

Role Profile

Post Title: Director of People and Organisational Development (Chief People Officer)

Date: October 2026

Grade: Director

Reports to: Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on an interim basis

Service Area: People & Organisation Development

The role provides strategic leadership and oversight of SBSA's human resources, organisation development and contributes to regional systems leadership. The role is integral to ensuring that the organisation operates efficiently and effectively, enabling the strategic aims and objectives of SBSA to be met. As a Director you will provide outstanding strategic and organisational leadership. With colleagues you have collective responsibility for the development and delivery of the organisation's operating model and supporting the development and embedding of the values and behaviours.

You will promote diversity, inclusion and cultural competence throughout the organisation and through partnerships and relationships with other stakeholders. You will work effectively with elected Members of the constituent councils and the Mayor once elected, to ensure the vision and strategic direction of SBSA is delivered.

SBSA's overall work programme is evolving, ambitious and focused on the future to deliver tangible, sustainable, lasting, and systemic change for our communities within a robust governance framework.

The Role

The Chief People Officer is an integral and strategic role within the Strategic Authority, playing a key authentic, strong and visible leadership role within the organisation across all areas of competence. The key areas of responsibility within the Directorate are Human Resources, Business Partnering, Organisation Design, Organisation Learning and Development, all reporting to the Director. The postholder will report to the Chief Executive whilst the organisation evolves and will ultimately become a Tier 2 role, reporting to an Executive Director. The Chief People Officer will have a close relationship with both the Chief Executive and ultimately the Mayor to provide advice, guidance and direction, deliver an effective people strategy.

We expect this role to deliver:

- effective, efficient high quality HR advice, reflecting best practice to the Mayor, Members and officers

- drive and delivery an innovative and evolving People Strategy
- operational and day to day management of the HR & OD teams
- support delivery of an ambitious and evolving organisation
- develop and maintain an 'enabling approach' within services provided by the Directorate and across the organisation
- challenge to conventional assumptions about how organisations work, helping to build a platform model that enables people, teams and partners to contribute their best.

Key Accountabilities

The specific key accountabilities for the role are as follows:

- Collaborate across the Executive and with the Mayor and SBSA Board to lead, develop and deploy a modern, unified People Strategy, to meet SBSA's evolving needs.
- Support the development of systems leadership both internally and across regional partners.
- Act as the Chief Executive's principal advisor on people, organisational, cultural and people policy matters.
- Partner with leaders to identify future organisational changes and develop strategies to support them.
- Attend SBSA's SLT meetings, as requested, to advise on people issues, organisational design, and change management.
- Review and enhance the SBSA Pay and Grading Framework to deliver against SBSA's ambition in this area.
- Lead on the development of a corporate learning and development framework.
- Lead, develop and collaborate with SLT to provide meaningful people and corporate related organisation metrics.
- Lead development and embedding of organisation values with and through the Senior Leadership Team.
- Evaluate buy-build strategy for people services
- Lead on the development and management of complex organisational design and development of a positive workplace culture.
- Deliver strategic workforce planning to build SBSA's capability to deliver against its Corporate Plans.
- Lead a positive culture of employee relations and engagement
- Lead and champion a cultural competence strategy to create an inclusive and diverse workplace, promoting diversity in all aspects of the organisation and ensuring SBSA becomes an inclusive and diverse organisation.
- Develop and track metrics to measure progress in ED&I efforts.
- Develop and communicate a clear vision for the organisation's culture, values, and people practices.
- Lead the development of talent acquisition strategies, from recruitment to on-boarding, ensuring SBSA attracts and hires exceptional talent.

- Set a compelling vision to ensure thoughtful design and implementation of talent development programs that nurture employee growth, skills enhancement, and career progression.
- Foster a learning culture that encourages continuous development and upskilling.
- Lead and establish SBSA's performance management processes, including goal setting, feedback mechanisms, and performance evaluations.
- Implement data-driven systems to measure and improve employee performance and productivity.
- Develop and run employee engagement strategies to enhance job satisfaction and workplace morale.
- Develop strong relationships with People Leads in all constituent authorities, non-constituent authorities and key stakeholders and partners, leading a network of relevant senior leads to support the sharing of best practice, learning and the development of joint campaigns, events, and initiatives when appropriate.
- Line manage and lead a high performing team, recruiting exceptional talent into the organisation, encouraging innovation, and cultivating a culture of collaboration and accountability, setting personal objectives, and supporting development to embed a culture of performance excellence.
- Plan and manage the resources of the HR & OD Team to ensure an agile approach to managing plans and short- and longer-term needs, ensuring value for money, high quality, and transparency in the delivery of services.

