



ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES - ROLE PROFILE

Assistant Director, Strategic Planning & Infrastructure

Permanent role, based in Kingston

Grade CO4

Context

Our Ambition

Kingston is a successful place because throughout its history it has adapted and changed. It has built on its past by embracing the future. The Council wants to continue that journey and has identified the outcomes it wants to strive for with its communities:

- People achieve wellbeing independence and health lives
- People prosper and reach their full potential
- A safe and resilient community where everyone is welcome and which supports the most vulnerable
- A network of engaged communities where everyone has a voice and does their bit
- A borough that embraces growth and attracts investment for a stronger and more diverse economy
- A borough of choice and opportunity that has broken the mould to increase housing and jobs
- A sustainable borough with a diverse transport network and quality environment for all to enjoy
- A borough with an identify rich in history, heritage and creativity which drives its future

Kingston Council has an ambition to change its relationship with its communities; to be an Enabling Council. To do this it needs to reinvent itself and ensure that all its resources are used to best effect; rather than simply cutting costs and making savings - what might be termed "salami slicing". To be successful it needs to transform itself into a high performing networked organisation with a highly constructive culture where people truly flourish and reach their full potential.

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Our priorities and values

The Council wants to change its relationship with our communities, our partners and the people we serve. This means:

- Enabling communities to do more for themselves
- Enabling people to be independent and be able to flourish
- Enabling good growth for businesses and our communities to thrive
- Enabling our staff to take decisions and be free of unnecessary bureaucracy
- Enabling us to use our resources and assets – human, physical and financial – to very best effect
- Enabling through services that are ‘publicly designed, not necessarily publicly delivered’

Becoming an enabling council is a key principle that runs through our organisational development and is embedded in everything we do. Underpinning these priorities are the following values:

Innovative:

- Promote a culture that encourages creativity
- Embrace new ideas and ways of working
- Ambitious to push the boundaries to realise potential

Open:

- Respect and recognition - everyone has a voice that is heard and we are all valued
- Collaborative - working together with new and existing partners
- Empowering staff and residents to encourage informed decision-making
- Inspire trust by acting with integrity in all we do

Smart:

- Commercial savvy and acumen to find solutions and best value
- Agile working
- Customer driven, listening and responding to consistently deliver ‘best in class’/excellence



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Role purpose

The Council is focused on progressing its thinking to deliver the best possible outcomes for its communities. To do this the Council needs Assistant Directors who thrive in a networked organisation and who can work strategically, corporately, across complex networks and systems and provide strong focused inspirational leadership to those for whom they are directly responsible as well as to a much broader audience through influence and their leadership impact.

The Assistant Director, Strategic Planning & Infrastructure is an exciting and critical role in enabling the Council to deliver its growth outcomes. This role will work with Members and SLT to set the planning and policy conditions for investment in development and infrastructure within Kingston that will enable its sustainable growth agenda – grappling with the demands of a growing population in a successful world City whilst retaining the rich heritage of the Borough. This role will also be responsible for navigating the Borough through the complexity of the Planning system to ensure that its policies and plans work to best effect for the Borough and reflect the voice of its communities.

Working corporately with the Corporate Leadership Group, and as part of the Directorate Management Team, the Assistant Director will provide leadership direction and impact to a small team of Corporate Heads of Service, Service Managers and/or team leaders as well as the corporate and commercial network across the Council to best deliver those outcomes and objectives.

Assistant Directors have a portfolio of responsibilities to lead and manage and will have:

- A corporate focus, working as ambassadors and networking with partners and communities, and participating in activities that impact right across the organisation
- A cross-cutting focus, leading and participating in activities that involve more than one directorate or different teams within a directorate to join up delivery to provide better outcomes and services
- A functional focus, with leadership responsibility for a range of functions, services, resources and people.

Each Strategic Director, with their Assistant Director colleagues, will form the directorate leadership team and share responsibilities for managing the directorate's portfolio of services, programmes and projects. This leadership cohort in each directorate will work corporately with and across directorates and is part of the corporate senior leadership team.



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Functional Responsibilities

The Strategic Planning & Infrastructure function includes:

- Strategic Vision and strategy for sustainable Growth
- Local Plan & Strategic Place Planning
- Transport Strategy
- Infrastructure
- Development Management
- Building Control
- Planning Enforcement
- Major Projects

The role reports directly to the Director, Growth, and is directly responsible for the Lead officers, and their teams, within the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure service.

