

Job Description

Senior Talent Acquisition Lead

Reference: PC024

Date: August 2025

Job Family: People & Culture: Talent Acquisition & Strategic Workforce Planning

Level: 3

Band: 10

Career Track: Technical, Professional and Managerial

Job Purpose

To lead and manage the organisation's talent acquisition strategy, ensuring the attraction, selection, and onboarding of high-quality candidates aligned with organisational values, workforce needs, and strategic priorities. This role will drive continuous improvement in recruitment processes, employer branding, and candidate experience.

Service Purpose

Northumberland County Council's Talent Acquisition and Strategic Workforce Planning service exists to ensure the organisation has the right people, in the right roles, at the right time to deliver its strategic objectives. This service provides a forward-looking, data-informed approach to workforce design, talent acquisition, and capability planning, enabling proactive responses to organisational change, market dynamics, and future skills requirements.

It supports leaders in making informed decisions about workforce composition, succession planning, and resourcing strategies, while maintaining robust governance over recruitment practices, workforce data, and compliance with employment legislation. Through strategic partnerships, workforce insights, and targeted talent pipelines, the service drives organisational resilience, agility, and long-term sustainability.

Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership and Management

- Lead and mentor a team of talent acquisition professionals, providing coaching and development opportunities, and fostering a high-performing team culture. This includes conducting regular 1-2-1s and annual appraisals.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of the council's overall People strategy.

Strategy Development

- Contribute to the development and implementation of the council's overall People and Culture strategy.
- Develop and implement strategic acquisition plans to meet current and future permanent and temporary workforce needs.
- Develop and oversee sourcing strategies adopting a proactive approach to attracting candidates.

Talent Acquisition & Recruitment Delivery

- Lead the end-to-end recruitment process, ensuring compliance with policies, legislation, and best practice. This will involve working collaboratively with the People and Culture Lead within the Business Operations Centre, to develop and monitor agreed SLA's.
- Manage and oversee talent pools to support future workforce planning needs building a pool of candidates identified as strong prospects for the future.
- Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of talent acquisition strategies and processes, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing changes to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.
- Lead and oversee the Councils Redeployment process.
- Champion diversity, equity, and inclusion in recruitment practices.

Employer Branding, Outreach activity

- Develop and implement employer branding strategies that position the organisation as an employer of choice across key talent markets
- Collaborate with Communications and Marketing teams to align recruitment messaging with the organisation's values, culture, and strategic priorities.
- Manage the organisation's careers page, social media presence, and recruitment marketing campaigns, ensuring consistent and engaging content.
- Monitor and enhance candidate experience throughout the recruitment journey, using feedback and data to drive improvements.
- Oversee, manage and evaluate outreach activity ensuring it promotes brand visibility and supports in attracting diverse talent.
- Leverage employee stories, testimonials, and internal success narratives to showcase the organisation's culture and career development opportunities.

Workforce Insight & Reporting

- Leverage People systems and analytics tools to support talent acquisition.
- Oversee the use and optimisation of recruitment systems (ATS) and ensure accurate reporting and data analysis.
- Monitor market trends and adapt strategies to remain competitive in talent attraction.
- Track and analyse employer brand metrics (e.g. application rates, candidate engagement, Glassdoor ratings) to inform strategy and demonstrate impact.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Ensure appropriate communication and engagement channels are developed across the People and Culture Team and beyond, that promotes effective collaboration with Strategic

People and Culture Partners, Finance, and Senior Leaders to ensure talent acquisition plans are integrated across services and align to workforce plans and succession plans.

- Partner with hiring managers to understand role requirements and provide expert guidance on sourcing strategies.

Other responsibilities

- Manage the budget for talent acquisition activities, ensuring efficient resource allocation and cost-effectiveness.
- Actively promote and represent the interests of the County Council in relation to service activities and policies at local, regional and national level, as appropriate.
- Attend and contribute to relevant committees, meetings, seminars and participate in task groups as required.

Person Specification

Professional and Technical Requirements

Qualifications

- Level 6 or above in HR or equivalent senior professional experience in a senior talent acquisition role

Knowledge, Experience and Skills

- Significant experience in talent acquisition, with a proven ability to conduct in-depth analyses and develop strategic recommendations.
- Demonstrable experience in developing and implementing long-term workforce plans and talent acquisition strategies.
- Proven experience in managing recruitment at scale.
- Experience of working with a diverse range of stakeholders, including senior managers, frontline staff, and external agencies.
- Experience in conducting market research and competitive analysis to identify best practices and innovative approaches.
- Knowledge of employment law and recruitment compliance.
- Highly competent in the use of Applicant Tracking Systems
- Strong experience in recruitment analytics.
- Experience of developing and delivering training programs tailored to specific audiences and needs.
- Understanding of budgetary processes and resource allocation within an HR context.

Core Competency Requirements

- **Communication:** Communicates across services to influence outcomes. Adapts style across organisational contexts and manages sensitive communications.
- **Collaboration:** Facilitates collaboration across teams, services, and external partners to deliver joined-up solutions.
- **Service Delivery:** Aligns delivery with strategic priorities and maintains high performance. Improves services using innovation and effective use of resources to deliver value for money.
- **Decision-Making:** Balances risk and impact in decision-making across teams or projects.
- **Digital & Data Literacy:** Uses digital systems to manage performance and inform decisions. Applies ethical judgement and explores new data sources. Analyses complex data to improve service outcomes.

- **Adaptability:** Leads teams through change using structured approaches that support clarity and resilience. Builds team cohesion and sustains service culture during transitions.
- **Problem-Solving:** Enables collaborative problem-solving and challenges existing practices to address cross-service challenges.
- **Community & Customer Focus:** Applies community insight and customer feedback to shape responsive and inclusive services.
- **Leadership:** Aligns team capability and resources to deliver meaningful outcomes. Leads projects and services within areas of expertise and across disciplines.

Strengths

- **Strategic:** You look at the big picture. You consider the wider factors and long-term implications of decisions.
- **Influencer:** You influence others, you articulate the rationale to gain their agreement.
- **Organiser:** You make plans and are well prepared. You seek to maximise time and productivity.
- **Adaptable:** You can adapt to variations in work or environment. Your effectiveness is not affected by change. You are flexible and versatile. You act as an advocate for change.
- **Team leader:** You are confident to lead a team. You effectively manage team dynamics toward a shared goal. You consider everyone's individual needs and create a genuine team spirit.

Desirable

- A strong understanding of the specific challenges and complexities of this sector, including relevant legislation, regulations, and best practices.
- Understanding of the unique workforce challenges within the sector and experience in developing strategies to address them.