

Job Description

Senior Change Lead (BEST Programme)

Reference:

Date: November 2025

Job Family:	Strategy and Transformation
Level:	3
Band:	10
Career Track:	Technical, Professional & Supervisory & Management

Job Purpose

The Senior Change Lead is a senior practitioner responsible for delivering expert, hands-on leadership in change management for the BEST transformation programme. This role combines strategic oversight with direct involvement in change activities, ensuring the successful implementation and adoption of key initiatives.

The Senior Change Lead will drive cultural and operational change in alignment with Northumberland County Council's vision, values, and behaviours, working closely with the Senior Change Communications & Engagement Lead and Change & Communications Advisors to deliver a cohesive and effective change management approach.

Service Purpose

Northumberland County Council's BEST programme is a strategic initiative focused on improving the council's efficiency and sustainability, ultimately enhancing services for residents. The programme transforms service delivery to better meet resident needs by modernising operations, enhancing digital services, and empowering communities. The Programme Management Office (PMO) provides governance, oversight, and support for the BEST programme, ensuring alignment and coordination across all change initiatives.

Duties and Responsibilities

Strategy Development

- Develop and implement a robust change management strategy aligned with the BEST Programme's objectives and the Communities First ethos, incorporating measurable KPIs and continuous improvement mechanisms. This strategy will guide all change initiatives within the programme, ensuring a consistent and effective approach, from initial assessment to post-implementation evaluation.
- Contribute to the development and refinement of the overall BEST Programme strategy, providing expert advice and guidance to other programme leads on change management considerations.

Change Leadership & Capability Development

- Act as a senior practitioner by providing hands-on change management support, guidance, and mentorship to the PMO and project teams.

- Establish and promote best practices in change management, ensuring effective implementation and successful adoption of change initiatives.
- Create and implement frameworks to assess stakeholder readiness, identifying and addressing areas requiring additional support.
- Continuously improve change methodologies, frameworks, and tools by leveraging best practice, professional insight, and innovative techniques.
- Coach and mentor change champions, providing resources and support to drive change within their areas.
- Oversee the design and delivery of change management training programmes for staff and stakeholders, ensuring consistent messaging and a unified approach across all projects.
- Ensure that change management principles are fully integrated into all transformational project plans, providing both strategic oversight and active, practical involvement in delivery

Lead and Deliver Expert Change Management

- Directly lead and execute hands-on change management activities, including the development of detailed change plans for key transformational projects.
- Ensure alignment between individual project plans and the overall programme strategy, managing interdependencies and facilitating collaborative planning workshops.
- Conduct thorough impact assessments to identify potential risks and challenges, considering effects on staff and stakeholders.
- Develop and oversee the implementation of mitigation strategies, working closely with change advisors and project teams to ensure effective monitoring and minimisation of negative consequences.

Leadership and Management

- Lead and coordinate the efforts of the change communications and engagement team using a matrix management approach, ensuring clarity of roles, effective resource allocation, and delivery of complex change initiatives.
- Foster a collaborative and high-performing work environment, setting clear goals, providing regular feedback, and conducting performance reviews.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Engage proactively with stakeholders at all levels, building strong relationships to support the successful delivery of change initiatives.
- Develop and implement stakeholder engagement strategies, ensuring feedback mechanisms are in place to inform and refine change activities.

Change Governance, Compliance & Reporting

- Develop and maintain key performance indicators (KPIs) to track progress against change management targets, regularly reporting to the BEST Programme Board and other stakeholders.
- Ensure adherence to all relevant governance frameworks and internal policies, maintaining appropriate documentation and audit trails.
- Promote a culture of compliance within the programme.

- Proactively identify, assess, and manage change-related risks and issues, maintaining a risk register and escalating critical issues as needed.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of change initiatives, reporting regularly to the BEST Programme Assurance & Benefits Board and other stakeholders.

Representation and Collaboration

- Work closely with programme leaders to ensure alignment on change management activities and proactively address potential roadblocks.
- Collaborate with existing change and communications teams across the organisation, sharing best practices, coordinating activities, and ensuring consistent messaging and approaches.

Person Specification

Professional and Technical Requirements

Qualifications

- Postgraduate Diploma or Master's in Change Management, Organisational Change and Development, or a related discipline, or equivalent experience within a large, complex organisation (ideally local government).
- Evidence of ongoing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to maintain and enhance professional knowledge and skills.

Knowledge, Experience and Skills

- Extensive experience in leading change management initiatives within large-scale transformation programmes in the public sector, ideally within local government.
- Proven ability to develop and implement successful change strategies, achieving measurable results and demonstrating a clear return on investment.
- Applied knowledge of change management methodologies (e.g., ADKAR, Kotter) and organisational readiness techniques.
- Coaching and mentoring capability to support managers and colleagues in change practices.
- Experience developing and delivering change management training.
- Strong facilitation and communication skills to engage diverse audiences inclusively and influence senior leaders.
- Experience in managing and mentoring professional teams, matrix management, and cross-functional collaboration.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to assess change impacts, develop mitigation strategies, and make data-driven decisions.
- Proven ability to manage multiple projects, prioritise effectively, coordinate resources and deliver outcomes within deadlines.
- Understanding of public sector financial management and budgeting.
- Experience managing external consultants and contractors.

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.

- **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

- **Change Agent:** Positive and inspirational in leading and supporting others through change.
- **Problem Solver:** Takes a positive approach to tackling problems and identifying suitable solutions.
- **Team Leader:** Confidently leads teams, effectively managing dynamics and fostering a genuine team spirit.
- **Explainer:** Communicates complex ideas clearly, adapting style for diverse audiences.
- **Analytical:** Seeks and analyses information to inform decisions, using the best available evidence.

Desirable

- Change Management certification (e.g., PROSCI, APMG) highly desirable
- Professional certifications in coaching, facilitation, or psychometrics
- Experience working within local government, the public sector, or similar organisations, demonstrating an understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities within these sectors.
- Knowledge of relevant legislation, regulations, and policy frameworks governing public sector operations.