West Midlands Combined Authority

Job Description

Job Title:	Director of Planning and Homes
Directorate/Team:	Major Programmes / Planning and Homes
Location:	16 Summer Lane or other site/location
Responsible to:	Executive Director of Major Programmes
Responsible for:	The Planning and Homes function and associated programme resources, consultancy commissions and multidisciplinary delivery arrangements.
Key working relationships: (internal)	Chief Executive, Mayor and Political Office and Executive Board; Senior leaders and equivalent specialists across WMCA; Housing, transport, economic development, infrastructure, environment, investment, finance, legal and procurement functions; WMCA governance boards and committees
Key working relationships: (external)	Chief Executives and senior officers across constituent and local authorities; Senior officials across HM Government departments, agencies and Homes England; Elected members and political stakeholders; Landowners, developers, investors, infrastructure providers and strategic delivery partners; Professional advisers, consultants, commissioned partners and specialist suppliers; Statutory bodies, regional networks, businesses, communities and representative organisations

Purpose of the Post

The Director of Planning and Homes will provide strategic leadership for the development and delivery of a portfolio of nationally significant growth, regeneration and investment sites across the West Midlands. Working in close collaboration with constituent and non-constituent local authorities, the postholder will build strong partnerships to shape place-based visions, coordinate investment priorities and deliver locally supported masterplans aligned with regional growth ambitions. The role will work closely with Homes England, government departments, landowners, developers, infrastructure providers, investors and local communities to create ambitious, deliverable masterplans that support WMCA priorities for housing delivery, economic growth, transport integration, net zero and inclusive prosperity.

The role will provide strategic leadership for regional housing strategy and homelessness, ensuring an effective and consistent approach to policy, partnership working, investment and regional interventions that deliver improved outcomes for residents.

As a key corporate leader, the postholder will contribute to the development of WMCA strategy, policy and long-term priorities, ensuring that the Planning and Homes portfolio supports wider organisational objectives and regional outcomes. The role will provide system leadership across organisational boundaries, aligning partners, investment and delivery around shared priorities and building organisational and regional capability to deliver sustainable growth.

The postholder will lead the development of a regional approach to placemaking, design excellence and strategic site delivery, ensuring that major development opportunities are transformed into sustainable, connected and thriving communities. Acting as WMCA's lead adviser on master planning and place delivery, the Director will coordinate partners, identify the funding and investment required to enable delivery, remove barriers to development and drive strategic growth projects from concept and vision through to delivery and long-term

stewardship, working with the Commercial and Investment and Property and Estates functions where their specialist accountabilities apply. The role will provide a critical interface between WMCA, local authority partners and delivery organisations, ensuring that local priorities and regional objectives are aligned and translated into successful development outcomes.

Accountabilities

- Lead the development and implementation of a West Midlands-wide Master Planning Programme, creating a coherent pipeline of transformational regeneration, housing, employment and infrastructure projects that support the priorities of the Mayor and WMCA.
- Provide strategic leadership and professional expertise on master planning, placemaking, urban design and development delivery, ensuring that programmes contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
- Work collaboratively with constituent and non-constituent local authorities to develop shared place-based visions, align local and regional priorities and coordinate the planning and delivery of strategic growth locations.
- Lead the development and implementation of regional housing strategy, policy and planning, using evidence of housing need, supply, affordability and delivery to establish priorities and inform regional interventions.
- Lead the strategic coordination of the regional response to homelessness, aligning policy, funding and cross-sector partnerships to support prevention, system improvement and better outcomes for residents.
- Build and maintain strategic partnerships with local authorities, Homes England, government departments, landowners, developers, investors, transport authorities, infrastructure providers, universities and other stakeholders to unlock development and accelerate delivery.
- Ensure that master planning activity is integrated with transport, housing, economic development, environmental sustainability, skills and infrastructure strategies to maximise social, economic and environmental impact.
- Establish and champion standards of design excellence, placemaking quality, accessibility, climate resilience and environmental sustainability across WMCA-supported development.
- Identify and remove strategic barriers to delivery, including land assembly, infrastructure constraints, planning challenges, viability issues and stakeholder conflicts.
- Define the place, development and infrastructure case for strategic sites and work with the Commercial and Investment function to develop investable propositions and business cases capable of attracting appropriate public and private sector investment.
- Provide strategic advice and recommendations to the Executive Director, Chief Executive, Mayor, elected members and senior governance boards on major placemaking, regeneration and development matters.
- Ensure effective governance, assurance, compliance, risk management and performance arrangements are maintained across the Planning and Homes portfolio.
- Be accountable for progressing strategic sites from concept and vision through master planning and development readiness, coordinating with the Property and Estates and Commercial and Investment functions on land, property, investment approval and capital deployment, and ensuring agreed place outcomes and benefits are realised.
- Manage significant resources, budgets, workforce capacity and external commissions to achieve sustainable outcomes, efficiency and value for money.

