

Job Description

Job Title:	Head of Client
Directorate/Team:	Transport for West Midlands/ITS
Location:	16 Summer Lane or other site/location
Responsible to:	Director of ITS
Responsible for:	Up to 3 direct reports
Key working relationships: (internal)	WMCA operational leads; WMCA governance team; corporate shareholder function; Bus Company Board representatives; TfWM leadership and finance, safety, communications and operational colleagues.
Key working relationships: (external)	Bus Company Chair and Board members; bus operators and sector partners; external advisors and stakeholders as required.

Purpose of the Post

To provide operational leadership for WMCA's Bus Company client and ownership function, acting as the primary point of contact for Bus Company activity and ensuring effective ownership oversight, governance, relationship management and escalation of critical matters relating to safety, operational and financial performance and external communications.

The postholder will translate strategic direction into operational plans and outcomes, ensuring services, resources and performance are aligned with WMCA priorities. As a key member of the senior leadership community, they will lead and develop managers, specialists and teams, driving continuous improvement, workforce capability and high-quality delivery while fostering an inclusive, collaborative and high-performing culture.

Through effective governance, resource management, organisational stewardship and systems leadership, the postholder will work across organisational boundaries to build partnerships, influence decision-making and align collective efforts to deliver sustainable public value and shared regional outcomes. They will model values-led leadership in line with WMCA's People & Culture Strategy, Values and Behaviours Framework and Leadership Statement, helping to make the West Midlands the best place to live, work and visit.

Accountabilities

- Act as the primary point of contact within WMCA for all Bus Company activity, providing clear ownership oversight and coordination.
- Manage the strategic relationship with Bus Company, overseeing working-level engagement between Bus Company and WMCA operational leads and resolving issues as they arise.
- Identify and investigate critical issues for escalation to the Bus Company Board, with particular focus on safety, operational and financial performance and external communications.
- Ensure effective governance of the Bus Company by the Board, working closely with the WMCA governance team and corporate shareholder function.
- Delivering agreed service objectives, outcomes and performance measures within their area of responsibility.
- Translating organisational and directorate strategies into effective operational plans and delivery activity.
- Contributing to the development and implementation of directorate and organisational priorities through effective operational leadership and service delivery.
- Leading and developing managers, specialists, teams and employees to achieve high performance and continuous improvement.
- Managing allocated budgets, workforce resources and service capacity effectively and efficiently.

- Ensuring compliance with governance, regulatory, legislative and organisational requirements.
- Identifying, managing and mitigating operational, financial and reputational risks.
- Provision of expert advice, assurance and professional recommendations through specialist capability within the Service and assurance to Directors, Associate Directors and Executive Leaders.
- Building and maintaining constructive stakeholder and partnership relationships that support service and organisational objectives.
- Promoting collaboration across teams, services and organisational boundaries to support delivery of organisational priorities.
- Promoting equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility in all aspects of service delivery and leadership.

Responsibilities

Strategic

- Maintain a strategic overview of Bus Company activity, ensuring WMCA's interests are represented and that Board-level decisions are informed by robust operational, financial and governance insight.
- Translate WMCA's People & Culture Strategy into the role by supporting high performance, values-led decision-making, matrix working and the leadership behaviours needed to create the best place to work and belong.
- Work flexibly and with integrity to meet the needs of the WMCA, Transport for West Midlands and the Bus Company ownership/client function.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of directorate and organisational strategies.
- Provide assurance, professional advice and recommendations to support decision-making by Directors, Associate Directors and Executive leaders.
- Identify opportunities to improve services, strengthen performance and deliver greater public value.
- Ensure service priorities align with organisational objectives and regional outcomes.
- Ensure decision-making, service planning and improvement activity is informed by evidence, insight, analysis and performance information.
- Promote innovation, organisational learning and evidence-informed decision-making.

People

- Build and maintain strong working relationships with Bus Company, WMCA operational leads, governance colleagues and corporate shareholder representatives.
- Influence and advise stakeholders at Board and operational levels, supporting collaborative problem solving and timely resolution of issues.
- Lead, manage and develop managers, team leaders and expert/specialist employees within the service area.
- Create a positive, inclusive and high-performing culture aligned to WMCA values and behaviours.
- Set clear performance expectations and ensure robust performance management arrangements are in place.
- Promote employee engagement, wellbeing, learning and development.
- Model inclusive leadership by creating the conditions for trust, psychological safety, constructive challenge and fair, evidence-based decision-making across internal and external relationships.
- Support succession planning and workforce development within the service.
- Foster collaboration across teams, services and organisational boundaries.

Operational

- Oversee working-level engagement with Bus Company by WMCA operational leads, ensuring actions, issues and risks are identified, coordinated and followed through.
- Act as Board Secretary for Bus Company, overseeing secretariat support and advising the Bus Company Chair on governance, agenda planning, papers and decision-making requirements.
- Coordinate the preparation of Board reporting and escalation materials, ensuring critical issues are presented clearly and supported by appropriate evidence.
- Lead the day-to-day delivery and continuous improvement of the service area.
- Ensure effective performance management arrangements are in place and regularly reviewed.
- Monitor service performance and implement corrective action where required.

- Ensure service delivery complies with organisational policies, governance frameworks and statutory requirements.
- Develop and maintain appropriate risk management, assurance and business continuity arrangements.
- Lead service improvement, redesign and change initiatives to enhance service performance, efficiency and customer outcomes.
- Ensure effective partnership and stakeholder engagement arrangements support successful delivery outcomes.
- Ensure services remain responsive, efficient and aligned with changing organisational and customer needs.
- Prepare reports, business cases and recommendations for governance and decision-making forums.
- Act as the senior operational lead for the service area.

