

Starfish Talent 20 – Place

Local government has not just risen to the challenges of the pandemic – it has continued to improve and innovate, working at pace and putting its communities first. Services have continued to adapt and develop in the most challenging of circumstances, and this is due to the talent and determination of officers working at every level of their organisations. With this context in mind, we have taken the opportunity to shine a light on the up-and-coming colleagues and leaders of the future. This list, which focuses on those from the 'place' portfolio of services, includes people who have been nominated for exceptional performance and going beyond 'business as usual'. These are managers making an outstanding difference to their council and communities.

Over the next twelve months Starfish Search and *The MJ* will be showcasing just a fraction of the talent and potential fizzing within local authorities up and down the country, and future articles will feature those from other service areas within local government.



Lucy Clarke
Citywide Service Manager
Salford City Council

This is Lucy's first public sector role and she has made an immediate impact on the Catering and Cleaning Service since joining in February of this year. Lucy's private sector background and experience is bringing a fresh, energised approach to business retention, development and growth and she has already begun developing her team. Lucy has recently signed up to Salford's Springboard programme for managers with high potential and is clearly a great addition to the local government family.



support the development of a £200m scheme for Gateshead Quays which includes a regional conference centre and 12,000 seat arena.

Dan Ayrton
Acting Head of Business Development and Innovation
Nottingham City Council

Dan is recognised by Nottingham's senior leadership team for being as adept at managing complex projects as he is at managing high quality front-line universal services. He played a leading role in developing the Council's local COVID-19 shielding support



programme and has, most recently, supported the Chief Executive and political leadership to develop Nottingham's Recovery and Improvement Plan. His role in determining a positive way ahead for the council shows all the signs of a future leader in the making.

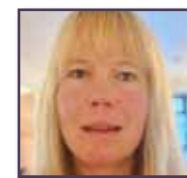
Lisa Woa
Head of Placemaking for Meridian Water
London Borough of Enfield

With a background in architecture and urban design, Lisa has previously worked on international projects to transform Hanoi and the downtown of Doha. Now using her skills in North London, she led the team which secured £170m strategic infrastructure funding from central government for Meridian Water and the wider Enfield area. Her current remit is oversight of the programme masterplan to create 10,000 new homes and 6,000 jobs over the next 25 years. Lisa's passion for placemaking and inclusive environments stands out above the crowd.



Amy Harris
Waste Strategy Manager
London Borough of Bromley

Amy's leadership and organisational skills are recognised across the department, contributing to Bromley's position as one of London's leading recycling boroughs. Her approach to resident communication is held as a benchmark across the Council as is her management of the borough's disposal contract. Amy's focus on the circular economy and waste minimisation has developed her presence in the wider waste industry and so we look forward to watching her future achievements.



Anthony Walker
Homelessness Strategy and External Relationships Manager
City of Wolverhampton Council

Anthony's nomination recognises his outstanding contribution to supporting the



Janna Walker
Head of Service, Highways Commissioning
Leicestershire County Council

In just three years, Janna has progressed from her role as a senior transport planner to Head of Service and is currently Acting Assistant Director within Environment and Transport. She has impressed colleagues with her strong people leadership, strategic approach to growth policy and her grip and delivery of technical operational services. Her outstanding communication skills and ability to take people with her demonstrate impressive leadership potential.



Chrissy Urry
Head of Planning and Development
Buckinghamshire Council

Christine is managing a major transformation programme across planning to ensure the service can support the high levels of anticipated growth in Buckinghamshire. Her passion for innovation has resulted in the Council partnering with MHCLG on some exciting new digital projects and she also played a key role setting up and managing the Aylesbury Support Hub alongside volunteers and community groups in the early stages of the pandemic.



Narinder Singh
Strategic Funding Programmes Manager
Gateshead Council

In his former role leading on community capacity building and social entrepreneurship, Narinder helped to develop over 100 social enterprises providing services to 15,000 of Gateshead's most disadvantaged residents. He currently manages the DWP North East commercial contract, assisting 5,000 new start-ups to open their doors for business and is also playing a key role accessing funding via the Government's levelling up agenda, to



City's most vulnerable people as we entered the first lockdown in March 2020. His work co-locating housing advice together with support agencies to help people with substance misuse and mental health issues and a wrap-around service for homeless residents was a first for the Council. His commitment extended to an on-site presence seven days a week, spending time away from his family to protect those most in need of help.

Helen Holland
Strategic Planning and Development Manager
Blackburn with Darwen Council

Helen's commercial aptitude has seen her work on a wide range of developments within the Growth Team that she set up in 2017 and the development of new Joint Venture Partnerships with respected local companies. Her strong personal links to the borough underpin her passion for highlighting how place making and planning improve life chances and the built environment. This passion for her local community also saw her assume responsibility for the Council's Food Distribution Hub at the onset of the pandemic.