Responsibilities

Strategic

- Lead the development, delivery and review of a regional master planning strategy aligned with WMCA corporate priorities and regional outcomes for economic growth, housing, regeneration, inclusive growth and environmental sustainability.
- Shape and influence WMCA-wide strategy, policy and business planning, ensuring that master planning, placemaking and strategic development considerations inform wider organisational priorities and investment decisions.

- Lead the development and delivery of a coordinated regional response to housing and homelessness priorities, aligning policy, funding, partnerships and interventions to improve outcomes for residents.
- Shape and promote a long-term vision for place across the West Midlands, ensuring that strategic sites, growth corridors and regeneration opportunities create vibrant, connected and sustainable communities.
- Lead the development of masterplans, spatial frameworks, development strategies and place-based investment plans that guide major sites and locations from vision into delivery and long-term stewardship.
- Champion design excellence, innovation and high-quality placemaking, ensuring exemplary standards in urban design, sustainability, accessibility, biodiversity and community benefit.
- Influence regional and national policy, funding programmes and investment strategies, and lead strategic engagement with government, Homes England, developers, investors and infrastructure providers.
- Anticipate changing political, economic, legislative, environmental and market conditions, translating complexity and ambiguity into clear priorities, advice and delivery responses.
- Establish a prioritised portfolio of sites and programmes aligned with mayoral priorities, market opportunities and regional growth objectives.
- Lead the development of innovative delivery models and implementation strategies that remove barriers and enable masterplans to progress into investable and deliverable schemes.
- Champion the effective use of digital, data and AI-enabled approaches within master planning and place delivery to strengthen judgement, improve decision-making and enhance organisational and development outcomes.

People

- Provide visible and inspirational leadership for the Planning and Homes function, creating a high-performing, inclusive, psychologically safe and delivery-focused culture.
- Lead, empower and develop senior leaders and multidisciplinary professional teams, establishing clear delegated accountability, expectations and lines of sight to delivery outcomes.
- Build organisational capability and leadership capacity across master planning, housing, homelessness, urban design, regeneration and placemaking, developing the next generation of leaders and specialists through succession planning, coaching and professional development.
- Lead workforce and resource planning so that the function can respond flexibly to changing priorities, emerging opportunities and programme requirements.
- Foster a One WMCA approach by building collaborative relationships across directorates and integrating master planning activity with related organisational functions.
- Lead through complex partnership arrangements, aligning public, private and community stakeholders around shared objectives while maintaining constructive challenge and accountability.
- Promote innovation, continuous learning and the sharing of expertise and best practice across WMCA and partner organisations.
- Champion WMCA values, behaviours and leadership expectations, demonstrating integrity, inclusion, care, clarity and courage.

Operational

- Lead and oversee delivery of the strategic Planning and Homes portfolio, ensuring programmes are delivered to agreed objectives, timescales, budgets, quality standards and performance frameworks.
- Direct the preparation, coordination and implementation of masterplans, development frameworks, design codes, spatial strategies, development briefs and delivery plans for priority sites and growth locations.
- Coordinate core housing and homelessness forums, the Homes Taskforce and Homelessness Taskforce.
- Ensure projects progress efficiently through feasibility, site assessment, engagement, master planning and development planning, providing the place and development evidence required for business-case and investment approval processes led through the appropriate governance route.
- Establish robust governance, assurance, risk, performance and reporting arrangements across the portfolio, ensuring clear accountability, effective decision-making and timely escalation of significant issues.
- Coordinate WMCA directorates, local authorities, government agencies and delivery partners to integrate housing, transport, infrastructure, economic development, public realm, environmental sustainability and social value objectives.
- Oversee the commissioning, procurement and performance of consultants, design teams and technical advisers, ensuring high-quality outputs, effective contract management and value for money.

- Ensure development proposals are informed by technical, commercial, environmental and social evidence, balancing ambition with deliverability and long-term value creation.
- Oversee meaningful stakeholder and community engagement, ensuring that local perspectives help shape development proposals and delivery outcomes.
- Work with local authorities and statutory bodies to navigate planning requirements, regulatory processes and policy considerations affecting strategic sites.
- Drive the transition of strategic concepts into development-ready propositions, working with the Commercial and Investment function to establish investability and appropriate funding routes.
- Maintain oversight of programme resources and ensure that project teams, technical expertise and consultancy support are deployed effectively across competing priorities.
- Ensure compliance with WMCA governance, procurement and financial requirements, health and safety obligations, statutory duties and relevant planning legislation, and oversee reports and recommendations to senior decisionmakers.

