LGC Awards 2026 30th ANNIVERSARY
Most Improved Council

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Head of Digital Services

Candidate Pack



www.**sandwell**.gov.uk

MEET OUR SERVICE DIRECTOR



David Scott
Transformation & Digital Services

Welcome, and thank you for your interest in becoming Sandwell Council's Head of Digital Services.

I lead Transformation and Digital Services, bringing together our digital ambition and wider portfolio of council-wide change. My role is to ensure that digital, data, technology and AI are central to how we redesign services, improve resident experience and build a more modern, productive and resilient Council.

This is an exciting time to join us. We are delivering on our new Digital, Data and AI Strategies, reviewing our wider technology and enterprise architecture, and developing a clearer roadmap for modern platforms, stronger data, responsible AI and excellent digital services. Alongside this, an ambitious transformation portfolio creates significant opportunities for digital to unlock change across every part of the organisation.

I am looking for a strategic, inspiring and collaborative leader who can set direction, build confidence and turn ambition into delivery. You will lead a broad and talented service, influence at the highest levels and help make digital a visible force for better outcomes across Sandwell. I hope you are excited by the opportunity and look forward to hearing from you.



Digital Services at Sandwell

Digital Services sits at the centre of Sandwell Council's ambition to deliver modern, accessible and effective public services. We provide the technology, platforms, data, connectivity, security and digital expertise that keep the Council running, while creating the capabilities that enable services to transform.

The Opportunity

The Head of Digital Services will provide council-wide strategic leadership across digital, data and technology. The role will lead excellent core services and shape the next generation of our digital offer, connecting corporate priorities, service needs and resident outcomes to clear strategies, investment choices and a deliverable roadmap.

The postholder will work closely with Executive Directors, service leaders and the Transformation team. They will ensure digital expertise is involved from the outset of major change, joining up customer experience, service design, people, process, data and technology. Digital will underpin the wider transformation portfolio, helping programmes move from ambition to scalable delivery and measurable benefit.

This is a role with genuine reach and influence. You will lead multidisciplinary teams, develop strong relationships and make the possibilities of digital clear and accessible to colleagues across the Council. You will balance ambition with strong stewardship of essential services, create the conditions for innovation and make sure successful ideas can be adopted safely and at scale.

Success will mean a confident, outward-looking and highly regarded Digital Service: one that delivers excellent day-to-day services, provides clear strategic direction and is recognised as a critical partner in improving outcomes for Sandwell's residents.



The Service You Will Lead

Digital Services is a significant corporate service at the heart of how Sandwell Council operates. It provides the technology, applications, connectivity, cyber security, data and digital capabilities that support day-to-day services, while enabling the Council's wider transformation ambitions. The service has strong operational foundations, but also a significant modernisation agenda ahead.

- People: Around 100 employees, supported by contractors and specialist capacity, with experienced teams, strong operational knowledge and an established apprenticeship pipeline.

- Technology: A large and complex estate covering more than 500 applications, thousands of end-user devices, infrastructure, networks, cloud services, integrations and supplier arrangements.

- Investment: Significant expenditure across people, technology, licensing, suppliers and infrastructure, with work underway to create a clearer single view of technology costs, contracts, assets and future investment.

- Performance: Strong operational delivery despite growing demand, including 98.41% incident SLA achievement, 86.5% first-contact resolution and 100% customer satisfaction in June 2026.

- Modernisation: An ambitious programme is already underway covering cloud and connectivity, hardware, application and licence rationalisation, supplier management, cyber security, data governance, Power BI and Microsoft Fabric, AI, asset management and the future operating model.

- Leadership: The Head of Digital Services reports to the Service Director for Transformation & Digital Services and will play a key role in moving the service from strong operational delivery towards a more strategic, modern and organisation-wide digital capability.



Our Digital Priorities

Digital services and customer experience: expanding resident-facing digital services and online customer journeys, enabling more end-to-end digital services, strengthening accessibility and inclusion, and exploring the AI-enabled customer contact and self-service capabilities.

Digital, Data and AI Strategies: setting a clear council-wide direction for digital services, stronger data, better insight, responsible AI, automation and the capabilities needed to deliver at scale.

Technology and enterprise architecture: shaping our future applications, platforms, cloud, integration and data landscape, with a clear roadmap for investment and modernisation.

Data, insight, automation and AI: strengthening data ownership and governance, improving integration and insight, growing business intelligence, reporting, low-code automation and workflow capability, and making responsible use of secure generative AI and productivity tools and automation.

Infrastructure, cloud and connectivity: progressing cloud hosting and platform options, network modernisation and modern network connectivity, while strengthening resilience, recovery and business continuity.



Applications and platforms: rationalising the application estate, reducing technical debt, improving lifecycle planning and enabling services to gain greater value from their core systems.

Cyber, assurance and trust: continuing to strengthen cyber security, identity and access management, technical assurance, information governance and responsible technology use.

