

Job Description

Senior People Adviser

Reference: PC013

Date: June 2025

Job Family:	People and Culture / People
Level:	2
Band:	8
Career Track:	Technical, Professional & Supervisory

Job Purpose

To provide professional People advice to Directorates, working collaboratively with the People & Culture Team to implement the Council's people agenda. The postholder will support the delivery of the People & Culture Strategy by ensuring all advice and actions align with best practice, internal policies, and legal requirements, while promoting pace, innovation, and excellent customer service in people-related service delivery.

Service Purpose

Northumberland County Council's People Operations team provides strategic and operational support to managers and employees across the organisation, ensuring consistent, fair, and effective application of people policies and practices. As part of the wider People and Culture service, the team delivers generalist HR advice on matters such as, performance management, absence, grievances, disciplinary procedures, and organisational change. It plays a key role in enabling structural transformation by supporting consultation processes, completing impact assessments, and advising on change management. The team also contributes to the Council's People and Culture Strategy by fostering a collaborative and empowered workforce, aligned with the Council's values and strategic priorities

Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership

- Provide guidance and support to People Advisers and People Graduates, fostering their professional growth and development.

Employee Relations

- Act as the initial point of contact for managers and employees, delivering generalist HR advice across areas such as employee relations, absence, performance, and change management.
- Advise and support managers on complex casework including disciplinaries, grievances, dignity at work, capability, absence, TUPE, redundancy, and probation, ensuring fair and consistent outcomes.
- Provide guidance to managers and senior leaders on employment legislation, terms and conditions, and best practice, ensuring compliance and risk mitigation.

Management of Change

- Work with managers and wider People and Culture to implement change initiatives, and support service improvement aligned with Council objectives.
- Advise managers on restructures, including, planning, consultation, selection criteria and implementation steps
- Build effective relations with Trade unions, liaising effectively with recognised trade union through change, ensuring transparent and collaborative communication.
- Support organisational design and workforce planning, including reviewing job descriptions and advising on job architecture framework.
- Provide wellbeing and change support, signposting support resources and promoting positive employee experience throughout change.
- Work with managers to embed diversity, equity, and inclusion principles, ensuring people practices are fair and non-discriminatory.
- Design and deliver formal and informal training sessions on People policies and procedures to managers and teams across the organisation.

Stakeholder Management

- Build strong stakeholder relationships, act as a champion for the People Operations team, and promote a positive working culture across the organisation.
- Collaborate with OD, and Acquisition colleagues to deliver integrated people solutions and contribute to strategic projects including BEST New Ways of Working.

Policy Development

- Develop and review of People policies and procedures, ensuring they reflect current legislation and support inclusive, transparent practices.

Workforce Insight, Technology and Reporting

- Deliver timely and accurate workforce data to support decision-making on absence, turnover, vacancies, and other key metrics.
- **Represent the Council Professionally:** Attend and contribute to internal and external meetings, committees, and conferences, representing the Council's interests and supporting strategic HR initiatives.

Person Specification**Professional and Technical Requirements****Qualifications**

- Level 6 qualification or above in a Human resources or equivalent senior professional experience. Member of CIPD and Demonstrates ongoing development in specialist or emerging areas relevant to the service or role

Knowledge, Experience and Skills

- **Employment Legislation and People Practice:** Strong working knowledge of employment law, good management practices, and HR policies, gained through significant experience in a people-focused environment.

Core Competency Requirements

- **Communication:** Tailors communication to audience and context. Uses listening and questioning techniques to clarify complex issues and support team understanding.
- **Collaboration:** Coordinates with colleagues and partners to deliver shared goals and improve service outcomes.
- **Service Delivery:** Identifies and resolves service issues, improves processes, and ensures policy alignment. Promotes efficiency and avoids waste through practical improvements.
- **Decision-Making:** Uses evidence and judgement to resolve issues and improve delivery.
- **Digital & Data Literacy:** Interprets data to improve services. Applies knowledge of digital risks and ethical data use. Uses basic analytical techniques to support decision making.
- **Adaptability:** Adjusts approach responsively to evolving needs and priorities. Identifies opportunities for continuous improvement and supports others through change.
- **Problem-Solving:** Analyses problems and applies knowledge to develop practical solutions and suggest improvements.
- **Community & Customer Focus:** Engages with service users and customers to improve delivery, ensure accessibility, and reflect diverse needs.
- **Leadership:** Supervises day-to-day activity and supports team development. Coordinates tasks and resources to meet the needs of the service.

Strengths

- **Explainer:** You communicate thoughts and ideas, verbally or in writing. You simplify complexities and adapt communication so others can understand.
- **Problem Solver:** You take a positive approach to tackling problems. You find ways to identify suitable solutions.
- **Influencer:** You influence others, you articulate the rationale to gain their agreement.
- **Resilient:** You have inner composure, recover quickly from setbacks and learn from them.
- **Organiser:** You make plans and are well prepared. You seek to maximise time and productivity.

Desirable

- Maintained chartership of CIPD
- Previous experience working within the public sector, with an understanding of its unique challenges and requirements.
- Experience of managing people.