Financial

- Lead financial planning, budget management and resource allocation across the Planning and Homes portfolio, maintaining effective financial governance, stewardship and control and ensuring long-term sustainability and value for money.
- Develop and oversee multi-year development and infrastructure requirement plans for strategic sites, growth corridors and regeneration programmes, informing investment and funding strategies owned through the appropriate commercial and investment governance arrangements.
- Identify the funding and investment requirements necessary to enable delivery of strategic sites and work with the Commercial and Investment function and external partners to develop investable propositions and secure appropriate funding.
- Lead the place, planning, development and benefits content required for robust business cases, investment propositions and funding submissions, working with the Commercial and Investment function on financial structuring, investment appraisal and funding approval.
- Provide strategic oversight of development economics, viability and financial appraisal, ensuring that masterplans are realistic, deliverable and capable of attracting investment.
- Develop innovative place-delivery and implementation models with local authorities, landowners, developers and investment partners, integrating land, infrastructure, phasing and funding requirements from the earliest stages and working with the relevant Property and Estates and Commercial and Investment leads.
- Lead development and place-based negotiations relating to strategic sites, working with the Commercial and Investment and Property and Estates functions where negotiations involve WMCA investment, land, property or commercial arrangements.
- Monitor budgets, expenditure, commitments and forecasts, addressing variances and emerging pressures and maintaining accurate reporting to governance bodies and funding partners.
- Define how public investment could unlock development activity and additional private investment, ensuring that social value, economic impact, environmental benefit and intended place outcomes inform appraisal and decision-making by the appropriate investment authority.
- Identify and manage development-related financial and commercial risks within the Planning and Homes portfolio, escalating investment, property and corporate commercial risks to the accountable functions and maintaining appropriate mitigation and contingency arrangements.

Other

- Act as a corporate leader, exercising organisational and system leadership beyond the immediate Planning and Homes portfolio to support WMCA-wide priorities, organisational performance and regional outcomes.
- Act as a senior ambassador for WMCA, representing the organisation at regional, national and international forums and promoting the West Midlands as a leading location for investment, innovation, regeneration and sustainable development.
- Build and maintain productive relationships with elected members, senior officers, government representatives, industry leaders, investors, professional bodies and community stakeholders.
- Act as a steward of organisational values, culture, reputation and long-term sustainability, leading with the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct.

- Promote equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility in leadership, decision-making, engagement and development outcomes.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation, governance frameworks, organisational policies and professional standards.
- Contribute to wider corporate initiatives and organisational priorities and undertake any other duties commensurate with the seniority and responsibilities of the role.

Person Specification

Candidates/post holders will be expected to demonstrate the following:	Essential / Desirable		How Evidenced?		
Experience	**E**	**D**	**A***	**I***	**T***
Significant senior leadership experience within a large, complex organisation, leading a substantial planning, housing, regeneration, development or placemaking portfolio.	X		X	X	
Proven track record of developing and delivering large-scale, multi-stakeholder regeneration, infrastructure, housing, commercial or mixed-use development initiatives from inception through to implementation.	X		X	X	
Experience of shaping organisational strategy, policy and investment priorities and influencing decision-making at Executive, Board, Committee or political level.	X		X	X	
Demonstrable experience of establishing and leading complex strategic partnerships across organisational boundaries, including housing and/or homelessness partnerships, aligning local authorities, government, public agencies, communities and other partners around shared outcomes.	X		X	X	
Experience of developing place-based strategies, masterplans, spatial frameworks, development programmes or regeneration initiatives that deliver economic, social and environmental benefits.	X		X	X	
Experience of developing and contributing to significant public and private investment propositions, including business cases, funding submissions and complex commercial or development negotiations.	X		X	X	
Experience of leading complex portfolios and programmes, including governance, assurance, risk management, performance, stakeholder engagement, resources and budgets.	X		X	X	
Experience of leading and developing senior managers and multidisciplinary professional teams and directing specialist consultants and advisers.	X		X	X	
Experience of identifying and resolving complex land, planning, infrastructure, viability and stakeholder barriers to development delivery.	X		X	X	
Experience of integrating planning, transport, housing, economic development, infrastructure and environmental priorities into coherent and deliverable place strategies.	X		X	X	
Experience of leading strategic change, transformation, innovation and continuous improvement.	X		X	X	
Experience of operating effectively in politically sensitive and publicly accountable environments.	X		X	X	
Experience within a Combined Authority, mayor-led authority, local government, Homes England, central government or a comparable strategic public-sector environment.		X	X	X	
Experience of nationally significant growth programmes, delivery vehicles, joint ventures or inward-investment activity.		X	X	X	
Skills / Knowledge	**E**	**D**	**A***	**I***	**T***
Expert knowledge of master planning, placemaking, urban design, regeneration and development delivery, with the ability to translate strategic vision into deliverable outcomes.	X		X	X	

