

Head of Highways and Coastal Maintenance

Salary: Band 15 £73,968 - £82,671 per annum

Contract: Permanent

Hours: 37 hours per week

The Role

Reporting to the Assistant Director for Infrastructure, you will be responsible for the maintenance and strategic management of the city's civil engineering infrastructure.

Your title will be "Head of Highways and Coastal Maintenance" and you will have overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of the city's highways including carriageways, footways, lighting and signage as well as the maintenance of newly built and existing coastal flood defence schemes.

Regarding highways, the council contracts out the maintenance and operations of its highways to Ensign/Colas under a 25 year PFI. Part of your role is to represent the council's interest as client and ensure best value for money is achieved on a daily basis. As Head of Department, you will be named as the council's representative under the contract.

The PFI will end in 2030. To help with the expiry of the PFI and the transition to a new way of delivering highway maintenance, PCC has employed a PFI Expiry and Future Services Strategic Lead. This role currently reports directly to the Assistant Director.

You will play a key part in PFI Expiry and will sit on the PFI Expiry steering group and board. You will work with senior officers, councillors, the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Infrastructure Projects Authority (IPA) to support in the shaping and implementation of a strategy for delivering successful contract expiry.

As the PFI contract comes to an end, there will be a transformation in the way we deliver highway maintenance. Some of the works currently delivered by Colas will be brought in house and some externalised under a new contract.

You will play a key part in this transformation and will become responsible for a growing remit of services as these are handed back from the existing contract. At the same time, you will be tasked with achieving best value for money from the Business-as-Usual function.

In addition to the above, the role extends to some areas of public realm as well as bridges, subways, retaining walls etc. The role will also include the maintenance of drainage as well as existing and newly built coastal flood defences.

You will be expected to build a strong relationship with private sector utility companies including Southern Gas, Scottish and Southern Electric, Southern Water and Portsmouth Water. You will work in partnership with these companies to develop and deliver a strategy of continuous improvement and resilience of this vital infrastructure across the city.

As a strategic thinker, you will play a key part in shaping and implementing the city's agenda around public realm transformation, biodiversity, greening, decarbonisation, active travel, community safety, healthy living and travel policies in the context of Highway Maintenance and Operation. Engagement with national thinking and influencing local policies around these themes is an important aspect of this role.

You will be expected to provide leadership and expertise to your department. In particular, this will be to your direct reports, who are the Technical Lead, Operations and Performance Manager, and Commercial Manager as well as the city's lead drainage officer. You will also provide technical support to the wider Infrastructure service and on occasion to colleagues across the wider council. You will also work closely alongside the Strategic Lead for PFI Expiry and Future Services as well as the Strategic Lead for Coastal Flood Defence; both of whom report currently to the Assistant Director.

You will form part of the Senior Leadership group reporting to the Assistant Director of Infrastructure and be a key player when it comes to developing an inclusive, diverse, equal and successful team.

The Person

Portsmouth City Council (PCC) is looking for an ambitious, high calibre individual who has excellent people skills, is business focused and is a forward-thinking creative leader who can build successful teams and relationships.

This role requires an individual with a vision, who sets high performance standards and achieves them.

You will have excellent communication skills and be able to analyse and interpret data, and present that to officers, councillors, members of the public and external third parties in a clear and concise manner. You will also have very good contract acumen and the ability to interpret and apply contract and commercial terms and issues.

We take pride in our work by valuing others, focusing on what's important so that we make a real and positive difference for the Council as a whole. Our values are outlined

in our Ways of Working and our Guiding Principles, and if they reflect how you are and how you work then this could be the role that meets your expectations.

Very importantly PCC is looking for someone who shares our values around Respect, Integrity, Inclusivity, Diversity and Collaboration. We put people first and ensure our customers are at the heart of everything we do.

Main Responsibilities

1. Management of employees including performance development, training and PDRs.
2. Responsible for performance of direct reports and wider department.
3. Develop and implement processes and systems and build a culture of continuous improvement across the department.
4. Establish and maintain regular channels of communication with other teams and departments within Infrastructure and across the directorate and wider council as well as external organisations such as contractors employed by PCC, National Highways and the Department for Transport.
5. As a strategic leader, you will be responsible for Portsmouth City Council meeting its own statutory obligations as a Highway Authority with respect to Highways Maintenance and aspects of its operation; recognising that the vast majority of highways maintenance and operation is currently contracted out to the PFI contractor, Colas.
6. You will take a broad view to ensure that the council achieves both value for money and required levels of performance of the PFI contractor through effective and intelligent management.
7. You will build strong and proactive relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders and many diverse groups that reflect the council's priority to support diversity and equality throughout the city.
8. Supported by your Operations and Performance Manager, you will help shape strategies relating to greening, biodiversity, street trees and decarbonisation, and ensure the PFI contractor delivers on both local and national targets.
9. You will be responsible for ensuring effective communication from the PFI contractor and other contractors involved in highway maintenance, to both internal and external stakeholders including councillors, businesses, residents, utility companies and operators.

