

CANDIDATE BRIEFING PACK

Chief Digital and Information Officer

Prepared for Reading Council

August 2024



Penna

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[Reading 2050 vision](#)

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Welcome Letter

Welcome,

I am delighted you have taken the time to explore this exciting leadership opportunity.

Reading is one of the best places to live and invest in the UK. It's a thriving borough in itself, but also benefits from first-class connectivity by road and rail – including the recently opened Elizabeth Line and new Green Park Station. Reading is a culturally rich and diverse place with a thriving economy - but if it's to continue to thrive and grow, it needs a strong and ambitious Council to stand up for the borough and support its community.

We are committed to doing all that we can to redress the social and economic inequality that persists in our borough – to ensure that Reading's success is shared by all in our community. Our financial resilience is enabling us to invest in new leisure facilities; improvements to local infrastructure; new council housing and accommodation for older people and vulnerable adults.

All of this is underpinned by a commitment to a carbon neutral Reading by 2030, working towards making Reading a greener, and more attractive place to live.

It's a hugely ambitious and exciting agenda, which makes the organisation one of the most exciting places to work in local government today.

No doubt you'll be undertaking plenty of research in preparing your application. In doing so you'll quickly identify just how far the Council has come in recent years. We are absolutely committed to maintaining this momentum and further embedding the good practice that is the foundation for high quality service delivery.

As we look forward, we recognise there is much to do. We are currently developing our next stage of transformation looking to put digital and technology at its heart.

We have recently implemented key major IT systems which we now need to exploit alongside our wish to become a leader in AI and mobile technologies.

The provision of IT within the Council has massively improved over the last few years, but we are now thinking of the next step and reviewing our technology operating model and enterprise architecture.

If you want to be the key player in taking the Council on its next technical and digital leap, then this job is for you.

You can be assured that this role will present plenty of complex professional challenges, alongside opportunities to innovate and deliver exciting and impactful outcomes for the Council.

As part of an ambitious senior team, this role offers a fantastic opportunity to embrace and promote a truly digital, human-centred approach for our organisation, driven by collaboration, openness, and change.

You will be able to work at scale, delivering digital and technology transformation and to re-imagine the way services are delivered.

I look forward to working with the successful candidate to achieve the very best for the Council, Reading and all our residents.

Very Best Regards,



Charlie Stewart
Executive Director of Resources
Reading Council

Advertisement

Chief Digital and Information Officer

Reading Council (hybrid-working)

Salary: £88,679 to £103,255

About Us

Now is a great time to look at joining Reading.

Within 20 minutes of central London, and within easy striking distance of the Midlands, the South East and the West Country, we are now seeking a digital professional to lead our ICT and digital services: to build on recent achievements, and continue driving value for money for our residents and businesses.

Your innovation and drive will help us to continue improving and evolving; and our opportunities and support will enable you to make a difference and leave a positive, lasting legacy.

The Role

Reporting to the Executive Director of Resources, you will be responsible for leading all ICT and Digital design, delivery and operations in Reading.

We are transforming how we work to enable our colleagues and customers to access the right services, at the right time in the right way.

You'll review our achievements so far and will be tasked with identifying how we can make best use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and automation in a local government context.

And just as importantly you'll be tasked with ensuring that we derive a tangible return on our digital investment.

About You

This exciting role calls for a digital professional who is ready for the next interesting step in their career.

If you think you have what it takes to be successful in this role, even if you don't meet all the requirements, please contact our consultants and/or apply. We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss your candidacy and consider your application.

Travel and workplace requirements

This role includes hybrid working, with a minimum requirement of circa 2-4 days in the office per month.

For more information and to apply

We champion equality, diversity and inclusion and we know that creating innovation for our residents starts from having a diversity of experience at the decision-making table.

