing and planning activity.
- Leading programmes and projects as directed by Head of Strategy & Innovation, shaping options for delivery in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

External engagement

- Building a relationship with Unitary Authority planning leads to provide strategic input on relevant issues.
- Develop and maintain high level strategic relationships with Government and other key stakeholders in the housing and planning sector.
- Drive forward regional and Metro Mayoral priorities by working with key stakeholders to coordinate activity, influencing national policy and practice.
- To represent the Combined Authority on housing and planning issues and input to a range national organisations and forums and/or support CEOs/Mayors in their engagement.

Management

- Management of the Combined Authority's work on strategic housing and planning, including establishing and managing a small team of policy officers.
- Managing relationships across the Combined Authority and externally with Government and Unitary Authorities on housing and planning activity.
- Management of relevant budgets.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Educated to degree level or able to demonstrate equivalent experience.
- Excellent knowledge and experience of the national, regional and local housing and planning landscape and the role of devolved Mayoral Authorities.

Experience

- Significant experience of working in a complex stakeholder environment, with a housing, planning or land-use focus, at a senior level and can demonstrate ability to develop and maintain effective relationships.
- Proven leadership and consensus building in a complex, multi-stakeholder environment.
- Experience of leading the development of housing and planning strategies and policies to strengthen regional economies and to support sustainable housing growth and land use.
- Significant experience of working with and advising senior officers and elected representatives.
- Significant experience of working with and influencing national government.
- Drafting high-quality documents, suitable for publication.
- Significant experience of managing Boards, steering groups or committees with senior leaders in a public-sector context.

Skills and Competencies

- Leadership qualities - able to build trust, confidence and engagement with housing and planning development processes, making a positive contribution to the achievement of the region's strategic planning objectives.
- Possess excellent interpersonal skills and ability to motivate staff and other managers.
- Persuasive individual who can challenge effectively so that others see another point of view.
- Demonstrate the ability to work accurately under pressure with frequent changes of priority.
- Have demonstrated the ability to work with initiative and plan work for the team to meet conflicting and changing priorities.
- Proven ability for verbal and written communication skills, consistent with operating at elected official and Senior Management level.

DESIRABLE

Qualifications and Knowledge

- *Understanding of strategic housing and planning landscape in the West of England.*

REWARDS AND BENEFITS

Alongside a competitive salary, we offer an excellent benefits package including:

- 26 days Annual Leave plus bank holidays
- Generous Employer-Contribution Pension Scheme through the Avon Pension Fund
- Cycle to work scheme and secure bike parking
- Free eye tests for all display screen equipment (DSE) users
- Discounted monthly bus tickets
- Hybrid working to split your week between the office and home to help you achieve the best work/life balance and career goals.

We are about to move into a new bright, airy, modern office space, with all latest technology, under a 10 minute walk from Bristol Temple Meads Train Station. We offer flexible and hybrid working options too if you would rather work from home, or another suitable location.

As an equal opportunities employer, we invite applicants to contact us to identify any additional support they may need during the recruitment process.

WE PAY THE LIVING WAGE

We're proud to have been accredited as a Living Wage Employer

Living Wage accreditation means that everyone working at The West of England and Combined Authority receives a minimum hourly wage of £9.90 - higher than the government minimum for over 23s, **currently £9.50 per hour**



It also means that anyone who provides services to, or has contracts with us, must pay the Living Wage, setting the bar for good employer practices in the region. This includes those who provide services to The West of England and Combined Authority, such as cleaning and facilities management contracts, as well as those who have contracts with us - such as IT providers.