

# Director of Highways and Transportation

**Salary: £126,909**



Penna

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# Welcome Letter from Mark Ash

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in this pivotal role of Director of Highways and Transportation at Essex County Council. This is an exciting opportunity to shape the future of our transport infrastructure, working with talented colleagues and partners to deliver innovative and sustainable solutions for the people of Essex.

Essex is a county with a clear identity, a compelling vision, and a robust plan for the future. As one of the largest local authorities in the UK, we serve a diverse population of over 1.5 million residents. From bustling urban centres to picturesque rural communities, Essex is uniquely rich in its people, culture, and opportunities. Our commitment to delivering excellence in public service was recently recognised when we secured a top-three position in the IMPOWER index of councils' productivity—a testament to the impact of our forward-thinking approach.

At the heart of our work is our promise that this is *Everyone's Essex*. We are determined to ensure that no one is left behind and that every community thrives. This role is integral to achieving that vision, as the condition of our highways and the quality of our transport systems influence the daily lives of our residents and the economic vitality of our region.

I won't shy away from acknowledging the scope and scale of the challenges that come with this role. Managing significant budgets, numbers of people, and delivering services that touch every corner of the county is no small task. However, it is precisely these challenges that make this role so rewarding. The opportunity to lead change on such a significant scale is unparalleled, and I firmly believe that with ambition, creativity, and collaboration, the right candidate will not only meet these challenges but also flourish in this role.

Please know that I, along with the wider leadership team, am fully committed to providing the support you need to succeed. We value fresh perspectives and are here to help you unlock your potential as you lead this critical portfolio.

Essex is ready to welcome a leader who shares our passion for making a difference. If you're inspired to be a part of this journey, I encourage you to take the next step and join us in shaping an even brighter future for Essex.



# Job Advert

Essex is a county with a clear identity, a clear vision and a clear plan. As one of the largest UK local authorities, with significant diversity of people and communities, we offer a uniquely stimulating public service environment. Our track record was recently recognised with a top-three place in the latest IMPOWER index of councils' productivity. And we've made a firm commitment that this is 'Everyone's Essex' – everyone matters, and no one should be left behind.

## About the Role

We're seeking a dynamic and innovative leader to spearhead our Highways and Transportation services. With responsibility for over £320m in annual budgets and a dedicated team of over 300 professionals, you'll ensure our highways remain safe, functional, and ready to support economic growth and our ambitions on net zero. You'll work closely with stakeholders to deliver transformative projects, from road safety initiatives to the development of cutting-edge public transport strategies. In this pivotal role, you'll act as Essex's ambassador in national conversations, advocating for sustainable transport solutions while balancing the diverse needs of our communities. Whether collaborating on multi-million-pound infrastructure projects or driving improvements in customer satisfaction, you'll be at the forefront of shaping a future-ready transport network.

## What You'll Bring

- A strategic vision to innovate and drive change in a complex, fast-paced environment.
- Proven expertise in managing large-scale transport projects and budgets.
- A strong track record in stakeholder collaboration and delivering value-driven solutions.
- Exceptional leadership skills to inspire teams and build partnerships.
- A strong track record of working in complex and politically driven organisations.

## Why Join Us?

This is more than just a leadership position; it's an opportunity to leave a legacy.

You'll work with passionate professionals dedicated to enhancing the lives of Essex residents.

If you're ready to challenge the status quo and lead Essex into a sustainable and connected future, we want to hear from you!





# About Essex

There is no single centre to Essex, but rather a series of interconnected economic corridors, overlapping labour and housing market areas and health economies.

72% of the county is rural, there are 350 miles of coastline, 35 islands, and we have the seventh largest road network in the country, as well as areas sitting in the London fringe.

Within our towns and villages there is diversity too, from the Roman city of Colchester to the 1950s new towns of Harlow and Basildon, the seaside resort of Clacton-on-Sea and the market town of Saffron Walden.

