



**Leeds**  
CITY COUNCIL

# Information for candidates

**Head of Strategic Planning**

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## Job Advertisement

### Head of Strategic Planning

**Salary: Up to £87,000**

#### **Shape the future of one of the UK's most ambitious cities**

Leeds is one of the UK's largest and fastest-growing cities, with a planning agenda that sits at the heart of its future. From progressing a complex Local Plan through to submission, to shaping major regeneration such as the South Bank, this is a city where planning genuinely matters.

Planning plays a central role in delivering the Leeds Ambitions, supporting inclusive growth, climate resilience and the creation of high-quality places for communities. This is an opportunity to lead a function that is fundamental to how the Council delivers on those ambitions.

We are now looking for a Head of Strategic Planning who understands the influence that high-quality plan-making, strong evidence and clear spatial thinking can have on delivering sustainable growth at scale. This is a rare opportunity to lead a function that brings together policy, plan-making, environment and design, with real visibility across the organisation and region.

#### **The role**

This is a senior, outward-facing leadership role, but at its core it is about planning expertise and influence. You will lead the progression of the Leeds Local Plan towards submission and examination, shaping how the city delivers sustainable development, housing growth and place-making at scale.

You will oversee a multidisciplinary function covering policy, design, ecology, heritage, climate and environmental planning, ensuring that the right expertise is brought together to support both plan-making and decision-making across the city. Alongside this, you will play a key role in overseeing how the service contributes to wider Council projects and programmes, ensuring that planning insight and specialist expertise are embedded across major initiatives and investment priorities.

You will act as a key voice across the Council, working closely with Members, senior officers and partners, and building strong relationships with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and wider stakeholders.

This is not simply about maintaining a statutory function. It is about articulating what good growth looks like in a major UK city and ensuring that vision is translated into delivery. You

will also play a key role in strengthening how the service uses data, digital systems and evidence to support more effective planning, consultation and long-term decision-making.

You will champion exemplary design and conservation, ensuring Leeds is recognised as a leader in high-quality places and sustainable growth.

### **Why this role will appeal**

This is a role that offers genuine influence. It provides the opportunity to lead a Local Plan at scale in a complex, high-growth city, while shaping how planning supports regeneration, housing delivery and climate priorities. The breadth of the service brings together policy, design and environmental disciplines, creating a more integrated approach to place-making than is often found elsewhere.

You will be leading a service of around 50 professionals across multiple disciplines, with responsibility for both statutory delivery and longer-term spatial strategy. The role also offers a visible platform across the Council and region, with the ability to influence beyond the planning service and contribute to wider strategic priorities.

### **About you**

You will bring a strong background in spatial planning, plan-making or strategic policy, alongside a deep understanding of the planning system, development market and wider policy environment. You are likely to have experience of leading or significantly contributing to a Local Plan or equivalent statutory framework and will be comfortable operating in a political and high-profile environment.

Just as importantly, you will be collaborative in your approach, with the credibility to influence and support across services and with external partners.

### **Why Leeds**

Planning in Leeds is visible, complex and high impact. With ambitious plans around inclusive growth, climate resilience and city centre expansion, this is a role where your work will shape the future of a major UK city.

*Closing Date: Midnight on Wednesday 3rd June*

To apply please visit [Head of Strategic Planning](#). For a confidential conversation, please contact Maud Hollis ([maud.hollis@tile-hill.co.uk](mailto:maud.hollis@tile-hill.co.uk) / 07444 696659) or Clare Connor ([clare.connor@tile-hill.co.uk](mailto:clare.connor@tile-hill.co.uk) / 0161 408 0703).

## Further reading about the role:

[Job Description](#)

[City Development and Planning Team Structure](#)

[Draft Strategic Planning Service Plan](#)

## Application Guidance

To apply, please [click here](#).

Please submit an up-to-date copy of your CV (three sides of A4 maximum), along with a supporting statement (three sides of A4 maximum) that address the criteria set out in the role profile, using examples to demonstrate how you meet the essential requirements.

### Applications must include:

- Full contact details;
- Please provide details for two referees, including names, positions, organisations and contact information. One referee should be your current or most recent employer where possible. We will only contact referees with your prior consent.
- Details of your current salary and notice period;
- Notification of any dates when you are not available for interview.

Once your application has been submitted, you will receive a response to confirm that it has been received. If you do not receive this response, please contact us to let us know.

You will receive a response to confirm your application has been received. If you do not receive this response, please contact Ella Vanderhook at [ella.vanderhook@tile-hill.co.uk](mailto:ella.vanderhook@tile-hill.co.uk) to let us know.

