

WHERE
CAREERS
THRIVE

When potential
is unlocked,
talent *thrives*



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Job description and person specification

Executive Director Place, Economy and Environment

Thank you for your interest in this role. Our vision at West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is: 'to make West Northants a great place to live, work, visit and thrive'.

We truly stand by this and work hard every day to make this a reality, and at WNC it's about our people. People who thrive with ambition, bring new ideas, demand better ways of working, care about every detail, and who never shy away from a challenge.

Our culture is a gateway for new experiences. A place to forge new opportunities. To empower you in your career and unite you with like-minded people. When potential is unlocked, talent thrives.



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Purpose and impact:

The Executive Director for Place, Economy & Environment holds one of the most influential leadership roles within West Northamptonshire Council, shaping the future of a growing, ambitious and dynamic area. As a key member of the Executive Leadership Team, the post holder provides strategic clarity, direction and inspiration across a diverse portfolio that includes planning, regeneration, economic development, major capital programmes, highways, transport, waste, environmental improvement, property and facilities management. This is a rare opportunity to lead a system that directly influences how people live, work, travel and experience the places around them.

At its heart, the role turns the ambition of the One West Northamptonshire Plan into visible, tangible outcomes. The Executive Director develops and champions a long-term place-shaping vision rooted in evidence, aligned with local needs, national policy and the shared aspirations of partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors. They help create the conditions for sustainable economic growth, attracting investment, strengthening business ecosystems, and ensuring that opportunities reach all communities.

The role is also central to designing and delivering high-quality, resilient and inclusive places. This includes leading the development of the Local Plan to 2043, shaping town centres, neighbourhoods and rural areas, enhancing the public realm, and ensuring infrastructure keeps pace with growth. Environmental stewardship is core—improving air quality, embedding sustainability, protecting and enhancing our historic environment and driving nature recovery across services and regeneration programmes.

Partnership leadership is fundamental. The Executive Director strengthens regional collaboration, including WNC's role hosting former LEP functions, unlocking greater impact from investment and strategic economic planning and secure the best outcomes for residents, businesses and the wider region.

Ultimately, this is a role for a bold, visionary and delivery-focused leader, someone who can harness the full potential of West Northamptonshire, drive measurable improvements across place-based services, and help shape a thriving, confident and forward-looking area for decades to come, ensuring that the Council's strategic priorities are fully realised through effective partnership, high-quality delivery and a relentless focus on outcomes.

It is an exciting time to join. Following the success of Local Government Reorganisation, we are now looking ahead with confidence, strengthening our role in the region and across the Ox-Cam Corridor. We are growing our reputation for international sporting events, attracting the best developers and investors into our town centres, drawing some of the world's to businesses to the area and continuing to improve the quality of all our services.

The job however is far from complete. In this role you will sit on the board at Silverstone, work closely with Government, leading UK universities, and outstanding businesses to drive the area forward. You will lead our major regeneration plans working alongside the English Cities Fund, Capital and Centric, and Cityheart, and some of the country's top housing developers. You will chair the inter-agency coordination for the Formula 1 Grand Prix; oversee one of the most significant changes to waste services in Northamptonshire's history, shape the next phase of the Local Plan, and guide the area through its journey toward devolution and its evolving position within the Ox-Cam Corridor.

Accountable to:

Chief Executive.

Responsibilities:

1. Strategic Leadership & Management

- Provide strategic direction and authoritative leadership across all areas of the Place, Economy and Environment portfolio.
- Lead transformation and culture change, creating high performing, resilient and inclusive teams.
- Ensure evidence based decision making using data driven insight, horizon scanning and robust analysis.
- Hold senior leaders accountable for performance, budgets, customer outcomes and delivery assurance.
- Provide clear, trusted advice to the Chief Executive, ELT, Members and partners.
- Support the Chief Executive in relation to emergency planning and resilience, providing support for the co-ordination of all measures to manage an emergency affecting the Council during the response and recovery phases.
- Demonstrate and positively reinforce the Council's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk and looked after children.

2. Planning, Growth & Infrastructure

- Lead the production and delivery of the **Local Plan for West Northamptonshire to 2043**, ensuring it is sound, ambitious and aligned to strategic outcomes.
- Ensure planning services are high performing, customer focused and commercially aware.
- Shape strategic infrastructure priorities (transport, utilities, digital, energy) and secure investment through government and partners.
- Use planning policy, design quality standards and development frameworks to secure high quality, sustainable and accessible places.