Laura Taylor Green
Head of Wellbeing and Public Health
Essex County Council

Working within the Place Department as a public health professional is a unique opportunity for Laura who partners with the County's biggest anchor institutions to promote local job creation, skills and apprenticeships. She also works closely with Planning colleagues to embed healthy design into the County's new communities of tens of thousands of homes and with NHS partners to address inequalities arising from economic factors in Jaywick and Clacton, two of the most deprived neighbourhoods in England.



Kate Price
Neighbourhoods and Community Enabling Manager
Norwich City Council

Kate has had huge success in finding innovative ways to involve and empower community residents and partners. She has overseen the development of the LUMi project, a digital sharing platform that has been designed collectively to inspire residents to get more involved and she has led the development of social value reports for community buildings and web tools for community groups. Kate's commitment to tackling inequality and making better use of shared resource via grass roots collaboration sets a high bar.



Mel Watson
Transport Coordination Manager
Cornwall Council

Mel joined Cornwall during the pandemic to face exceptional challenges across school transport services, particularly for children with special educational needs. The function had only recently restructured and there were additional challenges around the mismatch between government guidance on shared journeys and parents' expectations. Mel navigated them with skill and diplomacy and built confidence with parents, her strategic director and elected members. Her relationship building with Cornwall's commercial bus operators has also secured the Government's commitment to a Cornwall bus fares reduction pilot. Cornwall are clear that Mel is a leader of the future.



Sam Saxby
Climate Lead Change
Calderdale City Council

Sam is Calderdale's Climate Change lead, supporting the council and the borough in tackling their climate emergency in the context of three devastating floods in the last eight years. Sam



supports the Climate Change Committee and is recognised for her imaginative solutions to the climate challenges Calderdale faces, spanning travel, landscape, housing and environment. Calderdale's leadership team describe her as a strong ambassador and star of the future within the environment sector.

Mark Catherall
Service Manager, Tourism
Sefton Council

With oversight of business tourism, destination marketing, major events and the management of Sefton's Visitor Economy, Mark also currently leads on the operational and project management of the £1.4m refurbishment of Southport Market. With colleagues, Mark also supported Southport's Town Deal submission that was successful in securing £37.5m, one of the highest awards in the country, and he will oversee the project through to completion. There is no doubt that Mark will play a critical role in the recovery of Sefton's visitor economy.



Steven Shaw
Environmental Manager
Aberdeen City Council

Steven and his team have worked alongside more than 150 community partners and thousands of residents, fostering a new wave of civic pride. The City's award-winning parks and green spaces are testament to the collaboration he has fostered with community groups. Amongst other achievements, the service has worked with schools to help deliver a £500,000 programme of play area refurbishments, introduced young park ambassadors, and grown the Branching Out programme for adults who use mental health services.



Ruth Cayford (pictured top right)
Creative Industries and Culture Manager
Cardiff Council

Ruth plays a critical role in driving culture led



regeneration which places culture, creativity and innovation at the forefront of the city's development. She is supporting Cardiff's Atlantic Wharf development – a 30 acre cultural complex in the heart of Cardiff Bay which will deliver a 15,000 capacity arena, world class theatres, and production and training facilities. Ruth is leading the Council's pioneering approach to creative education, nurturing a diverse talent pipeline to underpin and sustain inclusive growth.

Anna Wills
Asset Management Team Leader
Durham County Council

Anna is described as a unique talent in her profession and someone who combines excellent technical knowledge with strategic insight and the ability to anticipate future challenges and opportunities. Her strong customer focus, positive mindset and ability to mentor others has had a huge impact on Durham's corporate property and land service. She has been instrumental in winning hearts and minds to introduce a successful new corporate approach to the management of the Council's land and buildings estate, with a focused approach to using the Council's assets to deliver outcomes for people.



Nasir Dad
Head of Service, Regulation & Enforcement
Doncaster Council

Nasir joined Doncaster in March 2020 as Head of Service and established a strong reputation for his focus on the well-being of residents through high quality environmental health. His service has played a key role throughout the pandemic, enacting statutory duties around licensing, food safety and COVID Compliance and he is currently supporting the safe restart of retail and hospitality across the City. Nasir's contribution has led to his current role as Acting Assistant Director and strategic lead for Emergency Planning.



Mohammed Jama
Brent Hubs Manager
London Borough of Brent

Mo developed and manages a network of hubs run in partnership with voluntary sector and community groups to support and advise vulnerable residents on housing, benefits, employment and debt. He works closely with residents with complex needs, going above and beyond to support people in the most challenging of circumstances. The Hubs have played a major role during the pandemic, providing access to food for those in hardship, and Mo's commitment and relationships with people from the borough's diverse communities embodies Brent's culture and values.



Alice Henderson
Team Manager for Libraries and Performance
East Sussex County Council

Alice's career progressed from Countryside Management Strategy to overseeing the modernisation of five public libraries in East Sussex. Using the libraries network, Alice is currently establishing priority programmes for COVID recovery, targeting support to improve the life chances of vulnerable and disadvantaged adults and children. Alice is also applauded for her role in the creation of the departmental women's network and action plan. Her focus on equalities, both internally and externally, and her commitment to partnership working is recognised and valued across the Council.



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