

Strategic Director

Recruitment

Candidate Pack

September 2025



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Welcome from Tom Pike

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of **Strategic Director, Place-Based Services** at Stevenage Borough Council.

This is an exciting and transformative time for our town. As the UK's first New Town, Stevenage has always been a place shaped by ambition, innovation, and a deep sense of community. Today, that founding spirit continues to drive us forward. We are in the midst of a once-in-a-generation regeneration programme, with over £1 billion of investment already secured. Work is well underway to revitalise our town centre, enhance public spaces, deliver high-quality homes, and create new opportunities for residents and businesses alike.

We are now seeking a senior leader who can help us take this next step – someone who combines strategic vision with practical delivery, and who can ensure that the changes we are making are inclusive, sustainable, and grounded in what matters most to the people of Stevenage.

As Strategic Director, you will lead on planning, regeneration, and our wider place-based services. You will work closely with national and regional partners, developers, local businesses, community organisations, and residents to turn vision into reality.

Crucially, we are seeking an individual who can build on our strong track record of securing funding (more than £100m over the past five years) and leverage our existing relationships to actively engage partners across business, academia, education, and the third sector to develop compelling, collaborative, and viable bids that attract further investment, unlocking funding for major regeneration.

I became Chief Executive in April 2025, having previously served as Deputy Chief Executive, and I know first-hand how committed our teams and councillors are to doing the right thing for our town. I am therefore confident that you will be joining a supportive, high-performing leadership team and a council that values innovation, flexible working, and staff development.

If you are a dynamic and outward-looking leader, with the ability to build trusted relationships and creatively unlock funding to support our vision, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Thank you once again for your interest in this important role. I hope to meet you during the process.



Tom Pike
Chief Executive
Stevenage
Borough Council



Our Values & Priorities

At Stevenage Borough Council, we are proud to serve a vibrant, diverse community and are passionate about making a real difference to the lives of our residents. Our values, being caring, excellent, responsive, innovative, straightforward, and working as one team, shape everything we do. Over the next few years, we will be focusing on delivering more affordable, good-quality homes, growing our local economy, creating cleaner and safer neighbourhoods, supporting health and wellbeing, and continuing the exciting regeneration of our town centre. We believe in working together with residents and partners to shape the future of our town, making Stevenage an even better place to live, work and thrive.



The Opportunity

**Strategic Director
Place-Based Services
Stevenage Borough Council
Salary: Competitive | Location:
Hybrid/Flexible Working**

Stevenage is a town with bold ambitions. As the UK's first New Town, our legacy of innovation, community, and progress continues to shape a forward-looking vision for inclusive growth and transformation. With over £1 billion in regeneration already underway – and a Corporate Plan focused on *Making Stevenage Even Better* – this is a rare opportunity to lead high-impact change in a place with genuine ambition.

We are now seeking a new member to join our leadership team as a Strategic Director to lead planning, regeneration, and wider place-based services. Reporting to our Chief Executive, you will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the town – working alongside Members, partners, and communities to deliver change that is sustainable, inclusive, and locally grounded.

A key priority will be leveraging existing relationships with partners across business, academia, education, and the third sector to develop compelling, collaborative, and viable bids that attract investment, unlock further funding, and deliver major regeneration.

We are therefore looking for a strategic, outward-facing leader with credibility, energy, and vision. You will be skilled at building trusted relationships across public, private, and voluntary sectors, and comfortable navigating the political complexities of local government. You will also bring a strong track record in leading regeneration or place-based change, and a commitment to delivering growth that benefits all parts of the community.

This is more than a regeneration role. It is a chance to shape the future of place and community in a town with the vision, partnerships, and leadership to make it happen.

For a confidential conversation, please contact our consultants at Penna:

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For more information, please visit:
<https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/???>

And to apply, please visit:
<https://execroles.penna.com>

**Closing date:
Sunday 12 October 2025**

About the Role

1. Job purpose

To take responsibility, in conjunction with the Chief Executive, the other Strategic Directors and the Strategic Leadership Team, for the overall direction and management of the Authority to achieve the Council's Making Stevenage Even Better Corporate Plan ambitions whilst also ensuring the organisation operates efficiently and effectively.

