



Executive Director of Rugby Borough Council recognised for how she stepped to the fore when the pandemic hit

Mannie Ketley, Executive Director, at Rugby Borough Council, stepped into the leadership position just two weeks before lockdown. She has been recognised for her contribution to the community as part of West Midlands Employers (WME) #EverydayHeroes campaign.*

Mannie has worked her way up into the position over fifteen years and six jobs so was feeling ready for the role but she describes having a rollercoaster of emotions since becoming Executive Director. She says, “The initial excitement of being offered the role, but real apprehension having seen what was happening around the world. It’s been really sobering with the reality of the tragic stories that we are hearing in our own Country and an overriding sense of making sure that we focus on doing what we need to do to keep our resident and business communities and our employees safe.”

Mannie says things won’t go back to how they were before. She says, “Most organisations will be a different shape and size. Home working is certainly here to stay, we’ve proved we can be productive at home. And digital is too – people can and will access services online.” She is hoping the work flexibility, community spirit and willingness to shop locally remains post lockdown.

Mannie credits her team for their rapid response to the pandemic. She says, “Everyone has made a key contribution, those who remained in the substantive roles have really pulled the stops out, those who have been redeployed to new roles have risen to the challenge. Without such dedication, success would just not be possible. I’m hugely grateful and so proud of everyone. For many it’s been a brilliant reminder of why we do what we do – to make a difference.”

Rebecca Davis, Chief Executive of West Midlands Employers, says, “It’s been inspiring to hear how Mannie stepped into the Executive Director position and highlights how senior leaders within the public sector have had to be highly adaptable to respond to any national

or local challenges. Like other Council Chief Executives across the country she has faced a particularly difficult period where she has had to respond to the ongoing changing pandemic situation, continue to deliver services to those vulnerable in the community and also plan for the council's recovery.”

*Local authority improvement body WME, owned by [33 councils](#) across the West Midlands, launched the campaign this month to recognise #EverydayHeroes – council workers who are working around the clock to keep essential services running and keep us safe through the coronavirus crisis.

Anyone can nominate one or more local council heroes [here](#). West Midlands Employers will review nominations in partnership with the relevant council and we will share their stories via <https://wmheroes.co.uk/meet-your-heroes/>.

Ends

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Notes to editors – About West Midlands Employers

West Midland Employers (WME) is one of 9 independent regional employer organisations nationally.

WME is a not for profit membership organisation owned by the 33 West Midlands local authorities. We are led by an Elected Member Management Board representing the membership body with a Chief Executive leading the organisation. Chief Executive Rebecca Davis is available through media interviews through the contact details above.

WME’s vision is **“to advocate, build and champion people centred organisations for a resilient and diverse public sector workforce that benefits everyone in the West Midlands”**. WME launched their new Strategic Plan 2020 -25 earlier this year <https://bit.ly/3aYsvHF> <http://www.wmemployers.org.uk/ourwork>

WME is playing a pivotal role in the Local Government response to the Covid-19 crisis and is providing daily support through their Covid-19 site (<https://wme covid19.org.uk/>), including provision of advice, innovative webinars, recruitment and resourcing and weekly bulletins [Pulse Extra bulletin](#)

WME also work in partnership with public and private sector organisations to design and deliver services on behalf of the 33 Councils in the Region, which span the employee lifecycle including: candidate attraction, recruitment, talent management, training and development, executive coaching and mentoring, leadership development, organisational design and restructuring, job evaluation, investigations, mediation and exit plans.