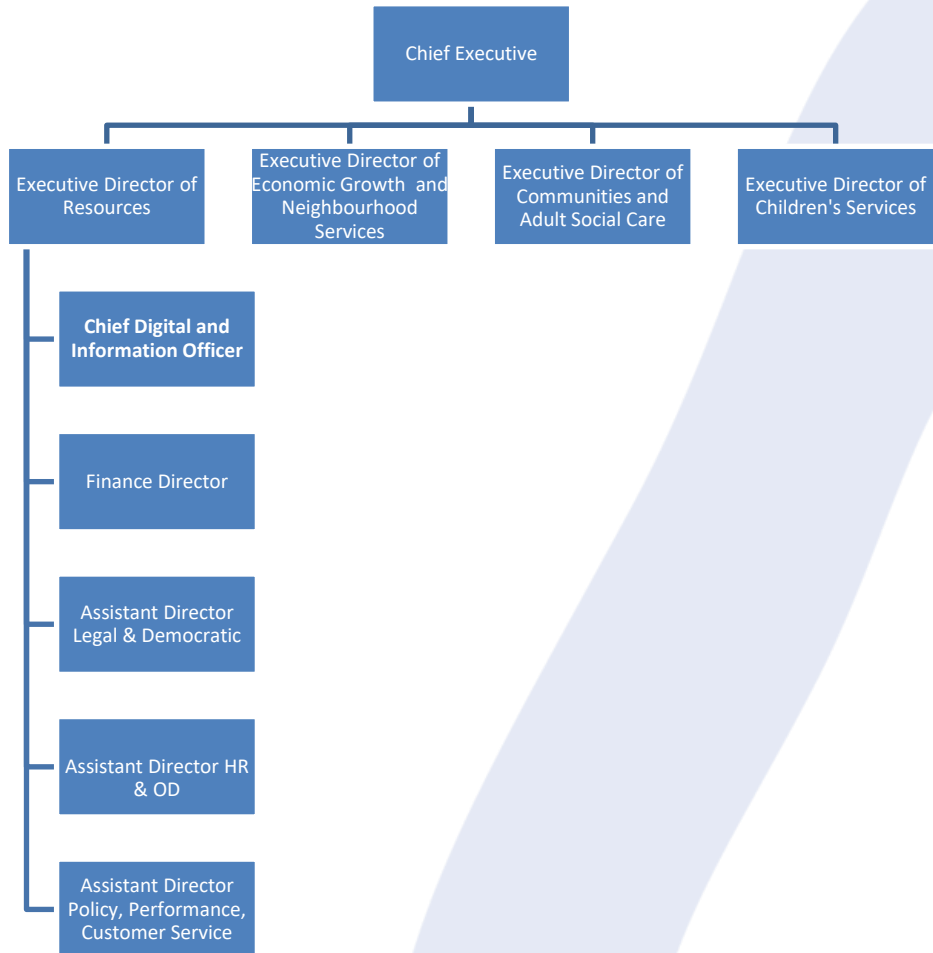
If this exciting opportunity has piqued your interest, please contact our Resourcing specialists at Penna for a confidential conversation.

- Andrew Tromans on 07805 226301 or andrew.tromans@penna.com
- Ali Tasker on 07514 728114 or ali.tasker@penna.com

