



Director of Essex Digital Service

Stretching from the coast to the capital, Essex is an iconic part of the country. With its stunning beaches and beautiful countryside, it is a perfect mix of urban and rural areas that is a great place to live and work.

Essex is one of the most innovative, exciting and growing places in the United Kingdom, the Essex CC leader, Kevin Bentley explains. 'It has everything. It borders the capital, with lots of trains into the city, but has close links with the East of England. It's great for connectivity, and it is great place to bring up your family.'

It is a forward-looking council that is determined to make sure no one is left behind. Cllr Bentley says: 'I describe life as like a corridor which has lots of doors and people in their life travel through that corridor.'

'For many people those doors remain closed, so our job as politicians and as a council, working with our partners, is to open those doors of opportunity. That's what we are doing every single day at the county council.'

The council truly lives its values, with a strong commitment to its apprenticeship scheme and providing opportunities for young people. It

strives to be ever more inclusive and expand its offer to local people.

Now a door has opened for an exciting senior role as the council is recruiting a director of the Essex Digital Service.

'If you want to be part of a team to improve not just the place you live in, but also help those who might not otherwise have the opportunity, then you want to come here,' Cllr Bentley suggests.

'This is a real opportunity to be part of the digital revolution that is taking place. You have to continually innovate, and we are now full pelt in making sure we become one of the most exciting councils in the country to work for.'

He is determined the council will not stand still, and instead is always looking for the innovations that will take it to the next level.

Executive Director of Corporate Services at Essex, Nicole Wood, explains a bit more about the role: 'We brought our transformation services together in a single hub, and this role will lead the digital part of that.'

'We have a very ambitious Whole Council transformation plan, reimagining services for the future. This role is critical to that plan.'

While Essex already has a reputation

for innovative digital services, the council is now determined to lead the sector and is experimenting with AI and future technology, but this is only the start. It will need expertise and creativity to move forward.

The council is also keen to build its commercial relationships, both with big multinational companies and local SMEs to help on its digital journey.

'We are looking for someone who can strengthen those relationships,' Wood says, 'and really build an innovative, creative team to rethink what digital and tech operations look like in the future.'

As part of a very stable organisation, this is a role with all the building blocks in place—the council works in the cloud, has an Oracle system implemented and uses the full Microsoft suite. Essex is also in the final stages of buying a new

Social Care platform. It is a place where they are willing and able to invest in the technology needed to move services – and the community – into the future. Essex is about to start piloting some new AI technologies too.

'This isn't coming in and doing the basics,' Wood says, 'It is focussing on transformation, innovation, redesign and rethinking services. We want someone who is in tune with what Essex residents want, 'gets' customer experience & plugged into their extensive networks to see what is happening to bring that back to Essex, 'We want someone who's got plenty of energy, who's creative, who can take a risk, but who has real standing in Digital and Technology. They have to be really collaborative, building great relationships that help to open doors to bring creative energy into the parts

of the business that are looking for reinvention. 'They will need to be confident and tenacious to be able to do that, not to wait for things to come to them. And most importantly of all – in leading a team of over 200 people, they need to inspire & develop others.'

The successful candidate will be leading a large team, but with the opportunity to reshape the team to make it sector leading. And, of course, they will need to be confident in offering advice to senior politicians on how to move the digital transformation forward.

Cllr Bentley adds: 'We want someone who wants to set a legacy here that others will desire to follow. I have strong ambitions for the county and for our residents. There is an ambition to get things done and we want someone to match that.'

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Kevin Bentley – Leader, Essex CC and Nicole Wood – Executive Director of Corporate Services, Essex CC

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