We are well connected to London, Cambridge and the M11 corridor and are a gateway to trade and investment with two international airports (London Stansted and London Southend), and two emerging Freeports (Thames Freeport and Freeport East), building on the Haven ports (Harwich and Felixstowe) and London Gateway and Port of Tilbury, as well as 57 railway stations.

Essex is home to two universities: the University of Essex, and Anglia Ruskin University, both of which generate research with world-leading impact.

Some of the most outstanding schools in the country – four of which, the girls' and boys' grammar schools in Chelmsford and Colchester, regularly feature amongst the top 20 schools in the country.



# Highways and Transportation Service

Essex County Council has one of the largest highway networks in the country – around 5,000 miles of roads and 5,000 miles of footways – and we're responsible for maintaining all of it. This includes road maintenance, street lighting, drainage and flooding, winter travel, road safety, traffic management, highway development, bridges and structures, grass and vegetation, bus stops and bus shelters, and roads strategies right across the county.

The Director is responsible for all aspects of highways and transportation for Essex County Council including, Asset Management, Transport Planning, Maintenance, Major Scheme Development, Sustainable Transport, Highway Maintenance, Programme Management, Network Management, Road Safety, Development Management, National Liaison, Passenger Transport and Home to School Transport. Over the coming years, the Highways and Transportation team will modernise the service, maximising value from technology, and raising customer engagement.

Everyone's Essex is the Council's four-year strategy running from 2021-2025 and sets out the vision for services for our residents. The Highways and Transportation Service has a key role in the commitment to build an environment that supports and levels up life chances for our residents, which includes delivering a step change in sustainable travel across the county, by growing passenger transport and active travel.

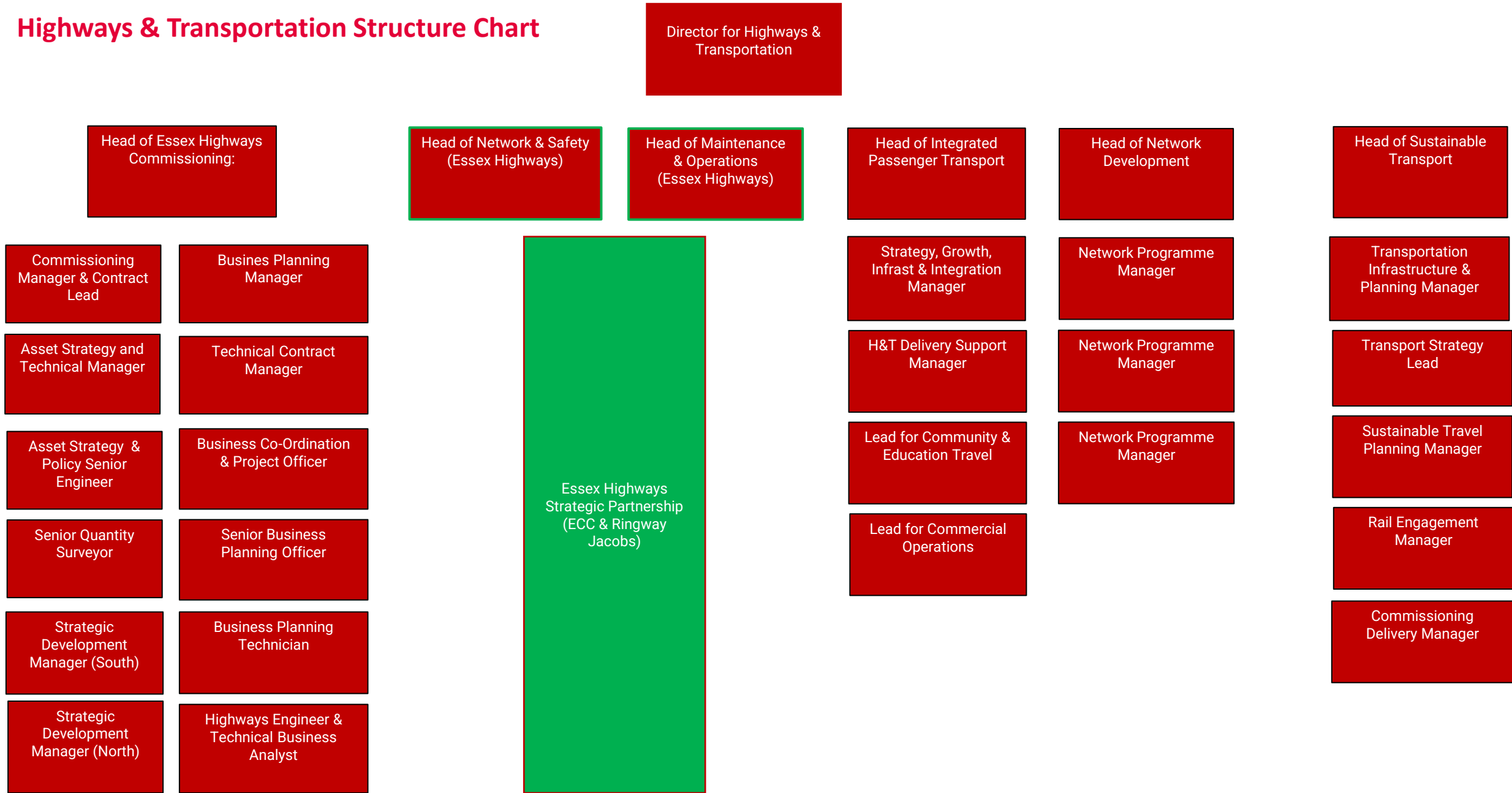
Our focus is clear: to improve travel in the county while helping fuel sustainable long-term sustainable growth in Essex and enriching the lives of our residents.