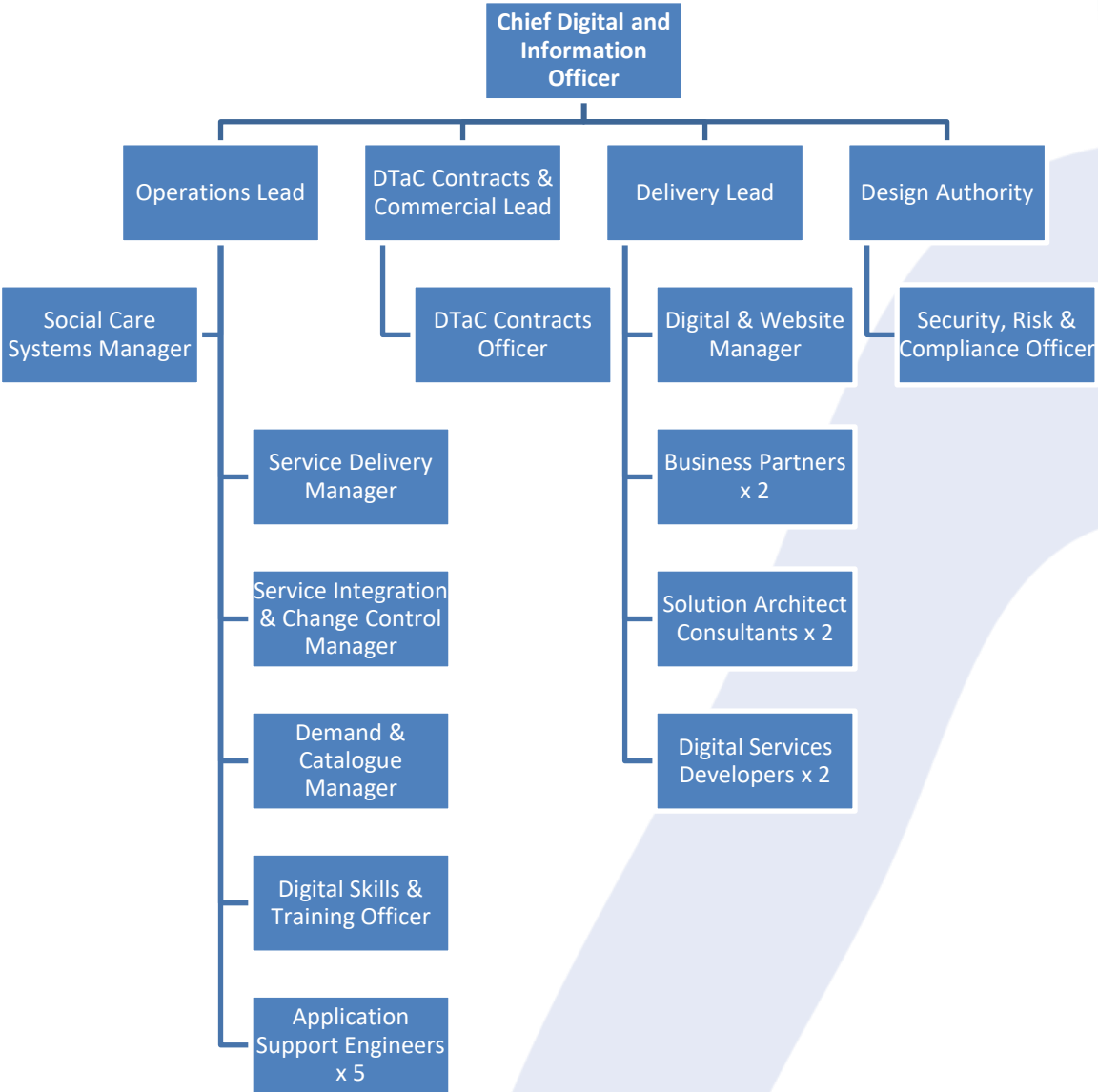
Closing Date: 29th September 2024

Structure Chart

Senior Team:



Digital & Information Service



Job Description & Person Specification

Job Description

Job Title:	Chief Digital and Information Officer		
Grade:	RSMA	Salary:	£88,679 to £103,255
Reports to:	Executive Director for Resources		
Accountable to:	Executive Director for Resources	Conditions:	JNC for Chief Officers
Direct Reports:	Digital & ICT Operations Lead Digital & ICT Delivery Lead DTaC Contracts and Commercial Lead Digital & ICT Design Authority PMO & Change Delivery Manager	Total Staff	48

Main Purpose of the Job:

1. To lead the Council's Digital strategy and functions and develop the Council's strategic approach in these areas, which includes meeting customer expectations and efficient and effective Council service delivery.
2. To position ICT and Digital as a corporate enabler of Council objectives.
3. To realise the transformational benefits that digital can deliver to an organisation.
4. To promote innovation, efficiency and customer focus in service delivery through the use of ICT.
5. As a member of the Senior Leadership Group, take a lead role in transforming and strengthening the organisational culture, ensuring that our '*Team Reading*' values and approach are lived and embedded.

Key Responsibilities:

1. To develop and implement the Council's digital strategy and implement processes and training as necessary to facilitate delivery.
2. To ensure delivery of a sustainable, robust and reliable ICT service to all internal and external Council stakeholders.
3. To manage and review the current ICT outsource contract and lead on future direction of travel.
4. To be accountable to the Executive Director, developing and supporting operational managers both within and outside the service and ensuring objectives and targets are delivered.
5. To contribute to developing the Council's Corporate Plan & other strategies. Specifically:

- Digital Strategy
 - Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - Customer Service Strategy
6. Member of the Resources Directorate Management Team.
 7. To drive and embed the Council's Organisational Development Strategy across the organisation, in conjunction with senior leadership colleagues to develop a high performing, motivated and highly skilled workforce.
 8. To manage the delivery, improvement, and performance of the Digital and IT service area, leading, inspiring and coaching managers and employees.
 9. To ensure the service area delivers its Corporate Plan objectives and embeds a system of improvement so that 'traditional thinking' is challenged and that best practice and innovation is pursued.
 10. To initiate new strategies and practices to support new delivery models and best practice in Reading, as well as attracting outside investment and actively seeking opportunities to trade services and increase commercialisation.
 11. To shape strategic plans for the directorate and the Council in close consultation with lead members and partner organisations in a cost effective and time efficient manner and ensure delivery of the key targets and outcomes.
 12. To participate in corporate programme boards developing strategy and policy; implement programmes and projects to improve service delivery
 13. To ensure Members of the Council are supported in their leadership and community roles through the provision of appropriate technology.
 14. To be accountable for the budget for the service, ensuring compliance with the Council's Constitution and Standing Orders and that the Council receives value for money from its expenditure.