10. You will provide regular feedback and forge effective professional working relationships with the Assistant Director, chief officers of the city council, strategic leads and Councillors including Cabinet members.
11. Regarding the PFI Highways Maintenance Contract, you will be responsible for the client-side management of the contract for the remaining term and for managing the effective hand-back of the project network and associated assets to ensure compliance with the contractual specification and achievement of value for money. This responsibility includes the day-to-day management of the client side services and scrutiny of the PFI contractor's operation and investment to maintain a highway network that meets the required contractual standards. This principally relates to the condition of the assets (carriageways, footways, lamp columns, signs etc) in terms of structural adequacy, cleanliness and general condition , and also operational aspects linked to network management and availability.
12. You will implement and shape a culture of continuous improvement across your service and that of Ensign/Colas. You will chair the PFI Network Board and approve targets and KPIs that are related to the PFI contract and its core objectives.
13. With the help of your team, you will monitor the delivery of services to ensure contractual compliance and take a lead role in the Council's commercial negotiations with the Service Provider, ensuring that the contract performs within its overall financial envelope.
14. Your department will also manage those highway assets that sit outside the PFI. These may be whole or part assets and these currently make up no more than around 5% to 10% of all highway assets; the remainder lying within the PFI. This balance will change as assets are handed over from the PFI and into the Council's own responsibility.
15. Your department will grow to also manage coastal and drainage assets and some areas of public realm that are currently under construction and/or not included as part of the PFI Highways Maintenance Contract.
16. Supported by your team and working with specialist consultants, you will produce and deliver a successful asset management strategy for non-PFI assets. This will include identifying, inspecting, assessing, repairing and/or replacing assets. The strategy will include a plan of forecast spend and programme of works. The strategy and resulting plan will be in accordance with the DfTs requirements for successful asset management.

17. You will translate asset management strategies into day-to-day operations; effectively managing the Highways PFI Contract and ever growing non-PFI assets by balancing competing service demands, resourcing, financial limitations and contractual constraints to deliver co-ordinated and planned programmes.
18. You will complete management instructions and reasonable requests from the Assistant Director.

Qualifications

Essential:

- Educated to degree level or equivalent with good experience in the client-side management of service contracts and/or strategic service-based contracts with values similar to that of PCCs Highways PFI.
- Have an appropriate professional qualification (e.g. CEng together with membership of the appropriate professional body e.g. MICE) or demonstrated performance over a substantial period at this level.

Desirable:

- A suitable project management qualification e.g. Prince 2.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

The person in this role will:

- Be a strategic thinker with a strong aptitude for financial and contract management.
- Be a scenario planner who is an excellent people manager capable of building a high-performing successful team.
- Be a compassionate leader and also one who is determined in the face of a challenge.
- Be an excellent communicator, both in writing and speaking.
- Have experience in reviewing delivery performance, carrying out research and preparing reports.
- Have achieved success in financial planning and budgetary control.

- Have good project management experience.
- Have experience of leading successful commercial negotiations, holding contractors to account and applying appropriate sanctions where necessary to ensure effective performance management of service delivery.
- Have a good understanding of the obligations of a Highway Authority under Highways Act 1980 and NRSWA.
- Have an understanding of PFI financing, legal framework and outcome-based performance management; with a willingness to seek expert advice in financial and commercial matters where necessary.
- Have experience in client-side contract management of large, complex contracts.

Additional Information

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

As part of any recruitment process, Portsmouth City Council collects and processes personal data relating to job applicants. Portsmouth City Council is committed to being transparent about how it collects and uses that data and to meeting its data protection obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Completing and sending an application in for a vacancy is your consent for us to process your data for the purpose of recruitment. Your data is not used in any other way and you can withdraw your consent at any point in the recruitment process and we will destroy or delete your information. For more detailed information on what we collect, how we use, store, delete data and your rights you can access a privacy statement on our Job board.

You will need to demonstrate that you have the Right to Work in the UK. No post will be offered without it.