3. Regeneration & Major Projects

- Lead the design and delivery of major regeneration programmes, including town centre renewal, key gateways and strategic employment locations.

- Secure and manage funding streams (Towns Fund, Pride in Place, capital funding, private investment).
- Oversee programme and project delivery, risk, benefits realisation and milestone performance.
- Build strong partnerships with developers, investors, institutions, industry bodies and community stakeholders.

4. Economy, Investment & Skills

- Lead the delivery of the **Economic Growth Strategy**, focusing on priority sectors (advanced manufacturing, life sciences, clean energy, advanced logistics, motorsport, creative/digital).
- Grow local business ecosystems, attract new investment and support innovation, productivity and entrepreneurship.
- Oversee the integration of Careers Hub and Growth Hub functions, Connect to Work and Skills Bootcamp programmes ensuring residents and businesses benefit from aligned skills and economic development programmes.
- Strengthen the visitor economy, destination profile and Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) activity.

5. Environment, Sustainability & Waste

- Drive practical environmental improvements across place services, improving air quality, public realm, energy efficiency and resilience.
- Oversee delivery of the Resources & Waste Strategy, ensuring harmonisation, efficiency, increased recycling and customer satisfaction.
- Embed circular economy principles across waste, regeneration and asset management.

6. Assets, Property & Commercial Management

- Set and deliver a modern, evidence based asset management strategy.
- Ensure assets deliver community benefit, revenue optimisation and best value capital receipts.
- Shape commercial opportunities (property, regeneration vehicles, traded services) that enable reinvestment into priority services.

7. Partnerships, Governance & Reputation

- Act as WNC's lead representative with MP's, businesses, developers, investors, government departments, universities and regional partners.
- Lead WNC's role hosting LEP functions across the South East Midlands, creating a strong sub-regional economic platform.
- Maintain strong governance, risk management, compliance and performance frameworks.
- Influence national and regional policy, ensuring West Northamptonshire's priorities are understood and supported.

8. Political Interface and Member Relations

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with elected Members, working with Members to foster a positive and productive Member/officer interface across the council.
- Work with, advise and support elected Members in formulating appropriate strategies and plans to deliver modern, efficient and effective services.
- Promote a culture of political awareness amongst officers to help translate political will into appropriate future strategies and delivery of objectives.

9. Equality, Inclusion, Wellbeing & Organisational Culture

- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion across services, leadership and decision making.
- Promote a healthy, motivated and resilient workforce culture.
- Ensure safe, compliant services meeting legal, regulatory and ethical standards.

Any other duties commensurate with the level of seniority and at the discretion of the line manager.

Executive Director/Director Standard Responsibilities:

1. Culture & wellbeing

Responsible for the establishment and maintenance of a positive organisational culture within the directorate, where safety is integral to all activities and wellbeing principles are prioritised, to support a healthy, motivated and resilient workforce.

2. Compliance

Promoting and ensuring compliance across the Directorate with the Council's Constitution and all corporate policies and practice in respect of Equalities, Human Resources, Finance and Contract Procurement across the Directorate.

3. Resources/Financial Management

Accountable for the management of budgets and delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Plan within the Directorate, including the effective use of WNC resources and exercising of strong budgetary control, taking a proactive approach to risk management and business continuity planning on areas of accountability.

4. Governance

Responsible for ensuring sound governance and performance management is in place supporting and contributing to organisational effectiveness, value for money and customer excellence.

5. Health & Safety

Ensuring adherence to corporate health, safety and wellbeing strategy, policies and procedures so that the Council complies with, and fulfils its legal and regulatory obligations.

6. Partnerships

Act as the Councils voice in local and national agendas, forming strong relationships and partnerships that drive forward joined up thinking, better uses of resources and more joined up thinking.

This job description reflects the major tasks to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the major tasks may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

Person specification:

The requirements for the role are outlined below and will be part of the selection process. Each of the criteria listed below will be measured by:

(**A**) Application Form, (**T**) Test, (**I**) Interview, (**P**) Presentation, (**D**) Documentation.

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills experience and qualifications required for this job.

