

Job Description

Senior Organisational Development Lead

Reference: PC025

Date: November 2025

Job Family:	People and Culture / OD & Culture
Level:	3
Band:	10
Career Track:	Technical, Professional and Managerial

Job Purpose

To provide expert leadership in organisational development and change by shaping and implementing strategies, frameworks and interventions across the full OD discipline, while acting as a subject matter expert in one or more specialist areas. This role combines broad OD capability with deep expertise to design and deliver solutions that build organisational capability, foster an inclusive and psychologically safe culture, and enhance colleague experience and engagement.

The postholder will lead multidisciplinary project teams and manage resources outside their direct line of authority, requiring advanced influencing and coordination skills to deliver complex OD and change initiatives. As part of the OD & Culture management team, they will coach and mentor colleagues to build capability and share best practice, ensuring a collaborative, high-performing team environment. Working collaboratively across the Council, they will partner with senior stakeholders to address organisational challenges and apply evidence-informed approaches to drive cultural transformation and enable change. By leveraging data insights and innovative practices, the role ensures OD initiatives deliver measurable impact and support the achievement of strategic priorities.

Service Purpose

The Organisational Development & Culture service enables Northumberland County Council to thrive by shaping an inclusive, high-performing culture and empowering colleagues to reach their potential. Operating within the People and Culture service, the team combines broad OD capability with deep expertise in Inclusion & Wellbeing, Talent & Capability Growth, Cultural Transformation, Leadership Development & Impact, Employee Engagement & Experience, and Change Leadership & Enablement.

Our cross-disciplinary approach combines versatility and specialist knowledge, allowing us to design and deliver impactful frameworks, development pathways and engagement initiatives that strengthen organisational capability and colleague experience.

We work collaboratively across the Council to lead and enable complex transformation, including system-level and digital change, ensuring our workforce is agile, resilient and aligned with the Council's values and strategic priorities. Through inclusive, evidence-informed strategies and innovative solutions, we foster adaptability and collaboration, equipping the organisation to meet today's challenges and seize tomorrow's opportunities.

Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership and Management.

- Lead and coordinate multidisciplinary project teams using a matrix management approach, ensuring clarity of roles, effective resource allocation and delivery of complex OD and change initiatives.
- Provide coaching and guidance to project team members, fostering a collaborative, high-performing culture across the OD team, wider People function, external partners and the organisation.
- Manage strategic OD and People initiatives in partnership with Strategic People & Culture Partners and Senior Managers, ensuring alignment with organisational priorities.

Strategy Development

- Contribute to shaping and implementing the Council's People and Culture Strategy, ensuring OD priorities are embedded.
- Support the development and delivery of OD strategies, proactively identifying risks and ensuring compliance with legislation, organisational policies and ethical standards.

OD & Change Leadership

- Design, implement and evaluate OD and change programmes, frameworks and interventions that enable cultural transformation and organisational effectiveness.
- Lead approaches to navigate complex challenges such as service redesign, new ways of working, performance and capability issues, and behavioural change.
- Continuously improve OD methodologies, frameworks and tools by leveraging best practice, professional insight and innovative techniques.

Employee Experience & Capability Development

- Develop and deliver initiatives that enhance employee experience, engagement and wellbeing, embedding inclusive and psychologically safe working practices.
- Design tools and resources that support talent and capability growth, leadership development and career progression.
- Design and implement employee engagement strategies, including forums, feedback mechanisms and colleague networks, ensuring all voices are heard and valued.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Build strong relationships with senior leaders, Business Partners and external providers to influence cultural change and deliver integrated workforce solutions.
- Lead procurement and contracting of OD-related services and development solutions, ensuring quality, compliance and value for money.

Policy and Practice Development

- Manage the development, review and communication of legally compliant OD-related policies, frameworks and tools, ensuring alignment with organisational values and that the employee experience is central to all approaches.
- Embed inclusive principles across all workforce practices and policies.

Workforce Insight, Technology and Reporting

- Analyse OD-related data to identify trends and improvement opportunities and inform decision making.
- Produce reports on key metrics such as engagement, cultural indicators, learning participation and ROI of development initiatives.
- Oversee the effective use of OD-related systems and technologies to support engagement, talent and learning processes.

Representation and Collaboration

- Represent the Council's interests in OD and culture-related activities at local, regional and national level, as appropriate.
- Contribute to committees, working groups and sector networks to share best practice and influence workforce development agendas and outcomes.

Person Specification

Professional and Technical Requirements

Qualifications

- Level 6 qualification or above in Organisational Psychology, Learning and development or equivalent senior professional experience.

Knowledge, Experience and Skills

- Significant Senior OD practitioner experience within a large, complex organisation (ideally local government).
- Strong knowledge of inclusion principles, psychological safety, employee experience, equality legislation, health and wellbeing, data protection (GDPR), and relevant employment law.
- Deep expertise in at least one OD specialism (e.g., Inclusion & Wellbeing, Talent & Capability Development, Leadership Growth & Impact, Culture & Engagement, Change Leadership & Enablement), with broad understanding across OD disciplines.
- Proven delivery of complex OD and change programmes aligned to strategy and values.
- Applied knowledge of change management methodologies (e.g., ADKAR, Kotter) and organisational readiness techniques.
- Experience leading multidisciplinary project teams using a matrix management approach.
- Coaching and mentoring capability to support managers and colleagues in OD and change practices.
- Strong project management experience: planning, resource coordination, financial control, and outcome delivery.
- Strong facilitation and communication skills to engage diverse audiences inclusively.
- Skilled in analysing complex workforce data and OD metrics to inform decision-making and continuous improvement.
- Competence with OD technologies (e.g., LMS, engagement platforms, talent systems).
- Demonstrable ability to provide expert advice and solutions on complex OD/HR issues, demonstrating sound judgement and problem-solving skills.
- Demonstrates ongoing development in specialist or emerging areas relevant to the service or role

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

- **Change Agent:** You are positive and inspirational in leading and supporting others through change.
- **Problem Solver:** You take a positive approach to tackling problems. You find ways to identify suitable solutions.
- **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.
- **Explainer:** You communicate thoughts and ideas, verbally or in writing. You simplify complexities and adapt communication so others can understand.
- **Analytical:** You seek and analyse information to inform your decisions, based on the best available evidence.

Desirable

- Current member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) or another appropriate professional body.
- MCIPD status.
- Change Management certification
- Professional certifications in coaching, facilitation, or psychometrics
- Understanding of the unique workforce challenges within local government and experience in developing strategies to address them.