

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	Digital Connectivity Lead
<b>MANAGED BY:</b>	Programme Manager – Digital Innovation & Transformation
<b>GRADE:</b>	10

## BACKGROUND

The West of England Combined Authority is building a dedicated team to accelerate infrastructure investment and deployment. We are seeking to appoint a **Digital Connectivity Lead** to join the **Strategy & Innovation Directorate**.

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.

**You will be a key player in creatively and collaboratively tackling our region's biggest challenges. By delivering improved digital connectivity for people and businesses across the region you will help ensure that our residents will benefit from fast, reliable broadband and the adoption of new technologies.**

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

## THE ROLE

Our Digital Plan sets out our regional ambitions for place-based digital transformation. Better digital infrastructure is fundamental as many communities do not have the broadband or mobile connectivity they need. Without the right infrastructure people risk being left behind as digital infrastructure supports people's lives, our economy and regional ambitions.

The Digital Plan sets out our Digital Infrastructure targets:

- Meet and exceed 85% gigabit connectivity by 2025 across the West of England
- Maximise number of premises which have at least superfast coverage by 2026
- Maximise 4G and 5G coverage and capacity
- Boost community-based connectivity

Delivery of these targets will require significant and challenging coordination between the Combined Authority, the Councils and our regional partners, including telecoms providers

and Government. Understanding how the public and private sectors can work together effectively to roll-out better connectivity is hugely important for the success of this role.

This is a varied, pivotal role working in the Strategic Innovation team and reporting to the Digital Innovation & Transformation Programme Manager. The post-holder will join the new project delivery team, shaping and leading projects designed to ensure everyone in our region is well-connected with access to fast, reliable and affordable digital connectivity.

The post-holder will lead a range of initiatives designed to make our region an attractive investment proposition and ensure that telecoms deployment is easy, fast and cheap for all involved. By creating the systemic conditions required to improve digital connectivity across the West of England, they will be helping to tackle digital exclusion and strengthen economic resilience.

In addition to telecoms experience, the post-holder will be delivery-focused and skilled at building trusted partnerships – they will be working closely with teams across the Combined Authority, Unitary Authorities, the Telecoms Industry, Government and with other sectors such as health, transport, education and energy.

This role provides a real breadth of possibility, and hence we are looking to recruit as diverse a skill set as we can. Beyond the technical skills listed in the person specification, what we really need is:

- Critical or lateral thinking leading to creative solutions
- Someone sees the big picture, but can also break it down into real-world deliverables
- Focus on impact, highly collaborative and passionate about ensuring that place-based digital transformation has a positive impact across our region
- Curiosity and a desire for continuous learning – digital is not a static sector
- Someone who can be vocal and visible professionally, in whatever way works for you
- Ability to communicate complex issues to a variety of audiences, both technical and non-technical

If this sounds like you, we'd encourage you to apply and show us why you'd be a good fit for the role.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The successful candidate will be expected to work flexibly on relevant projects as they arise. Core responsibilities will include:

- Act as the main point of contact or 'account manager' for the telecoms industry and Government on issues related to digital infrastructure, and work closely with unitary authority stakeholders involved in the telecoms deployment process.
- Translate the Combined Authority's new Digital Infrastructure Action Plan into a pipeline of deliverable projects, building partnerships and securing funding to drive better digital connectivity across the West of England.
- Lead project delivery, managing budgets and resources, and mobilise and galvanise delivery partners, ensuring there are up-to-date and appropriate project plans which can be used to evaluate, monitor and report and forecast delivery against agreed outcomes and milestones.

- Engage stakeholders and communicate effectively, including the preparation of briefings for senior leaders and the Mayor, and raising awareness of our digital connectivity ambitions and wider Digital Plan.
- Identify and develop opportunities for digital infrastructure / better connectivity to enable delivery of wider mayoral priorities across transport, nature and the environment and clean, inclusive growth.
- Represent the team locally, regionally and nationally promoting the West of England's ambitions and advocating for projects amongst senior leaders, officers, other key stakeholders and wider beneficiaries.
- Line management of team members, this includes (but not limited to) objective setting, performance management/appraisals and providing leadership, mentoring and coaching / support through regular 1-2-1s and any other duties commensurate to the grade.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

#### Qualifications and Knowledge

- Substantial knowledge of the following:
  - Telecoms sector and digital connectivity (fixed, mobile and wireless)
  - How Local Government can support the deployment of digital connectivity effectively to ensure residents have the connectivity they need
- Knowledge and experience of applied project management methodologies.
- Educated to degree level, or equivalent, or able to demonstrate equivalent professional experience in a relevant sector.
- Knowledge of the regional policy context, national policies and latest thinking on digital infrastructure / telecoms sector and how this will impact the work of this role.

#### Experience

- Operating at a strategic level within and across complex organisations – telecoms knowledge is essential for this role.
- Leading digital connectivity improvement projects and digital infrastructure rollout.
- Project delivery and managing resources, outputs and stakeholder expectations to agreed baseline (e.g. time, cost, quality).
- Convening and managing delivery partnerships, developing strong stakeholder networks in the public, private and third sectors.
- Successfully securing funding via grant funding bids, business cases and/or investment propositions.

#### Skills and Competencies

- Understand and articulating the connectivity needs of residents and local businesses.
- Partnership working and collaborative delivery to achieve shared outcomes.
- Leading project teams, delivery partnerships and external contractors to maximise delivery and impact of projects/programmes.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, able to translate complex information into clear, engaging and high-quality reports for a variety of audiences.

## DESIRABLE

- Professional project management qualification (such as PMQ, PRINCE2 or MSP).
- Knowledge or experience in one or more of the following: place-based digital transformation, digital ecosystems and digital inclusion
- Knowledge of the West of England Combined Authority and Local Enterprise Partnership and how they contribute to delivering better outcomes for the region.
- Experience of local and UK government policies, practices and procedures.
- Experience of telecoms infrastructure funding and BDUK bids.
- An understanding of public funding, including the principles and application of Subsidy Control / State Aid legislation.
- Delivery of innovation and/or R&D projects.

## 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 have recently moved 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 £15.17 – higher than the government minimum for over 23s, currently £10.42 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 cleaning and facilities management contracts, as well as those who have contracts with us – such as IT providers.



## WE ARE A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE GOOD EMPLOYMENT CHARTER

We're proud to have been accredited as a founding Member of the West of England Good Employment Charter.

The [Good Employment Charter](#) is a voluntary membership and accreditation scheme aimed to create an active network of employers within the West of England that are committed to supporting the basis of 'good work'. The Good Employment Charter is defined by seven key characteristics of good employment: recruitment, secure work, Real Living Wage, developing people, health & wellbeing, flexible work and engagement & voice.