Read our plans and strategies relating to highways and transport and our goals for improving travel in Essex:

- <https://www.essexhighways.org/>
- [Travel and transport | Essex County Council](#)



# Highways & Transportation Structure Chart





# Political Make-up

Officers and Members at Essex County Council work closely to develop and implement the strategies to improve the lives of our residents.

Essex County Council is made up of 75 elected members and is currently governed by the Conservative group. The Council Leader is Kevin Bentley. The Council composition is currently as follows:

Conservative: 51

Liberal Democrats: 8

Labour: 6

Non-aligned group: 10

More information about the Cabinet:

[How decisions are made: The Cabinet | Essex County Council](#)





# How to apply

**This guidance contains important information to help with your application:**

- Please apply by submitting a CV and Covering Letter (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; and that where there are essential criteria, competencies and/or qualifications you make clear how you meet these. We may wish to verify this information during the recruitment process.
- 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.
- Please return 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.
- At any point throughout the process our retained consultants at Penna will be happy to help you with information, insight and guidance about the process and our clients.

Essex County Council is a Disability Confident Employer so candidates who wish to be considered under the scheme and meet the essential criteria will automatically be invited to interview. Please note, that should you require any adjustments through the process, we will accommodate as much as possible.

To apply for this role, please click the link below:

[Director of Highways and Transportation](#)

For further information or confidential discussion, please contact:

Ali Tasker on 07514 728114 or email: [ali.tasker@penna.com](mailto:ali.tasker@penna.com)

Rachael Morris on 07840 711217 or email: [rachael.morris@penna.com](mailto:rachael.morris@penna.com)





# Timeline

The following timetable sets out the key dates in the recruitment process:

Activity	Date
Closing Date	Sunday 18 May 2025
Longlist meeting (candidates are not required to attend)	29 May 2025
Preliminary Interviews	w/c 9 June 2025
Shortlist meeting (candidates are not required to attend)	w/c 16 June 2025
Psychometrics	w/c 16 June 2025
Final Panel Interviews	w/c 23 June 2025



# Further Reading

[Our vision for Essex | Essex County Council](#)

[Equality and diversity: Our approach | Essex County Council](#)

[Climate Action | Essex County Council](#)

[Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026](#)

[Travel and transport | Essex County Council](#)

<https://www.essexhighways.org/>

[Home - Working for Essex](#)

[Extraordinary Essex video](#)

