

AMBITIOUS

CREATIVE

COLLABORATIVE

SUPPORTIVE

JOB DESCRIPTION

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| JOB TITLE: | Infrastructure Specialist (Principal Planning Officer) |
| MANAGED BY: | Strategic Planning Lead |
| GRADE: | Grade 10 LTC until end of August 2022. |

BACKGROUND

The Employer: The West of England Combined Authority (WECA)

The West of England is an economic leader with an economy worth over £33 billion a year. With a population of over 1.1 million people, one of the highest rates of employment in the country, and over 45,000 businesses, the region competes on a global scale. The West of England is a place where highly-skilled people work, where ideas flourish, and where businesses grow. It's also a place that a diverse population of people call home.

The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) was formed in 2017, to champion the region and drive clean and inclusive economic growth. As a result, significant powers and funding have been transferred to the region through the new Combined Authority and West of England Mayor.

Our aim is to deliver economic growth for the region and address some of our challenges, such as productivity and skills, housing and transport.

WECA is made up of three of the local authorities in the region - Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Building on a strong track record of partnership working in the region, the West of England Combined Authority continues to work closely with North Somerset Council. The Combined Authority also the accountable body for the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership.

WECA is an equal opportunities employer, in line with the Equalities Act 2010, and invite applicants to contact us to identify any additional support they may need during the recruitment process.

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

The purpose of this job is to act, under the guidance of the Strategic Planning Lead, as the Principal Planning Officer to support the West of England Combined Authority strategic planning activities, with a particular focus on employment land. The postholder

will also be working closely with the Principal Economist on matters relating to the Local Industrial Strategy.

To contribute at a senior professional level to, the formulation, implementation, monitoring and review of strategic planning policies and to work with the unitary authorities and LEP on joint planning work.

The post holder will be responsible for supporting the Strategic Planning Lead and relevant partners in developing the agenda and reports related to Planning and Housing for the Joint Committee, Planning and Housing Board, and for undertaking or commissioning projects and initiatives identified in the work programmes of these groups.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Provide support to the Strategic Planning Lead to:

- Develop the West of England policy response to National Policy and initiatives, including revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework, proposed wider planning reforms and any emerging planning policy review.
- Lead and scope strategic planning work and project teams to deliver strategic policy and plans with a particular focus on Infrastructure sufficiency, opportunity, and other spatial and infrastructural needs relevant to strategic priorities including clean and inclusive recovery and growth.
- Project manage and lead on work on the Infrastructure and Investment Delivery Plan that will set out the scale, and phasing of delivery, alongside a strategy for targeting investment of WECA, UAs and other public sector bodies to optimise the delivery of infrastructure and other investment in relation to strategic objectives.
- To assist in supporting business cases to leverage in funding opportunities including private sector funding.
- Explore delivery and funding models and opportunities including mechanisms for the pooling of resources and other strategic tools.

Develop key partnerships with the Unitary Authorities and our partners to:

- prepare reports and presentations for Committees and other public meetings.
- ensure that there is participation by stakeholders, community interest groups and others in the development, review and implementation of the Combined Authority's strategies, policies and schemes.
- procure and manage technical input and expertise in the commissioning of consultancy work for housing and planning policies and projects.
- assist in any other areas of comparable work as may be required by the Head of Regional Housing and Planning because of workloads and priorities.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Qualified to degree standard or equivalent in relevant subject.
- High level numeracy skills and ability to present complex arguments in a clear and understandable manner.
- Understanding of key local government politics, political structures and culture.

Experience

- Experience and proven ability of delivering relevant strategic planning policy work from evidence base development through to examination, adoption and implementation, notably that relate to infrastructure delivery plans, other planning policy support for infrastructure sufficiency and spatial strategy development more generally.
- Experience of supporting masterplanning and infrastructure planning work in private or public sector, understanding the role of infrastructure in the delivery of wider strategic objectives including growth as well as site level interdependencies.
- Experience of developing and delivering infrastructure projects and programmes including associated project management.
- Experience in partnership working, developing and maintaining effective sub-regional inter-authority and cross-sectoral partnerships to deliver and co-ordinate relevant work area across service, professional, administrative and organisational boundaries.
- Experience of working in a political environment, including with senior local authority members, and officers.
- Experience of project managing consultants and other team members to deliver expected outputs in relation to a broader programme.
- Demonstrable understanding of the national, regional and local planning policy context with the ability to translate this into effective co-ordination of joint working arrangements in the sub-region.

Skills and Competencies

- Good analytical skills in relation to interdependencies
- Ability to communicate effectively with elected Members, colleagues at all levels across the Authority and members of the public.
- Ability to prioritise workload to achieve desired outcomes and meet deadlines.
- Ability to give advice and, when necessary, negotiate assertively but with tact and diplomacy.
- Good organisation skills and ability to promote an organised working environment.

DESIRABLE

- Higher level degree or post graduate qualification
- Relevant professional qualification.

- Membership of the RTPI or at least eligibility for membership

REWARDS AND BENEFITS

WECA staff receive:

- 25 days annual leave, rising to 30 after five years' continuous service, plus bank holidays, pro rata
- Auto-enrolment into the Avon Pension Fund
- Cycle to work scheme and secure bike parking
- Free eye tests for all display screen equipment (DSE) users
- Commuter Travel Club - WECA employees can sign up to receive discounted monthly bus tickets, unlimited bus travel for work or leisure within your chosen zone, automatic ticket renewal and price freeze for 12 months.