Key activities

Leadership

- As a member of the Corporate Leadership Group, plays a key role in the collective and constructive leadership of the Council, providing the constructive leadership needed to create the conditions for success
- Provides strong strategic leadership and support to the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), Portfolio Holders and Elected Members, ensuring they receive high quality advice
- Provides effective programme and project leadership to ensure that cross-cutting and corporate programmes achieve desired outcomes
- Provides inspirational and constructive leadership to the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure function and creates the conditions for a high performance networked operating model and culture, encouraging innovation and smart working



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Commissioning and Performance Management

- Commissions services and activities to secure the best outcomes for service users and deliver optimum value for money, in line with the Council's commissioning and contract management frameworks
- Manages the performance of the service, working with colleagues to define outcomes, set targets and monitor performance, within a culture of continual improvement
- Translates strategies into operational policies and plans, ensuring that the resources within the team are used to best effect and impact
- Ensures that the best use is made of the Council's resources to secure the best outcomes for residents within the resources available
- Ensures that the best use is made of financial resources and achieves high levels of productivity and efficiencies

Customers and Partners

- Builds strong working partnerships across the public, private and voluntary sectors to enable services to be delivered that are outcome focused and efficient and represent Kingston corporately within such partnerships
- Promotes community cohesion and Kingston's commitment to valuing diversity, ensuring the development and implementation of effective social inclusion

Delivery

- Leads the delivery of Kingston's growth agenda through developing strong relationships, the leadership of strategic planning, major project implementation, and the effective management of key functions including local strategic planning, infrastructure planning, development management, building control, planning enforcement and transport strategy
- Performs the role of 'Chief Planner' on behalf of the organisation.
- Seeks to promote and embed Placemaking as a key outcome in the wider activities of the Authority.

Equality and Diversity

- Embeds issues relating to equity, equality and diversity into all aspects of professional and managerial role, including service delivery

Corporate responsibilities

Kingston Council requires Assistant Directors to undertake and support a range of important corporate responsibilities including:

- Data Protection
- Election duties



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- Emergency planning and business continuity
- Engagement & Collaboration
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding – protection of vulnerable adults and children
- Volunteering/social impact
- Complaints handling and investigation

These corporate responsibilities are outlined in more detail in the Corporate Responsibilities Guidelines (currently being developed).

NB. The requirements of this post include attending meetings and other events outside normal hours as expected with a post of this nature and the postholder will need to manage their work life balance flexibly to meet the needs of the role.

Within the context of Kingston Council's structural framework, Assistant Directors work together to translate strategy into aligned operational plans, connecting all operational activity and delivering it in a joined up way. Assistant Directors play a key role in creating a strong, council-wide sense of common and shared purpose, securing greater collective and individual impact, and making the best use of resources. Our staff are our greatest asset, and to achieve our ambitions their performance depends on constructive leadership and highly effective management. Assistant Directors provide focused inspirational leadership to those for whom they are directly responsible and a broader audience through their influence and leadership impact.

The person

In order to successfully deliver the responsibilities of the role, you will need to:

- Understand the Council's transformational and leadership approach and contribute to the collective leadership required to continually develop this
- Have exceptional leadership skills, modelling a strong performance culture and constructively building achievement, confidence and skills in others
- Display the commercial mindset and the financial management skills to bring about demonstrable improvements in efficiency, value for money and income generation



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- Be able to build high levels of credibility and impact quickly, working within networks to delivering through and with others.
- Have significant experience and a proven track record of achievement in leading and managing strategic planning-focused services and activities
- Work successfully with elected members, partners and key stakeholders including residents, businesses, communities, partner organisations and other public services
- Have significant experience in planning and placemaking
- It would also be desirable if the post holder has either Associate or Chartered membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), or they are able to demonstrate professional qualifications in a related built environment discipline which demonstrates experience relevant to the role
- Demonstrate commitment to own personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the role
- Demonstrate a high level of innovation and creativity.

Our leadership competencies

Leadership

- Inspire a sense of purpose and direction across the Council and be definitive about the contribution that the Director of Growth and his/her team and resources need to make to support staff, elected Members and the Chief Executive to achieve the successful delivery of outcomes for the Kingston community
- Track record of leading a team, functions, services and programmes of comparable scope, size and complexity
- Ability to demonstrate successful leadership experience and positive outcomes at a senior strategic level within an organisation of similar complexity
- Ability to build a strong and capable team, confidently setting the direction and clearly articulating the measures of success

Partnering for Excellence

- Proven ability in brokering and leading complex, high level partnerships
- Proven ability to deliver transformational change and achieve improved outcomes through public or private sector partnerships
- Ability to apply commercial judgement to make decisions that will deliver cost efficient and effective results for Kingston Council and the Kingston community
- Ability to develop effective relationships that lead to measurable outcomes



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Communication and Influencing

- Demonstrate the sensitivities at operating in a political environment, balancing policy with local needs
- Experience of working successfully with elected Members and navigating a complex political landscape at a sub-regional level and engaging effectively with communities
- An ability to understand and respond to the complex, evolving economic and social environment within which Kingston Council operates

Putting the Customer First

- Demonstrate a strong commitment to service excellence, customer care and continuous improvement
- Identify and understand the needs of both internal and external customers by providing excellent customer service in all areas of Council business

Being the Best

- Provide the freedom and support to improve the performance of Kingston by challenging the status quo and providing enough scope for staff to experiment with new or innovative solution