Skills and abilities:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Communicate a compelling strategic vision and convert complex strategy into clear delivery plans.	Essential	A, I, P
Operate with high political awareness, credibility and sound judgement.	Essential	A, I
Excellent written, verbal and visual communication skills.	Essential	A, T, I, P
Strong analytical capability; able to interpret complex data and evidence	Essential	A, T, I
Build high-performing, resilient teams and lead people through uncertainty, transformation and change.	Essential	A, I
Strong commercial acumen; ability to negotiate, influence and drive value and social value.	Essential	A, I
Resilient, outcome focused, decisive under pressure	Essential	I
Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.	Essential	A, I
Personality and credibility that engages and commands the confidence of all stakeholders; building rapport and relationships with ease and quickly gaining trust.	Essential	I

Knowledge:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Broad understanding of local government, public-sector services and the socio-economic context.	Essential	A, I
Good knowledge of planning, place-making, regeneration, infrastructure funding and delivery models.	Essential	A, I
Understanding of economic development, inward investment, sector propositions and business/skills ecosystems.	Essential	A, I
Knowledge of resources & waste strategy, highways/transport policy, FM, property and regulatory services.	Essential	A, I
Strong grasp of governance, risk, commercial and contract management in complex environments.	Essential	A, I

Relevant experience:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Substantial director level leadership in large, complex, multi-stakeholder systems.	Essential	A, I
Track record of delivering in some of the key areas under this remit, for example, regeneration, planning or economic development	Essential	A, I, P
Success securing external funding and investment; working effectively with government and industry	Essential	A, I
Leadership of planning and Local Plan processes. Strategic contract, commissioning and commercial management	Desirable	A, I
Leadership of large multidisciplinary teams and major organisational change.	Essential	A, I
Experience of managing and delivering against both large scale capital and revenue budgets	Essential	A, I

Education, training and work qualifications:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Management qualification or degree and /or significant experience in organisational leadership.	Essential	A, D
Recognised professional qualification in one of the subject areas (e.g. planning, economic development, regeneration, property)	Desirable	A, I, D
Evidence of continuous professional development.	Essential	A, I, D

All appointments are subject to standard pre-employment screening. This will include identity, references, proof of right to work in the UK, medical clearance and verification of certificates.

Day-to-day in the role:

Hours:	37	Primary work base:	Northampton
Job family band:	Strategic Management 15	Worker type:	Part-flexible
Salary range:	£151,368 – 161,559 (pay award pending)	Budget responsibility:	Net Budget £95.3m Capital: c.£106m
People management responsibility:	Directorate Headcount: 589 Direct Reports: 4-6		

Our organisational values and behaviours

Everything we want to achieve for West Northants depends on having the right people in place and doing the right things and we want all colleagues to THRIVE, both personally and professionally. Our values and our behaviours framework underpin how we work and what partners and customers can expect from us. We want to do our very best for our residents, service users and businesses and for our staff – we want everyone to THRIVE.

T Trust	We are honest, fair, transparent and accountable. We can be trusted to do what we say we will.
H High Performing	we get the basics right and what we do, we do well. We manage our business efficiently.
R Respect	we respect each other and our customers in a diverse, professional and supportive environment.
I Innovate	we encourage curiosity, we are creative and seize opportunities to grow individually as an organisation and as an area.
V Value	We continually strive for best practice and ways of improving existing procedures, practices and systems and thereby promoting efficiency and cost effectiveness
E Empower	we believe in people, will listen, learn and trust them to make decisions. We help people to realise their ambitions.

“Valuing colleagues as individuals and encompassing our different perspectives to deliver our collective ambitions. One West inclusive culture”

When potential is unlocked, talent *thrives*

Choose a career that offers you a true sense of achievement, fills you with pride and challenges you in a positive way, everyday.

The benefits of a career at WNC include:

- **People** are at the centre of everything we do. Without our people, we wouldn't be able to deliver services to the people in our community.
 - **Ambition** runs through everything we do at West Northants Council, we nurture and develop our people's ambition and willingness to succeed, to continually improve the service we provide to the community.
 - **Care** is at the heart of West Northants Council, we care in so many ways; seen and unseen, helping our colleagues and community to thrive.
 - **Flexibility** is key, we know work-life balance is critical to wellbeing, so we work hard to make sure our benefits package promotes and improves wellbeing; from annual leave, sick pay, family leave and flexible working, financial security offered by a local government pension scheme and life assurance, and discount schemes which make a difference to your day-to-day life, through to employee helplines offering free legal, health, financial and wellbeing advice and support.
- We want you to have balance and be happy.