Strategic Directors provide sponsorship support to the Assistant Directors (AD) who are accountable for the performance of their Business Units (BU) and the achievement of BU and corporate performance objectives / targets.

The Chief Executive working in conjunction with the Strategic Directors will allocate Assistant Director sponsorship responsibilities. The AD sponsorship allocations are likely to change from time to time to reflect changing pressures, demands and circumstances.

2. Organisational position

See slide 9

3. Key tasks, duties and accountabilities of the post

Support the Council's Executive in its strategic leadership role, providing clear, timely and effective advice and support as appropriate on strategic issues and policy initiatives.

- Provide support Council Members in defining and realising the Council's vision and ambitions for Stevenage, advising and assisting the Cabinet in development and delivery of the Council's business and financial plans.
- Work in conjunction with the Assistant Directors to ensure the Cabinet is properly advised both on Government initiatives, requirements and changes and major local matters.
- Act as sponsor to a number of the Assistant Directors and, when necessary, provide advice and support to aid them to resolve specific matters.
- Take a lead role in the ongoing visioning, development and implementation of the Council's Cooperative Corporate Plan and other key strategies including the sponsorship of specific projects / programmes, and the delivery of the Council's financial plans.
- Proactively develop and maintain effective relationships with local, regional and national organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors with a view to ensuring that both Stevenage Borough Council objectives and place based objectives are effectively managed and/or addressed.
- Support corporate activities and efforts through the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure that the Council achieves its performance targets and that proactive action is identified and taken as and when issues arise. Promote a high performance / entrepreneurial culture and at the discretion of the Chief Executive support improvement of specific 'hot spot' matters when required.

- Champion, live and exhibit the values of the Council at all times whilst also striving to be a positive role model to colleagues both internal and external to SBC.
- Encourage a learning and development culture within the authority to help ensure that our most precious resource, our team, have the skills, abilities and motivation to be the best they can be in the roles that they perform.
- Take a lead role in ensuring delivery of key ambitions, major change initiatives and new developments.
- Promote effective communications within and outside of the organisation.

4. The role's key contacts and level of relationships with individuals, groups of people, agencies and external organisations

Internal: Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members, Scrutiny Committee Members and other Members of the Council, Chief Executive; Strategic Directors and Executive Management Team, Assistant Directors and management and staff across the Authority.

External: Representatives of partners' bodies and agencies, European, central, regional and local government bodies. Members of Parliament, government and other agencies, health authorities and trusts, other national organisations and local businesses; voluntary bodies and agencies, community groups, etc.

5. Governance and corporate responsibilities

- Undertake any additional responsibilities as directed by the line manager commensurate with the level and grading for the role
- Adhere to the Council's policies, rules and procedures including Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Emergency Planning / Business Continuity, and other legislative responsibilities, governance, financial and procedural rules.
- Ensure compliance to the organisation's Code of Conduct in the delivery and provision of services to staff and the community.
- To act as the organisational lead for Safeguarding

The job description is not a definitive list of tasks: rather it is designed to give an overall view of the job. It is expected that Strategic Directors will use their vision and personal initiative to meet the overall purpose of the job and help ensure the Council's aims and ambitions are effectively delivered.

Person Specification

Required Competencies		Essential	Desirable
Knowledge, skills and abilities	Knowledge of working in a political environment	X	
	Ability to work in complex partnership arrangements	X	
	Experience in local government finance and budget management	X	
	Knowledge of principles of managing change	X	
	Expert understanding of the Council’s services and the current challenges to delivery.	X	
Qualifications	Degree or equivalent	X	
	MBA/Masters or equivalent		X
Experience	Experience in providing direction and management	X	
	Experience in delivering corporate plans and leading on complex projects	X	
	Experience in advising Members and working in partnerships	X	
	Leading effective performance management and delivery of change and new approaches within services	X	
	Experience in delivering strategic direction and management		X
Any other attributes required for the role not mentioned above	Personal drive and commitment	X	
Personal Attributes	Initiative	X	
	Objective management style	X	
	Personal judgement and integrity	X	
	Written and verbal communication	X	
	Influencing and negotiation skills	X	
	Ability to set out succinct arguments in complex areas	X	
	Ability to inspire and motivate others	X	
	Strategic thinking	X	
	Innovation and creativity	X	
	Entrepreneurial / Commercial acumen	X	
	Support for equality and diversity issues	X	
	Customer focus	X	
	Political awareness and sensitivity	X	
	Experience in delivering results in a demanding environment	X	
	Experience in delivering results in a demanding environment	X	

