Northumberland Council

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

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| **Post Title:** Strategic Category Manager | **Director/Service/Sector** Procurement Service | **Office Use** |
| **Grade:** 10 | **Workplace:** County Hall | JE ref: 2964HRMS ref: |
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| **Responsible to:** Procurement Business Partner | **Date:** July 2023 | **Manager Level:** |
| **Job Purpose:** The primary objective of this role will be to work simultaneously across the Council providing specialist procurement and commercial advice and guidance, and to lead a team of procurement specialists undertaking procurement activity to deliver the cost reduction programmes/commercial programmes within the organisation. |
| **Resources** | Staff | Line Management responsibility for 2 – 4 FTE Procurement Specialists and Procurement Officers  |
| Finance | Significant influence on external 3rd party spend across the organisation within allocated portfolio of spend (circ £150M). Direct accountability for achieving savings targeted against the largest areas of organisational non-pay expenditure. |
| Physical | Maintains significant corporate databases that are commercially sensitive  |
| Clients | Regular contact and productive relationships with Senior Managers and Operational Managers, with occasional contact with Directors and Elected Members. |
| **Duties and key result areas:**1. To lead the development of productive and influenceable relationships with clients in allocated spend areas, ensuring all business needs and expectations are met or exceeded.
2. Provide leadership and direction for focused spend analysis within allocated spend areas to identify procurement and commercial opportunities to ensure consistent contribution to the Procurement and Commercial work programme.
3. Support a range of complex procurement projects, including planning and developing procurement/commercial options as required by the organisation and ensure timescales and outcomes are delivered.
4. Manage a multiple number of long term procurement projects at the same time and involving the interpretation of highly complex and varied sources of quantitative and qualitative information. Each project is expected to carry a high level of financial and/or service risk to the organisation, and will require active management to meet tight deadlines.
5. As a senior position within the team, post holder is expected, with little guidance, to work across a broad area of activity and translate skills and expertise to different and new areas or activity.
6. Lead and co-ordinate the development of complex generic specifications, between stakeholders for equipment and services, to ensure commercial outcomes are achieved through collaboration where possible. Due to the senior nature of the role; this will involve a wide level of discretion and with minimal managerial support.
7. Lead a range of strategic and or problematic key supplier/provider reviews with stakeholder contract managers.
8. Introduce, promote, co-ordinate and chair spend review groups within allocated spend areas to support the identification of procurement and commercial opportunities for cost reduction or income generation.
9. Day to day performance management, supervision and development of a team of procurement specialists to ensure the forecast outcomes of the Procurement and Commercial work programme are consistently delivered within agreed timescales.
10. To support the Procurement Business Partner in complex negotiations on a range of differing types and value of contracts in sometimes challenging, conflicting and sensitive environments, including pricing structures, performance mechanisms, commercial transfer issues, conditions of sale and warranties.
11. To represent the Procurement Service and clearly, concisely and confidently present issues and recommendations to groups of Senior Managers within the organisation and externally to key suppliers, providers, contractors and other partners.
12. Requirement to work in an integrated management style and will be required to foster close and effective working relationships with other senior managers.
13. To provide consistent, legally compliant and often complex procurement and commercial advice and guidance to senior managers and operational managers to assist decision making. This will require taking into account the policies of the organisation, as well as regulations for public procurement.
14. To support the change management required including motivating and mentoring staff including leading by example, and encouraging staff development.
15. Participate in relevant internal and external working groups/projects, services and initiatives to provide project information and specialist procurement and commercial advice/expertise to the stakeholders.
16. Attend regional meetings and be the nominated lead for the Procurement Service in regional or national procurement forums as required.
17. Ensure all procurement documentation is completed and approved within the required timescales and to the required standard.
18. Production of key performance indicators in allocated area of spend and responsibility.
19. To assist in the recruitment and selection of the Procurement Specialists.
20. To work on their own initiative as required, taking direction from the Procurement Business Partner.
21. To deputise for the Procurement Business Partner as required.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis. |
| **Work Arrangements** |
| Transport requirements:Working patterns:Working conditions: | Frequent car use across the region – full valid driving licence and access to a car is required.Regional and National travel on occasionsFlexible and occasional out of hours work requiredA primary sedentary office based position with little exposure to unpleasant or disagreeable working conditions |

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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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| **Post Title:** Strategic Category Manager | **Director/Service/Sector** Procurement Service | Ref: 2964 |
| **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Assess****by** |
| **Knowledge and Qualifications** |
| * First degree or equivalent standard of education
* Relevant professional qualification (CIPS)
* Extensive specialist working knowledge and understanding of relevant public sector procurement legislation, regulations and professional best practice
* Knowledge and understanding of current public sector procurement issues and challenges
* Commercially aware and understands the relationship between costs and quality
 | * Evidence of recent continuing professional development
* Project Management
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| **Experience** |
| * Extensive, high level experience in procurement
* Extensive experience in a specialist procurement position including managing a team
* Demonstrated track record of successful delivery/contribution to procurement and commercial work programmes for the purposes of delivering cost reduction and/or income generation
* Experience of managing high value complex projects with multiple stakeholders or at a regional level
* Experience of leading or supporting change management within the procurement field
* Experience of working in challenging complex environments
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| **Skills and competencies** |
| * Strong track record of delivery of commercial cost improvement initiatives with a strong understanding of the constraints of the public sector.
* Exercises judgement in complex situations, making judgements as an “expert in field”
* Excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to adapt to a wide ranging audience, including non-specialist
* Provide and receive complex, sensitive and sometimes contentious information, and be able to present this type of information to project teams to aid decision making.
* Ability to lead by example and drive team delivery by robust performance management, sharing of knowledge and role modelling effective commercial behaviours
* Solution focused with the ability to respond to sudden unexpected demands and to translate information to an appropriate level and recommend courses of action
* Strong planning skills, using available information sources, and with the ability to understand and work to tight and regular conflicting deadlines
* Ability to deliver results through using a range of levers in the absence of direct line management responsibility
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| **Physical, mental and emotional demands** |
| * Occasional unsocial hours and travel requirements
* Prolonged periods of enhanced concentration i.e., data analysis and specification evaluations
* Able to prioritise and regularly meet challenging and often conflicting deadlines
* Work under pressure within a consistently changing environment
* Actively participate and lead change management by example
* Able to relate to people at all levels in the organisation
* Ability to deal with problematic phone calls and one to one meetings from suppliers and clients
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| **Other** |
| The ability, personality and conduct which demonstrates credibility, and trust that engages confidence to colleagues, the Procurement Service Stakeholders and external partnersAbility to calm, empathise and negotiate with colleagues, staff and external suppliers/providers to the organisation |  |  |

Key to assessment methods; (a) application form, (i) interview, (r) references, (t) ability tests (q) personality questionnaire (g) assessed group work, (p) presentation, (o) others e.g. case studies/visits