At Tile Hill, we are committed to inclusion and accessibility. We champion and support all individuals to ensure everyone feels valued, listened to and motivated to get the very best out of each recruitment process and that processes are designed to meet the needs of individuals. If you have any specific requests and would like a confidential discussion with the Tile Hill team, then please email [inclusion@tile-hill.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@tile-hill.co.uk).

### Recruitment Timetable:

**Closing date:** Midnight on Wednesday 3rd June

**Longlist Meeting (no candidate involvement):** Friday 12th June

**Preliminary Interviews (virtual):** Tuesday 16th June

**Shortlist Meeting (no candidate involvement):** Tuesday 16th June

**Final Member Interviews and stakeholder panels (in Leeds):** w/c 22nd Jun

## About the Council

### We are Team Leeds

#### Why Leeds

In a major city of over 800,000 residents, leadership offers the chance to make a difference at scale - protecting children, strengthening families, and building inclusive systems that support every child to thrive. With a huge diversity of communities with different strengths and challenges, you will use the breadth of your expertise with vision and compassion for lasting impact.

As the UK's fastest-growing city and the economic heart of West Yorkshire, Leeds is dynamic, outward-looking and innovative. We are equally proud to be a values-led and compassionate city, with a long-standing Child Friendly ethos that places relationships, inclusion and lived experience at the centre of how services are designed and delivered. Our ambition is clear: the success of the city must translate into better lives for children and families in every community.

Leeds City Council is England's second largest local authority, with more than 14,000 colleagues working alongside partners across health, education, policing and the voluntary and community sector. In Children and Families, we are undertaking a deliberate leadership renewal - strengthening how we work corporately and leading as one team across the system. This is an opportunity to join a city that believes in purposeful transformation, shared leadership, and the power of partnership to deliver lasting improvement for children and families - now and into the future.

#### Our Leeds Ambitions

The [Leeds Ambitions](#) are our vision for the city. Created in consultation with residents and partners, the Leeds Ambitions are a strategic roadmap with a core mission of addressing poverty and inequality to achieve real and measurable results.

We have listened and learned, and have built that feedback into the Leeds Ambitions to ensure we keep a sharp focus on:

- **Our updated priorities:** Our Leeds Ambitions have at their heart four key priorities that reflect interconnected goals: health and wellbeing, inclusive growth, strong communities and a sustainable city
- **Tackling poverty and inequality:** Leeds Ambitions serves as the city's anti-poverty strategy, embedding Marmot City principles to drive meaningful change
- **Shared city vision:** Leeds Ambitions is no longer solely a council plan; it's a collective vision with shared leadership and input from diverse organisations citywide

- **Our Team Leeds approach:** we're building on the strengths of Team Leeds to further boost collaborative working, social value, community empowerment and resource sharing
- **Clearer impact measurement:** A new outcomes framework will use action plans, benchmarks and data to track progress and monitor the impact of the Leeds Ambitions
- **Strategic partnerships:** We want our partnership infrastructure to be fit for the future; continuing our work with [Leeds Anchors Network](#) and [Leeds Community Anchor Network](#) and empowering all partners to drive shared action.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We are proud to be an inclusive employer, supporting you all the way, from the moment you apply to join our team throughout your time working with us.

We recognise that to properly serve our city, our leadership and our workforce must fully reflect the diverse people of Leeds. Teams built of individuals who bring their unique contributions to the table are vital if we are to evolve and innovate to deliver for our citizens.

[Our values](#) encapsulate our commitment to treat people fairly, appreciate others and challenge all forms of inequality and discrimination. Our leaders embody our values, creating a workplace where everyone can thrive, use their individual talents and feel that they belong.

We're keen to hear from people of all backgrounds and life experiences who can lead our services with fresh insight and perspective. We especially welcome applications from women, carers, veterans, LGBTQ+ people, those from ethnically diverse communities, disabled people, and those with care experience - and anyone else who brings lived experience that can lead us do things better.

The following [accreditations and pledges](#) demonstrate our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion:

- Mindful Employer
- Disability Confident Leader
- Age-friendly Employer Pledge
- Stonewall Workplace Equality Index Top 100 Employer
- Fostering Friendly Employer
- Armed Forces Covenant

- Living Wage Employer

Our [staff networks](#) provide peer support and a safe space to colleagues who associate with a particular theme through lived experience or allyship. At an organisational level the networks are important in raising awareness, empowering underrepresented groups and driving cultural change.

