

# Job description

## Head of People

### Main purpose

The Head of People leads Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE)'s HR team directing and overseeing all staff-related activity and holding responsibility for developing and delivering the charity's People Strategy. The role is a strategic partner to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT).

Working alongside SLT in an advisory and partnering capacity, the Head of People helps ensure organisational decisions are informed by workforce insight and that CSE has the people, capability and culture needed to deliver its strategic objectives. The role works with line managers across the organisation to build people management capability and ensure that wellbeing, equality, diversity and inclusion, and people-related legal and policy requirements are consistently applied.

The role spans the full breadth of the People function, including strategic business partnering, employee relations, recruitment, learning and development, wellbeing, EDI, people operations and digital transformation. The Head of People leads and develops the HR team, ensuring the delivery of a high-quality, proactive and people-centred service while building on the good practice that already exists within the charity and driving continuous improvement for the benefit of the charity and its employees.

As the senior People professional at CSE, the role balances strategic leadership with practical operational delivery across the full breadth of the People function, requiring the successful candidate to move confidently between strategic thinking and hands-on implementation. The Head of People provides expert advice on complex people matters, develops and implements people policies, frameworks and processes, supports organisational change and improvement, and translates organisational priorities, values and culture into practical people initiatives that support both staff and the wider organisation.

This role is likely to appeal to someone who enjoys building, improving and embedding great people practice and who is comfortable balancing strategic leadership with operational delivery across a broad and varied remit. The role requires curiosity, pragmatism and a genuine interest in understanding organisational challenges and delivering practical, lasting improvements.

### Specific responsibilities

#### People strategy development and implementation

- Lead the development, implementation and cyclical review of the CSE People Strategy, ensuring

it supports delivery of CSE's organisational strategy and business plan.

- Provide expert advice to SLT on people-related policies, practices and risks.
- Bring workforce insight and people priorities into annual business planning and reporting cycles.
- Support communication of the People Strategy and people priorities to all staff.

Champion an inclusive, values-led organisation where staff are engaged, motivated and supported to thrive.

### **People Business Partnering**

- Act as a trusted strategic advisor to SLT and SMT, influencing decisions with workforce insight and making sure people implications are considered at the point of decision-making.
- Lead and oversee complex employee relations matters, ensuring legal compliance, managing organisational risk, and supporting fair, consistent and values-led outcomes.
- Provide strategic guidance on complex people issues including organisational change, team effectiveness, performance, wellbeing, inclusion and people-related risk.
- Lead the people elements of organisational change, including restructures, system implementations, and strategic shifts.
- Coach and partner with the HES Senior Staff Development Manager and line managers across CSE to build confidence and capability in people management.
- Build strong relationships across the organisation and champion consistent, fair, values-driven people practice.

### **People operations, governance and compliance**

- Lead the organisation-wide approach to the employee lifecycle, including recruitment, onboarding, probation, performance, development, wellbeing, employee relations and offboarding frameworks, working in partnership with line managers and teams across CSE to identify improvements, share good practice and ensure a consistent employee experience.
- Develop a People MI dashboard.
- Develop, maintain and continuously improve People policies, frameworks, toolkits and guidance, ensuring they are compliant, practical and aligned to CSE's values.
- Lead on people compliance including employment law, GDPR, and HR best practice, and manage strategic people-related risk, escalating to SLT and trustees where appropriate.
- Act as CSE's Staff Safeguarding representative, working under the direction of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and ensure safeguarding concerns relating to staff are managed appropriately and in accordance with CSE policies and procedures.

### **Recruitment and workforce planning**

- Lead the ongoing development of CSE's recruitment framework, including candidate

experience, employer brand, diversity of talent pipelines, equitable recruitment practices, digitisation through the Applicant Tracking System, and effective business partnering support for hiring managers.

- Establish recruitment metrics as part of the People MI dashboard.
- Partner with SLT to anticipate workforce needs and support recruitment and staff development so CSE has the right people, capability, and capacity in place.
- Champion equitable and inclusive recruitment practice that strengthens CSE's employer brand and better reflects the communities we serve.