Excellent digital services: building a strong service culture, developing digital capability and using the independent review of digital capability and the future operating model to help shape a modern, responsive and outcome-focused operating model



Digital-enabled Transformation

Digital Services will play a leading role in the Council's wider transformation portfolio, including:

Customer and community access: improving how residents find, access and complete services through joined-up digital and assisted channels, better customer journeys and stronger use of insight.

Adult Social Care: enabling improvements to the front door, prevention, strengths-based practice, technology-enabled care, information sharing and more effective use of data.

Children's Services and SEND: supporting better digital journeys, case and workflow improvement, stronger information and insight, and improved experiences for children, young people and families.

Brilliant Everyday and the Council's enterprise resource planning platform: helping embed modern people, finance and procurement processes, improve data and reporting, increase adoption and realise the value of the Council's investment.

Place, assets and fleet: using digital tools, data, mobile working, automation and connected systems to support future operating models and make better use of Council resources.

Council-wide productivity: enabling simpler processes, better collaboration and responsible use of AI and automation so staff can focus more time on outcomes for residents.



We look forward to learning more about you in this process and reviewing your application.

If you'd like to find out more about our achievements, plans, and culture, from our CEO, Shokat Lal, you can watch a video now.



Our **Values** and **Behaviours**

One **team**

United and working together with a shared purpose of achieving great results

- Actively role model and create trust
- Enable honest and open communication
- Visible and approachable
- Engage in regular communication
- Recognise contributions and success
- Display a coaching leadership style and inspire others
- Encourage best practice and cross team collaboration
- Drive a healthy work-life balance
- Develop and grow future talent

Customer **focus**

We care about providing the best possible public service

- Manage customer's expectations
- Ensure the service works to the best outcome for the customer
- Create accessible channels for customer communication
- Encourage customers to lead in service provision
- Take a holistic view of services
- Be accessible to residents, service users, customers and employees
- Engage with customers, seek feedback and enable continuous improvement

Inclusive

Treating each other with respect and knowing our diversity is our strength

- Create an inclusive environment to encourage a voice for everyone
- Create opportunities and champions diversity and inclusivity
- Seek feedback from all audiences to facilitate co-production
- Seek to understand our diverse communities
- Actively challenge barriers to inclusion
- Encourage diversity of thought and perspectives to overcome challenges

Our Values and Behaviours

Ambitious

Striving for excellence, always looking to get better and making sure everyone can take pride in our borough

- Promote a growth mindset
- Communicate the organisation's ambitions and desired outcomes
- Lead, manage and communicate change
- Encourage and inspire creativity and innovation within boundaries
- Seek and encourage everyone to be the best in class
- Create channels for giving and receiving feedback
- Tackle under-performance early and challenge unacceptable behaviour with courage
- Grow personal credibility
- Communicate with passion and integrity to maintain and elevate the reputation of the service and the council

Accountable

Deliver what we say we will

- Create a clear vision and strategy
- Consider external and internal factors
- Encourage learning from feedback and complaints
- Promote resilience and adaptability
- Set clear expectations and standards for self and others
- Provide resources for service provision
- Empower others to solve problems and take ownership
- Give support to strengthen team and personal resilience
- Make timely and well-judged decisions



PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB DESCRIPTION



Service Director - Transformation & Digital Services

Head of Digital Services
Council-wide digital leadership, excellent core services and transformation enablement

The Head of Digital Services will lead these interconnected capabilities and work alongside the wider Transformation and Digital Services leadership team.

Digital Experience & Service Transformation
Online services, customer journeys, accessibility, inclusion and adoption

Applications, Platforms & Integration
Applications, platforms, integration, rationalisation and lifecycle planning

Data, Insight, Automation & AI
Data governance, insight, business intelligence and reporting, automation and responsible AI

Infrastructure, Cloud & Connectivity
Cloud, networks, hosting, end-user technology, resilience and continuity

Cyber, Architecture & Assurance
Cyber security, enterprise architecture, assurance and information governance

Service Operations, Portfolio & Investment
Service management, portfolio delivery, assets, licensing, investment and benefits