Information Common to all Reading Borough Council Job Descriptions

1. All work performed and duties undertaken must be carried out in accordance with relevant Council and Departmental policies and procedures, within legislation, and with regard to the needs of our customers and the diverse community we serve.
2. This document sets out the main dimensions of the job it describes. It does not define all individual tasks, which may be expected to change from time to time to meet operational needs.
3. Job holders will be expected to be flexible in their duties and carry out any other duties commensurate with the grade and falling within the general scope of the job, as requested by management.

Health & Safety/Risk Management

1. Ensure that all aspects of the Council's Health & Safety Policies and Procedures are adhered to.
2. Be responsible for identifying and managing all risks associated with the job role through effective application of internal controls and risk assessments to support the achievement of corporate and service objectives.
3. To be a member of the Council's Emergency Response Team at SILVER level and deputise for the Executive Director/Chief Executive at GOLD level as required.

Contacts and Relationships

At this level the post holder will have significant contact with Elected Members and senior officers of the Council. As the lead officer for this area, the post holder will have contact with the public through engagement led by the Council as well as planned and unplanned communication with local media.

Other Role Information

This is a politically-restricted post, and the post holder cannot be elected as a councillor in any local authority.

Person Specification

Qualifications

1. Degree level or equivalent experience.
2. Relevant professional qualification and professional membership of a relevant professional body.
3. Evidence of continuous professional development

Experience

1. Significant experience of leading or delivering Digital and IT services at a strategic/senior management level and in advising at Board level.
2. Proven experience of realising the benefits of digital transformation.
3. Proven experience of developing and delivering Digital and IT strategies and policy that support organisational ambitions and priorities.
4. Experience of senior management in a large, diverse and complex organisation.
5. Significant demonstrable experience of managing and delivering major change projects and programmes that deliver service improvement, increased efficiencies and cultural change in a large and complex organisation.
6. Experience in the formulation of policy, analysis, advice and implementation to senior managers, board and partners.
7. Demonstrable experience of engagement with high profile and influential stakeholders.
8. Track record of delivering savings through effective procurement and contract management interventions.
9. Track record of identifying opportunities and initiating new ideas, taking advantage of legislation and financial opportunities to maximise resources.
10. A successful track record of working with partners to negotiate, agree and influence outcomes to help further corporate objectives.
11. Significant experience as an efficient and effective people manager, leading, motivating, managing and developing a professional function and teams to achieve desired outcomes.
12. Experience of successfully managing budgets of a comparable scope and scale.
13. A successful record of delivering high quality professional and customer oriented services.

Knowledge

1. Excellent understanding and knowledge of relevant IT and data management-related legislation, regulations and policies.
2. Commercially aware with an up to date and relevant knowledge of procurement and commissioning best practice.
3. Awareness of large and complex public service organisations.
4. Awareness of local government operations and services, how they interact with customers and how Council services interface with key public service partners e.g. police, health.

Skills and Abilities

1. Creativity and imagination in seeing new approaches, painting the vision, overcoming obstacles and showing that ambitious goals can be achieved.
2. An ability to build strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders, working collaboratively, obtaining the trust of a wide range of individuals and organisations, working as part of multi-function teams.
3. Excellent communication and negotiating skills with the ability to present complex issues in a simple and easy to understand way for internal and external audiences.
4. Good political judgement, with an ability to gain the confidence of a wide range of stakeholders.
5. Ability to provide timely, accurate and correct written and verbal advice at Board level, to develop and articulate the strategic direction for the organisation.
6. A strong corporate cross-working ethos, able to develop shared approaches with colleagues across the council and beyond and enable joined-up planning and shared values and objectives.
7. An enabler, with the ability to manage a wide range of complex issues and agendas at the same time and drive change through influence and diplomacy.
8. Commercial awareness and approach, recognising the importance of value for money in all Council activity.
9. Excellent judgement and analysis with the ability to broker solutions to complex problems.
10. Tenacity and resilience, for example challenging existing ways of doing things and raising performance and standards.
11. The ability to lead, develop and motivate staff and teams to effect change and deliver improvement and achieve desired outcomes.
12. Commitment to and understanding of equalities issues in service delivery and employment, with a commitment to corporate policies including the Equal Opportunities Policy and to ensuring that the service is compliant.
13. Ability to manage conflicting demands to tight timescales.
14. Ability to work flexibly, including attending evening meetings.

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 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.
- 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.

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

Date	Activity
Closing Date	29 th September 2024
First Stage Interviews	Circa 7 th October (to be confirmed)
Assessment Centre	28 th October
Final Interviews	1 st November (candidates will be required in-person in Reading)

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

<https://execroles.penna.com/>

For further information or confidential discussion, please contact Andrew Tromans on 07805 226301 or Ali Tasker on 07514 728114.