### **Learning and development**

- Lead the development of CSE's approach to learning and development, ensuring it supports organisational priorities and staff development needs.
- Provide leadership and direction to the Training Manager, ensuring the effective delivery and continuous improvement of organisation-wide training and learning initiatives.
- Partner with managers and teams across CSE to share good practice and strengthen capability in identifying development needs, holding effective development conversations, and supporting employee growth and progression.
- Ensure that development opportunities are equitable across teams, with transparent processes for allocating budgets.
- Embed development into probation, appraisal, and progression planning.
- Track L&D impact and use the evidence to shape future investment.

### **Wellbeing, EDI, reward, recognition and culture**

- Lead the development and delivery of CSE's EDI activities in partnership with SLT, the EDI Working Group, Employee Voice, line managers and staff, ensuring inclusion is embedded in organisational culture, leadership practice and the capability of managers to support an increasingly diverse workforce.
- Embed wellbeing across the employee lifecycle.
- Work with SLT to explore and develop approaches to reward and recognition that support CSE's values, culture and employee experience.
- Act as a culture ambassador, embedding CSE's values in people processes, leadership behaviours, and how the organisation works day to day.

### **People function digital infrastructure and reporting**

- Lead the ongoing development and optimisation of the People function's digital infrastructure, including Employment Hero (HR Information System), the SharePoint People Hub, Monday.com people ticketing, the Glo benefits platform, and the automation of people processes across the employee lifecycle.

- Lead the People function's reporting and insight, including annual staff survey analysis, exit interview analysis, workforce data, recruitment metrics and the People management information (MI) dashboard, using this insight to inform decision-making and support discussions with SLT and trustees.
- Present quarterly updates to SLT on progress.

### **Trustee engagement**

- Act as the People function's lead point of contact with the Trustee People Sub-Group, preparing reports and presenting updates at sub-group meetings.
- Provide workforce insight and strategic challenge to support trustee scrutiny of the people implications of CSE's wider direction.

### **Leadership and management**

- Lead, develop and empower the People team, creating opportunities for learning, growth and professional development while building a high-performing, collaborative and supportive team culture.
- Provide coaching, support and direct line management to the Senior HR Advisor, HR Officer and Training Manager, helping individuals develop their capability, confidence and ownership.
- Manage the HR & centralised staff training budgets.

### **Working relationships and contacts**

- Reports to the Director of Finance & Operations and is a member of the Senior Management Team.
- Works closely with the Senior Leadership Team, providing strategic and operational advice, challenge and support on people-related matters and organisational priorities.
- Leads and develops the People team, providing direct line management to the Senior HR Advisor, HR Officer and Training Manager.
- Partners with line managers and colleagues across the organisation to support effective people management and the consistent application of people practices.
- Works closely with colleagues across Finance & Operations and the Household Energy Services (HES) Senior Staff Development Manager to ensure a joined-up approach to people, learning and organisational development priorities.
- Works with the Trustee People Sub-Group, providing workforce insight, reporting, assurance and advice on people-related matters.
- Develops and maintains productive relationships with external stakeholders, including legal advisers, training providers, recruitment partners, benefits providers, HR system suppliers and other professional advisers relevant to the role.

The responsibilities of this post and reporting structure will be periodically reviewed.

## Place of work and other requirements

This role will require a basic DBS check.

This role is based at CSE's Bristol office. Hybrid working is available, with a minimum expectation of three days per week onsite.