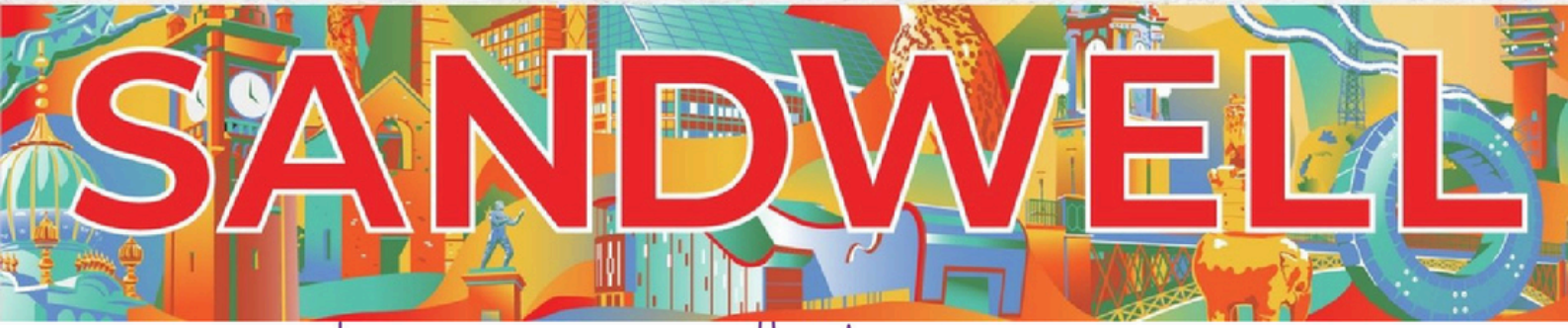
A NEW STORY FOR SANDWELL

Made 50 years ago from six proud towns, Sandwell is a place built on making things happen. It’s where industry met innovation, and where strong communities still shape the future.

The Sandwell Story is a campaign and programme of work to celebrate the people, places and partnerships that make this borough a great place to live, work, learn and visit. Find out more at the Sandwell Story website.

Watch the New Story for Sandwell video







LOCATION



Sandwell is a metropolitan borough in the Black Country, which is made up of six towns - Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich.

Located in the West Midlands, Sandwell borders Birmingham city, Dudley borough, Walsall borough and Wolverhampton city.

The borough has excellent access to the national motorway network with five junctions feeding in to the M5 and M6 motorways serving the South West, South East and North West regions of the UK.

Sandwell also benefits from a mainline train station - Sandwell and Dudley and the Midland Metro.



OUR OFFER TO YOU

Join the largest employer in Sandwell, where over 3,500 of our diverse employees thrive in hundreds of unique roles.

To support you to develop your career with us, we offer:

- A competitive pay progression structure and leave allowance
- Hybrid working arrangements (3 days a week on site) and a flexitime system (subject to needs of the role)
- Supportive staff networks including Culture Champions, helping to fulfil our organisational culture aspirations and make us a fully inclusive employer
- A confidential counselling service (BACP approved) and a mediation service is available on managerial referral
- Talent initiatives including apprenticeship programmes at all levels, and the prestigious National Graduate Development Programme.
- Learning and development including management development training, employee wellbeing workshops and job role specific training.
- A professional coaching and mentoring offer
- Employee performance and development processes with regular check-ins and an annual review to help you be your best
- Recognition for your hard work through our ‘We our Sandwell’ award scheme and colleague appreciation schemes
- Work that makes a real difference to our customers and residents, continually improving our boroughs.
- Access to trade unions



Our aim is to be an outstanding Council and we recognise that part of that is providing the best employee experience possible. At Sandwell we care about our people and commit to keeping our colleagues safe and well at work.

To make sure everyone can be their best and feel like they count, our support offer includes:

- Our employee assistance programme with free, confidential, 24/7 helpline service staffed by professional counsellors
- Access to occupational health services
- Wellbeing champions network
- Supportive carers and parental policies
- Generous maternity, paternity and adoption leave
- Disability passport scheme
- To help you make the most of your money we offer:
- Membership of West Midlands Pension Fund with generous employer contributions
- Staff deals through our employee benefits scheme

HOW TO APPLY

Finding the right talent for our roles is very important to us here at Sandwell Council. To help us understand how you might be a fit for our organisation, please submit an up to date CV along with a supporting statement, no longer than 2 sides of A4, detailing how your skills and experience align with our requirements for the role. Please help us to understand more about:

We want to understand the scale of your ambition, the leadership you would bring and the impact you have already delivered. Please include clear examples of how you have:

- set and delivered a digital, data or technology strategy across a large and complex organisation;
- led a broad Digital Service spanning core technology, applications, platforms, data, architecture, connectivity, cyber security and end-user services;
- influenced senior leaders and created shared ownership of organisation-wide digital change;
- used digital, data, automation or AI to enable service redesign and measurable transformation;
- shaped technology or enterprise architecture and translated it into practical roadmaps and investment choices;
- delivered reliable, resilient and customer-focused operational services while progressing strategic modernisation;
- built high-performing multidisciplinary teams and a culture of ambition, inclusion, collaboration and excellent service; and
- delivered tangible benefits for residents, staff and services.

Tell us what you personally led, the choices you made, how you brought people with you and the outcomes achieved. We are particularly interested in how you would shape Sandwell's Digital, Data and AI Strategies, use our architecture review to inform the future roadmap, and mobilise Digital Services as a critical enabler of our wider transformation portfolio.



If you have any questions about the role or process, please reach out to our talent team for an informal discussion. If you require any reasonable adjustments as part of your application journey please also let us know how we can support you.

Your contact for this recruitment is Imran Butt (Talent Acquisition Advisor). You can connect with him on LinkedIn or email at Imran_Butt@sandwell.gov.uk

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