Financial

- Manage service budgets and resources in line with delegated authority.
- Monitor, analyse and report on Bus Company financial performance, ensuring that revenue, cost, budget and business plan assumptions are understood, scrutinised and escalated as required to support effective ownership oversight and Board assurance.
- Act as the WMCA point person for the Bus Company business plan, working with Bus Company, finance and operational colleagues to track delivery against agreed revenue and cost lines, identify emerging pressures and ensure timely corrective action or escalation.
- Identify opportunities to improve efficiency and achieve value for money
- Support business planning, resource prioritisation and workforce planning processes.
- Ensure commissioned activities and contracts deliver intended outcomes and comply with organisational requirements.
- Ensure Value for Money and follow the appropriate governance processes for dealing with any financial activities.

Other

- Represent the WMCA in a professional manner, including in engagements with Bus Company, Board members and external stakeholders.
- Apply sound judgement when handling sensitive, high-profile or commercially significant matters, including external communications.
- Promote equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility in service delivery and decision-making.
- Ensure compliance with governance frameworks, legislative requirements, organisational policies and values.
- Support organisational initiatives and contribute to wider corporate priorities.
- Work collaboratively across organisational and partnership boundaries to support shared organisational, regional and system-wide outcomes.
- Undertake such tasks as may reasonably be expected commensurate with the scope and level of the role.

Person Specification

Candidates/post holders will be expected to demonstrate the following:	Essential / Desirable		How Evidenced?		
	E	D	A*	I*	T*
Experience					
Substantial experience of managing complex senior stakeholder relationships, influencing at Board and operational levels and securing alignment across organisational boundaries, using clarity, care and courage to support transparent, values-led decisions.	x		x	x	
Experience of operating within formal governance, Board reporting, secretariat or corporate decision-making environments, including the ability to prepare clear	x		x	x	

advice, manage agendas, support assurance and escalate material risks or decisions at the right level.					
Experience of working in, with or alongside the bus sector, passenger transport or a comparable regulated operational environment, whether from a local authority, operator, client-side, shareholder or third-party context.		x	x		
Experience of budget and resource management and managing risk, governance and compliance requirements.	x	x	x		
Skills / Knowledge	E	D	A*	I*	T*
Highly developed networking, relationship-building and influencing skills, with the credibility to operate confidently with senior leaders, Board members, operational leads and external partners while demonstrating a one-organisation mindset.	x		x	x	
Excellent organisational and prioritisation capability, with the ability to coordinate complex, fast-moving and sensitive activity while maintaining a strategic overview, anticipating interdependencies and aligning priorities to WMCA's purpose, People & Culture Strategy and values-led culture.	x		x	x	
Sound political, commercial and organisational judgement, with the ability to assess risk, handle sensitive or high-profile issues, identify when matters require escalation and model inclusive, fair and evidence-based decision-making.	x		x	x	
Ability to interpret operational, safety, financial, governance and communications information, identify themes and provide balanced, evidence-based advice to support Board-level oversight and decision-making.	x		x	x	
Ability to lead through ambiguity, constructively challenge, resolve issues and maintain momentum across a matrix environment without direct line authority over all contributors.	x		x	x	
Strong written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to produce concise Board papers, briefings, escalations and stakeholder communications on complex or sensitive issues.	x		x	x	
Strong operational leadership and service management capability	x		x	X	
Strong people leadership and performance management skills	x		x	X	
Ability to lead service improvement, change and transformation activity	x		x	x	
Strong analytical, problem-solving and decision-making abilities with financial and commercial awareness	x		x	X	
Knowledge of equality, diversity and inclusion principles and their practical application	x		x	x	
Understanding of public sector governance and accountability frameworks		x			
Qualification / Education / Training	E	D	A*	I*	T*
Educated to degree level or equivalent professional experience in governance, transport, public administration, commercial management, programme leadership or a related discipline.	x		x		
Relevant professional qualification or training in governance, company secretariat, transport, project/programme management, leadership or risk management.		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, partners or geographic areas—to achieve shared goals. The postholder is expected to connect teams, share insight, strengthen collective accountability and support the one-organisation culture described in WMCA's Values and Behaviours Framework.
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, building trust, connection and shared purpose across teams, partners and customers to create the biggest impact for our region. For this role, this means actively breaking down silos between Bus Company, WMCA operational leads, governance, finance, safety and communications colleagues, and enabling shared ownership of decisions and outcomes.
Inclusive	Every voice matters – we create belonging, fairness and psychological safety so everyone can thrive. For this role, this means ensuring diverse operational, governance, financial, safety and stakeholder perspectives are heard and used to inform balanced, transparent and equitable Board advice and decisions.
Innovative	We think future and act smarter – embracing curiosity, creativity and continuous improvement to shape the future. For this role, this means using insight from Bus Company activity, operational performance and governance learning to improve ways of working, anticipate issues and support smarter, evidence-based decision-making.
Driven	Focused on impact – leading with clarity, care and courage to deliver meaningful results for the West Midlands. For this role, this means providing clear direction, escalating issues at the right time, taking ownership of outcomes and supporting Board-level decisions that protect safety, performance, value for money and public confidence.

Our culture is built on collective leadership, where everyone plays a part in shaping how we work and succeed together. Guided by WMCA's People & Culture Strategy, Values and Behaviours Framework and Leadership Statement, this role is expected to demonstrate inspirational leadership at the Leading the WMCA level: shaping direction, enabling collaboration, modelling inclusion, challenging constructively and delivering with clarity, care and courage. Through these behaviours, the postholder will help make West Midlands Combined Authority the best place to work and belong while supporting lasting impact for the region.

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			