Senior Leadership Team

(June 2025)



Tom Pike
Chief Executive



Richard Protheroe
Strategic Director



Clare Fletcher
Strategic Director and
S151 Officer



Kathryn Carr
Interim Strategic
Director



Victoria Wilders
Borough Solicitor and
Monitoring Officer
Legal Shared Services



Denise Lewis
Assistant Director
Building Safety and
Housing Property Services



Nadia Capuano
Assistant Director
Business Change
and Digital



Kerry Clifford
Assistant Director
Housing & Neighbourhoods



Matt Canterford
Assistant Director
Chief Technology Officer and
Senior Information Risk Owner



Ash Ahmed
Assistant Director
Housing and Development



Dave Wells
Assistant Director
Regeneration



Steve Dupoy
Assistant Director
Stevenage Direct Services



Clare Davies
Head of HR & OD



Alex Robinson
Assistant Director
Planning & Regulation



Kirsten Frew
Head of HR & OD



Melanie Chiknagi
Head of Estates



Atif Iqbal
Assistant Director
Finance

Further Reading



Stevenage Borough Council's
Annual Report 2024-2025



Corporate Plan
Make Stevenage Better
(2024-2027)

How to Apply

This guidance contains important information to help with your application:

Please apply by submitting a CV and Supporting Statement (no more than four sides of A4 in length per document aligned to the person specification). Please also include your contact details.

Please ensure your full employment history is outlined in your CV; where there are essential criteria, competencies and/or qualifications please make clear how you meet these. We may wish to verify this information during the recruitment process.

Please provide the details of two referees. Note that we will only approach referees for candidates proceeding to final selection and only with your permission. Please clearly indicate whether we can approach each referee before the selection date.

Please share with us in your Supporting Statement the values and behaviours that you bring to your leadership, and how you will transfer your skills and experience into this role.

Please complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form when you upload your details via our website.

Please upload your application by the closing date – no applications will be accepted once the long listing process has begun.

Following long-listing, you will be contacted directly by a Penna consultant to update you on the status of your application.

Asking for adjustments: we’re committed to making our recruitment practices barrier-free and as accessible as possible for everyone. This includes making adjustments or changes for disabled people, neurodiverse people or people with long-term health conditions. If you would like us to consider doing anything differently during the application, interview, or assessment process, including providing information in an alternative format, please contact us.

To apply for this role, please visit the following link to upload your CV and Cover Letter: <https://execroles.penna.com>

Aptitude and Disposition

Applications deadline	12 October 2025
Technical Interviews	20-31 October 2025
Final interviews	14 November 2025

For questions or an informal discussion, please contact:



Kelly Ridley
on 07709 512415 or email:
kelly.ridley@penna.com



Bruna Varante
on 07858 306725 or email:
bruna.varante@penna.com



Andrew Tromans
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andrew.tromans@penna.com

Penna Executive Search

Inclusive Leadership ...Redefined!

At Penna, we specialise in connecting outstanding professionals to senior leadership roles that shape the future of local government. From Strategic Directors to Chief Executives, we help councils deliver their corporate ambitions, manage complex partnerships, and drive positive change for their communities.

Our decades of experience working with local authorities set us apart. We understand the demands of political leadership, the importance of corporate plans, and the skills needed to navigate complex, challenging environments.

We work with integrity, imagination, and determination to ensure every placement is the right fit. Whether you are looking for leaders who can deliver major change initiatives, champion high performance cultures, or build stronger partnerships with communities and stakeholders, our specialist team will help you find the talent who can turn vision into reality.

At Penna, we don't want to just fill roles, we want to build leadership that delivers stronger, fairer, and more sustainable communities.

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