## **Our Benefits**

We know that delivering exceptional public services starts with supporting the people who make them happen. That's why we prioritise a rewarding and inclusive experience for all our colleagues. We offer a comprehensive range of benefits focused on professional development, wellbeing, work-life balance and finances. Our employment policies are designed with flexibility and fairness in mind, helping you balance your personal circumstances with your career ambitions.

Our leadership package includes:

- Fair and transparent pay progression structure under the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Officers in local government
- Annual leave starting at 28 days (33 days after 5 years' service) plus statutory holidays, with the option to purchase 5 additional days through salary sacrifice
- Flexible and hybrid working options subject to your role and service need
- Professional development with fully funded study for relevant qualifications and supporting your progression through opportunities at work or with our partners
- Local Government Pension Scheme administered by West Yorkshire Pension Fund with generous employer contributions
- Shared cost AVC scheme allowing you to boost your pension in the most tax-efficient way
- Support for your wellbeing through our family friendly policies, flexible working options and 24/7 employee assistance programme
- Exclusive offers on an ultra-low emission vehicle lease paid for through salary sacrifice
- Moneysaving offers including discounts with national retailers and special deals with local businesses

We're proud to foster a workplace where everyone can be their best - and where your leadership can make a lasting difference to the communities we serve. Find out more about [benefits for all Leeds City Council colleagues](#).

## **Living in Leeds**

Life in Leeds offers far more than a great career opportunity. Leeds is a vibrant, confident and welcoming city, combining the energy of a major urban centre with an exceptional quality of life. With a thriving economy, a rich cultural scene and a strong sense of community, it's a place where people come to build both careers and lives.

Well-connected and easy to navigate, Leeds benefits from excellent road and rail links across the UK, alongside Leeds Bradford International Airport just a short journey from the city centre. Whether you prefer the buzz of city living, the character of established suburbs or the calm of surrounding rural areas, there is a wide and varied choice of places to call home – all within easy reach of work and leisure.

Leeds is one of the greenest cities in the UK, with an abundance of parks, waterways and open spaces, including seven Green Flag award-winning parks. For those who love the outdoors, the Yorkshire Dales and dramatic countryside are right on the doorstep, offering space to unwind and explore.

The city's cultural life is equally rich. From world-class galleries and museums to theatres, live music venues and independent cinemas, Leeds has something for every taste. A lively food scene, excellent shopping and a strong calendar of festivals and events add to the city's appeal.

For sports fans, Leeds is home to internationally recognised teams across football, cricket and rugby, as well as a strong grassroots and participation sporting culture.

Friendly, diverse and full of character, Leeds offers a warm Yorkshire welcome – and a place where you can truly feel at home.

We can't wait to give you a warm Yorkshire welcome!

### **Further Reading about the Council**

[Leeds Council Plan](#)

[Leeds Ambitions](#)

[Corporate Leadership Team](#)

## City Development at Leeds City Council

Leeds is a city on the up - home to a thriving economy and a growing population, with a bold vision for inclusive, sustainable growth. Our City Development teams are at the heart of this transformation, shaping the physical, social and environmental fabric of the city as a vibrant, attractive place to live, work and invest - now and for generations to come.

### City Development

Our [City Development](#) directorate spans the built environment, culture and economy of Leeds, driving strategy and delivering services that enhance quality of life, attract investment, and create opportunity for people and businesses.

The directorate comprises:

- Asset management and regeneration
- Economy and skills, including culture and the visitor economy
- Planning and sustainable development
- Highways and transportation
- Markets and city centre management
- Active Leeds (sports and leisure)

A leadership role in City Development is an opportunity to influence the direction of one of the UK's most dynamic cities for a future that reflects the needs and aspirations of all communities.

### Momentum and scale

Over the past decade, Leeds has seen significant investment and development. Our City Development teams have steered this progress in line with the council's strategic priorities in our [Leeds Ambitions](#) - health and wellbeing, inclusive growth, strong communities and a sustainable city.

Our city's growth is built on a strong track record of delivery and the coming years will be transformative. We have launched our [Leeds Economic Vision](#), a bold roadmap setting out seven steps that will generate £20 billion in economic growth and create 100,000 new jobs citywide.

We are a key partner in major projects including:

- £160m expansion of the Royal Armouries Museum
- Elland Road stadium expansion and local regeneration
- Aire Park mixed-use development with £40m infrastructure investment

- West Yorkshire Combined Authority's mass transit plans which will revolutionise connectivity across the region

### **Further reading about City Development**

[Adopted Local Plan](#)

[Inclusive Growth Strategy](#)