

Senior Leader Post Specification

Post Specification - Key Information

- **Post Title:** Chief Executive – Head of Paid Service
- **Date:** 21/07/2025
- **Tier Level:** Tier 1

Purpose of this Post

Working with elected Members, Officers and key partners, the Chief Executive will be responsible for providing inspirational and strategic leadership to the Council. Delivering the ambitions of the Council, and ensuring the provision of high quality, efficient and responsive services to the residents of Westmorland and Furness Council.

Act as a Chief Advisor to the authority, responsible for ensuring the best advice is available to it at all tiers and ensuring the efficient and effective implementation of the council's programmes and policies across all services and the effective deployment of the authority's resources to those ends.

The Chief Executive will lead on the design, delivery, coordination, transformation and integration of council priorities and services. Delivering improved outcomes for residents, businesses, partners and the environment. The Chief Executive will work effectively to address the challenges we face around our large, mostly rural geography, and appreciate the contrasts and differences between our communities.

Responsible to: Leader of the Council

Key Job Specific Accountabilities

- Working in partnership with elected members lead the development and implementation of the Council's corporate strategy, policies and strategic plans in alignment with the ambition of elected members.
- Lead, coach and motivate a high performing Strategic Leadership team who deliver in line with the values of the Council. Fostering a culture of innovation, continuous improvement and high performance across all council services.
- Work effectively within the Code of Practice on Good Governance supporting collaboration and good working relationships within the 'Golden Triangle' which operates between statutory officers. Working effectively with elected members in accordance with the Officer/Member protocols enabling good ethical governance across the council.
- Working collaboratively to embed a culture for the organisation that ensures the needs and aspiration of customers and local communities are at the centre of the Council's operating model and where employees are valued, inspired and motivated to give their best.
- Lead the ongoing transition to an effective Unitary Council – enabling service re-design, transformation and a culture of continuous improvement whilst maintaining effective service delivery across all areas. Unlocking innovation to modernise public services that are agile and adaptable.
- Lead the development of the organisation, pioneering the development of highly effective systems, structures and processes which will enable us to respond to the needs of our residents and partners.

- Foster a place-based approach with the Council and other strategic partners, that reflects our distinctiveness but also facilitates collaboration with our neighbouring authorities and our other regional and national partners.
- Ensure sound financial planning and maintain a financially sustainable council which delivers the best value for money, through delivery of efficient and effective services and maximising funding resources.
- Maintaining effective systems and processes for corporate governance, financial, performance, risk and assurance.
- Acting as an ambassador for the Council and exerting influence at the most senior levels across an extensive range of government departments, public bodies and suppliers
- Undertake statutory duties as Head of Paid Service and exercise the authorities delegated to the role of Chief Executive according to the Council's constitution.
- Act as Returning Officer for local and national elections.
- Preparing and leading response and recovery from civil emergencies.

Knowledge / Skills / Experience required

- Relevant degree or professional qualification or equivalent professional experience
- Significant management experience working within a large-scale organisation at a senior executive level
- Evidence of work-related continuing leadership and professional development
- Successful track record of having worked in a similar, complex, political environment
- Evidence of successful collaboration and delivering results with a diverse range of key partners
- Successful experience of advocacy with government departments and external bodies, and a demonstrable awareness of likely future trends and developments in the sector
- Experience of leading and delivering large scale, complex change programmes involving structural and cultural change
- Evidence of building high performing leadership teams
- Evidence of inspirational leadership and creating a committed, motivated and engaged workforce
- Proven ability to articulate a compelling vision for the future of an organisation, and of winning colleagues over to that vision
- Detailed knowledge and understanding of the major issues facing local government and the statutory, policy, strategic and service delivery framework in which local government operates
- An appreciation of the specific issues for Westmorland and Furness.

Context and Scope

As a relatively new unitary Council, the Chief Executive will play a pivotal role in shaping a modern, forward-thinking organisation that delivers high-quality, agile, and inclusive services to our communities and residents. This is a critical period of transformation and integration as the Council continues to bring together the strengths, cultures, and capabilities of its legacy authorities to form a cohesive, responsive, and innovative council for Westmorland and Furness.

The Council is committed to working differently—by enabling and empowering communities, co-designing services, and exploring diverse models of service delivery. The postholder will champion a facilitative, community-centred approach, ensuring the Council is not only a provider but also an enabler of sustainable and resilient local outcomes.

This role demands strategic leadership in an environment characterised by ongoing change, complexity, and the ambition to do things differently. The Chief Executive will lead and inspire a senior leadership team tasked with creating a safe, inclusive, and enabling working culture that supports staff through transition while maintaining the consistent delivery of essential services.

To be successful, the postholder must bring a balance of stability and agility—ensuring governance, accountability and service continuity while driving transformation. This is a unique opportunity for an inspirational, imaginative leader who can guide the Council through a journey of cultural, operational, and strategic evolution—delivering better outcomes and a stronger future for all communities across Westmorland and Furness.

Traits, Motives and Competencies

Cultivate Innovation

Creating new and better ways for the organisation to be successful.

Customer Focus

Building strong customer relationships and delivering customer-centric solutions.

Manages Complexity

Making sense of complex, high quality, and sometimes contradictory information to effectively solve problems.

Demonstrates Self-Awareness

Using a combination of feedback and reflection to gain productive insight into personal strengths and weaknesses.

Manages Ambiguity

Operating effectively, even when things are not certain, or the way forward is not clear.

Instils Trust

Gaining the confidence and trust of others through honesty, integrity, and authenticity.

Action Oriented

Taking on new opportunities and tough challenges with a sense of urgency, high energy, and enthusiasm.

Plans and aligns

Plans and prioritises work to meet commitments aligned with Council goals.

Ensures Accountability

Holding self and others accountable to meet commitments.

Drives Vision and Purpose

Painting a compelling picture of the vision and strategy that motivates others to action.

Collaborates

Building partnerships and working collaboratively with others to meet shared objectives.

Values Differences

Recognising the value that different perspectives and cultures bring to an organisation.