Comprehensive understanding of the planning system, spatial planning, development management, land-use policy and statutory processes affecting major development and regeneration.	X		X	X	
Ability to provide corporate and strategic leadership and translate organisational and regional strategy into clear priorities and delivery.	X		X	X	
Ability to apply systems thinking across organisational, regional and partnership environments and align multiple organisations around shared outcomes.	X		X	X	
Ability to lead through others across complex organisational and partnership structures, empowering senior leaders, professionals and partners while maintaining clear accountability.	X		X	X	
Outstanding leadership, communication, negotiation and influencing skills, with the credibility to advise senior executives, elected members, boards and strategic partners.	X		X	X	
Strong political awareness and understanding of local government, Combined Authority governance and public-sector decision-making.	X		X	X	
Advanced commercial and financial awareness, including development economics, investment appraisal, viability, funding mechanisms and delivery models.	X		X	X	
Strong understanding of governance, assurance, risk, programme and portfolio management and performance monitoring.	X		X	X	
Ability to analyse complex technical, commercial, environmental and strategic issues, translate ambiguity into clear direction and make sound evidence-based decisions.	X		X	X	
Ability to lead through transition and transformation while maintaining organisational clarity, momentum, resilience and delivery.	X		X	X	
Understanding of organisational development, workforce capability, delegated accountability and succession planning.	X		X	X	
Knowledge of sustainability, climate resilience, net zero, biodiversity, inclusive growth, social value and the role of placemaking in creating thriving communities.	X		X	X	
Ability to use digital, data and AI-enabled approaches to strengthen judgement, decision-making, capability and delivery outcomes.	X		X	X	
Understanding of devolved powers, city-region growth strategies and the economic, social and public-policy issues affecting the West Midlands.		X	X	X	
Knowledge of emerging practice in master planning, urban regeneration, digital planning and innovative delivery models.		X	X	X	
Qualification / Education / Training	**E**	**D**	**A***	**I***	**T***
Degree-level qualification or equivalent professional experience in a relevant discipline.	X		X		
Evidence of continuing professional and leadership development.	X		X	X	
Relevant professional qualification or chartered membership, such as RTPI, RICS, RIBA, ICE or equivalent.		X	X		
Relevant postgraduate qualification.		X	X		

***Key: A** = Application, **I** = Interview, **T** = Testing/Assessment

Core Expectations	
Health, Safety & Wellbeing	All employees have a duty to take reasonable care for the health, safety, and wellbeing of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work; and co-operate with their employer so far as is necessary to enable it to successfully discharge its own responsibilities in relation to health, safety, and wellbeing.
Equality & Diversity	Promote and champion equality and diversity in all aspects of the role.
Learning & Development	Participate in and take responsibility of any learning and development required to carry out this role effectively.

Performance Management	Actively engage in the performance management process and take responsibility for managing performance outcomes.
GDPR	Ensure the reasonable and proportionate protection, processing, sharing, and storing of WMCA information in accordance with the relevant legislation, corporate policies, and in the best interests of the data subjects (Data Protection/GDPR), the WMCA, our partners, and the West Midlands, in all aspects of the role.
Adherence to Policies	Be aware of and comply with all organisation policies.
Matrix Working	Work in a matrix way when required by actively collaborating across traditional boundaries—such as directorates, functions, or geographic areas—to achieve shared goals. Depending on your role, you may contribute to multiple projects or workstreams, often working alongside different teams and leaders.
Business Continuity	All staff should actively participate in business continuity training and exercises when required, ensuring they understand and follow business continuity plans and procedures to maintain organisational resilience during disruptions.
Other	There may be a requirement to work outside normal office hours on occasion, including a requirement to work within stakeholder and partner offices within the WMCA constituent area on a regular basis.

Values	
Collaborative	We work as one organisation. Together we build trust, connection and shared purpose across teams, partners and residents to create the biggest impact for our region.
Inclusive	We value difference. Creating an environment where people belong, and feel psychologically safe, so we can all thrive and shape a West Midlands built for everyone.
Innovative	We are courageous. We embrace new ideas and challenge the status quo to continuously improve and shape the future of the West Midlands.
Driven	We are focused on outcomes. We perform at our best to unlock productivity and delivery, achieving the greatest regional impact.
Our culture is built on collective leadership, where everyone plays a part in shaping how we work and succeed together. Guided by our values, we create an environment where people feel valued, supported and able to contribute their best. Through behaviours grounded in clarity, care and courage, as set out in our Leadership Statement we are making the West Midlands Combined Authority the best place to work and belong.	

Additional Post Requirements							
Politically Restricted Post		**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**				**Vetting**	
Yes ☐	No ☐	Basic ☐	Standard ☐	Enhanced ☐	None ☐	Yes ☐	No ☐

Job Evaluation Details			
Date Evaluation Agreed	**JEP Reference**	**Grade**	**Job Family**
Position Reference			