## Person specification

Requirement	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and professional knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CIPD Level 7 qualification or equivalent senior-level People/HR experience.</li> <li>• Up-to-date knowledge of UK employment law and HR best practice.</li> <li>• Strong understanding of employee relations, people management, employee lifecycle management, organisational development, people operations and the role of digital systems and workforce insight in organisational effectiveness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working as part of, or partnering closely with, a senior leadership team.</li> <li>• Experience of supporting or leading organisational change and improvement initiatives.</li> <li>• Understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and practice.</li> </ul>
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience operating in a senior HR/People leadership role across the full breadth of the People function,</li> <li>• Experience working across both strategic and operational HR, with the willingness to roll up your sleeves and personally develop policies, guidance, systems and processes alongside leading the wider People agenda.</li> <li>• Experience of developing and delivering people strategies aligned to organisational priorities.</li> <li>• Experience leading and improving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working within the charity, public or not-for-profit sector.</li> <li>• Experience of overseeing learning and development strategy, programmes or functions.</li> </ul>

	<p>the employee lifecycle and developing the policies, frameworks and processes that support it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of advising, influencing and constructively challenging senior leaders on complex people matters.</li> <li>• Experience of presenting recommendations, proposals, business cases or workforce insight to senior leaders.</li> <li>• Experience of managing complex employee relations cases and organisational risk.</li> <li>• Experience of leading, developing and empowering People teams and supporting line managers to build confidence and capability in people management.</li> <li>• Experience of using workforce data and insight to inform decision-making and organisational improvement.</li> <li>• Experience of building, improving and embedding people systems, services, frameworks or organisational capability, including through organisational change and continuous improvement initiatives.</li> </ul>	
<p>Skills and abilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to operate effectively across a broad and varied remit, balancing strategic priorities with hands-on delivery.</li> <li>• Strong analytical, problem-solving and decision-making skills, with the ability to identify root causes and develop practical solutions.</li> <li>• Ability to build trusted relationships, influence and provide constructive challenge at all levels of the organisation.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong coaching, communication and interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• Ability to manage competing priorities and exercise sound judgement in complex situations.</li> <li>• Ability to use workforce data and insight to inform decision-making and organisational improvement.</li> </ul>	
Technical skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digitally confident, with experience of using technology to improve People processes, reporting, employee experience and service delivery.</li> <li>• Experience of implementing, developing or optimising HR systems and digital tools.</li> <li>• Proficiency in Microsoft 365 applications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of managing HRIS platforms.</li> <li>• Experience of workflow automation, self-service tools or digital transformation projects.</li> </ul>
Personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naturally curious and analytical, with a genuine interest in understanding organisational challenges and identifying practical, lasting solutions.</li> <li>• Collaborative and pragmatic, with the ability to adapt approach to different stakeholders and organisational needs.</li> <li>• Motivated by organisational impact, continuous improvement and helping others to develop and thrive.</li> <li>• Enjoys building, improving and embedding effective people practice.</li> <li>• A genuine commitment to CSE's mission and values, and a desire to help create a workplace where people can thrive and contribute to that mission.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest in sustainability, climate action and social justice.</li> </ul>

## Success in this role looks like...

- The people strategy is clearly aligned to organisational priorities and actively informs SLT decisions.
- Recruitment and progression frameworks are established, embedded and supporting the organisation to attract, retain and develop the people and capability needed to deliver CSE's mission.
- Line managers feel confident and capable in handling people matters, supported by clear frameworks, guidance and training.
- The employee experience is consistent, fair and reflective of CSE's values across the full employee lifecycle.
- Wellbeing and EDI are visible, measurable and embedded across the organisation.
- Complex employee relations matters are managed effectively, with proportionate risk management, legally compliant processes and fair, values-led outcomes. People-related risks are identified early, managed effectively and escalated appropriately, with confidence from SLT and trustees in the organisation's people governance.
- Employment Hero, SharePoint People Hub, Monday.com and the wider digital infrastructure are effective, embedded and providing staff and line managers with self-service tools across the employee lifecycle.
- SLT and trustees have access to meaningful workforce insight and reporting that supports oversight of management decision-making.
- The People team is high-performing, well-supported and continuously developing its capability, while delivering both strategic and operational outcomes.
- The People function is recognised as a trusted, pragmatic and solutions-focused partner that adds value across the organisation, develops organisational capability and supports the delivery of CSE's strategic objectives.