Our Values

We have proactively become a values-based organisation from the outset. Our Values are:

Setting people first: *We put the best interests of residents, communities and businesses at the heart of every decision*

Being open and accountable: *We act with transparency, integrity and fairness in everything we do*

Stronger Together: *We collaborate across Sussex and Brighton to deliver better outcomes*

Always Improving: *We use evidence, learning and innovation to improve what we do and deliver results*

These values shape our culture, influence expected conduct, how we work and interact with each other and our stakeholders, fostering positivity, and supporting the achievement of our goals and progress together.

Leadership

We expect inspirational leadership from this role, including:

- Provide visible leadership

- Create a positive and supportive learning and working environment through delegation, mentoring, and coaching of staff and promote a culture of collaboration by sharing knowledge and resources within the organisation.
- Support the development of individuals and teams to develop career pathways, ensuring a talent pipeline for the organisation.
- Create the right working environment for your team with a solid work ethic of working towards achievement of our vision.
- Develop and demonstrate a strong performance management culture, ensuring that people are accountable for the delivery of results.
- Promote an understanding of and adherence to the Strategic Authority's values by modelling appropriate behaviours and creating a corporate, collaborative and supportive environment that encourages and recognises those values.
- Ensure appropriate communication channels are in place and effective between you and your direct reports.

Person Specification

Qualifications

- Chartered Fellow / fully qualified member of CIPD or equivalent relevant professional qualification or appropriate level of experience.

Experience

- Proven experience in directing transformational change at executive level.
- Demonstrable understanding and experience of the political and social environment that the SBSA operates within.
- Detailed and proven understanding of the strategic and operational challenges of managing within the private and public sector and being able to show a track record of success in this sector.
- Experience of results driven partnerships with stakeholder organisations and agencies achieving mutually beneficial objectives.
- A proven and success-based track record of managing performance successfully of direct line reports.
- Understanding of and experience in delivering effective engagement with a wide and diverse set of employees, partners, stakeholders, and residents
- Significant, relevant, and recent high-level professional experience in a complex public sector organisation.
- Experience of TUPE
- Experience of start-ups or scaling organisations preferred

Skills and knowledge

- In-depth knowledge of employment law and employee relations.

- Detailed and demonstrable understanding of the political context to the work of local government/public sector and its decision-making processes.
- Political awareness with an ability to achieve results in a political environment where there are competing agendas.
- Recognition of the need for and importance of personal professional development.
- Flexibility with ability to contribute to the wider priorities of the team strategically and practically, as well as deliver personal workload
- Strategic analytical thinker with a foundation in robust research.
- Demonstrable experience of senior management of resources within multi-disciplinary HR&OD teams.
- Strong influencing and stakeholder management skills.
- Commercial awareness and experience managing outsourced people services (via SLAs)
- High quality verbal, interpersonal and written communications skills.
- Experience of developing and leading creative and innovative solutions to complex people and corporate challenges
- A successful track record of promoting equality of opportunity in employment and service delivery.
- Strong operational delivery focus.
- Compelling and passionate presentation skills with the ability to present material in a persuasive and convincing manner to both senior and non-senior partners and stakeholders.
- Expert and demonstrable strategic management skills leading to the securing of quality results at a senior level in a complex organisation.
- A proven ability to deliver under pressure and to tight deadlines showing resilience and ability to overcome internal and external barriers.
- Wide experience of communicating and engaging productively with identified stakeholders.
- Ability to adapt communication skills in a changing and challenging environment.

The role requires an ability to be able to work flexibly to fulfil the requirements of the role and to attend meetings inside and outside of the region

This is a politically restricted post as designated under the LGHA and any subsequent amendments