

Job Vacancy

Head of People



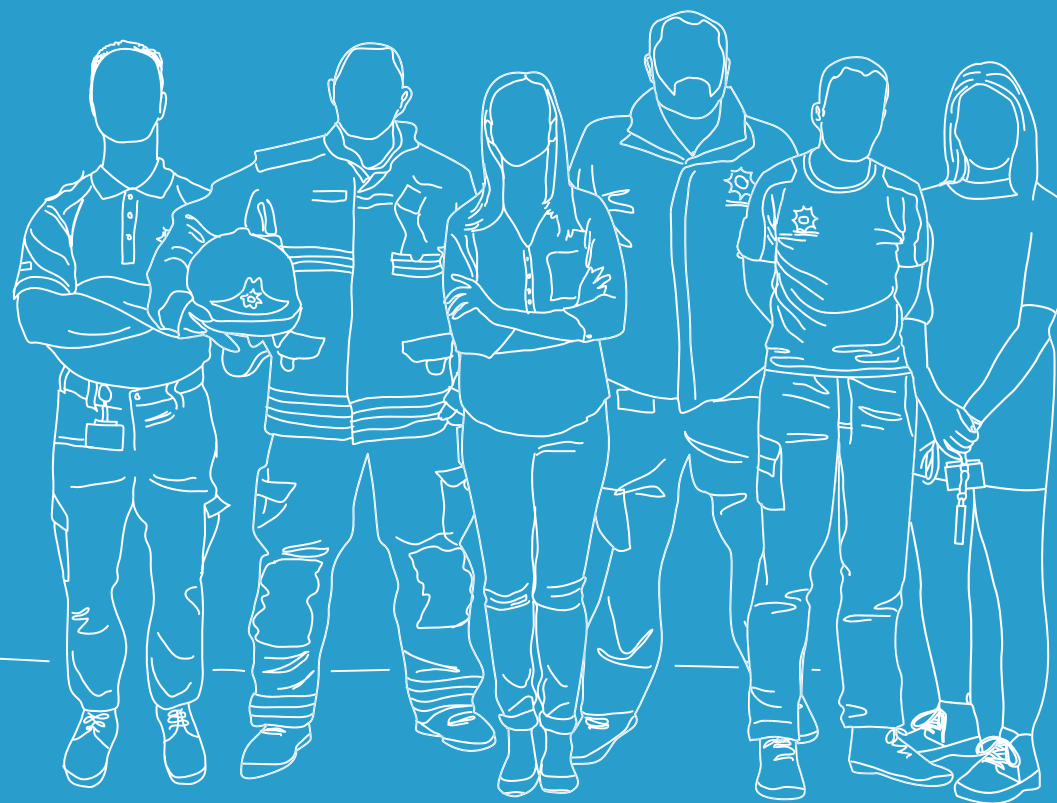
West Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue Service

Post title: Head of People

Grade: E02

Responsible to: Director of People and Culture

Purpose of post: Reporting directly to the Director of People and Culture to support WYFRS with all people related matters across the end-to-end employee lifecycle. Lead the People function, aligning people strategies and policies with the Service's objectives. Ensure that the Service is enabled by a highly skilled and expert People function, which delivers excellence and puts people at the heart of every decision. To drive cultural evolution and prioritise employee experience.



This is an interactive document and is best viewed using Adobe Acrobat Reader. [Click here to download.](#)



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We are an equal opportunities employer; we value and celebrate equality, diversity and neurodiversity and inclusion. We particularly welcome candidates from communities that are currently under-represented at WYFRS, including women, racially and ethnically diverse applicants and applicants with disabilities. We can offer support and adjustments for candidates and staff who experience barriers to work that result from health conditions or Specific Learning Differences, such as dyslexia.

WYFRS is a 'Real Living Wage' employer and have been rated 'good' by HMICFRS in all areas of our service.

Welcome message

I am delighted to invite you to consider joining West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service as Head of People. Our people are at the heart of our organisation – this role is not just a job; it's an exceptional opportunity to directly impact employee experience, modernise interventions and help shape the future people priorities for one of the largest fire and rescue services in the country.

At WYFRS, we are dedicated to making West Yorkshire safer, and our People and Culture Directorate plays a crucial role in that mission. By ensuring we attract, recruit, train, and retain the right people in the right roles, we empower our workforce to deliver the highest standards of service. As Head of People, you will be at the heart of this transformation, leading and evolving people services to strengthen our organisational readiness and resilience.

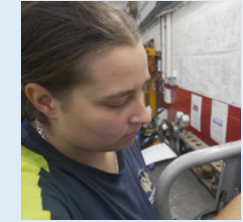
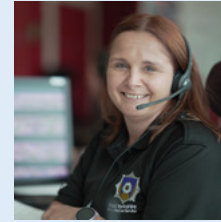
Currently focusing on delivery of our **12-month People Plan**, we need an outstanding people leader to help me and other senior leaders co-create the next stage of the journey. This is a broad and dynamic role, requiring a blend of strategic insight and HR operational experience. It involves working with people across the Service and beyond.

The successful candidate will have a track record of driving transformational change, experience of embedding a positive climate at work and championing service excellence through evidence-based, data-driven decision making. If you are passionate about people, service excellence and possess the thought leadership to stay ahead of the curve, we would love to hear from you.

I look forward to receiving your application.



Sonia Pawson
Director of People and Culture



Population
2,351,600+

Employees
1,450

Fire Stations
40

Overview

Join West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service as Head of People – Make a Real Difference to Our Service and Our Communities.

An exciting opportunity has arisen to join one of the UK's leading fire and rescue services, playing a vital role in making West Yorkshire safer. At West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS), we believe everyone has a part to play, and we are looking for a dynamic and compassionate leader to join our team.

As **Head of People**, you'll be at the heart of our service, helping to drive the success of over 1,450 dedicated colleagues who work tirelessly to help people and save lives. This role offers the unique job satisfaction of knowing that your leadership is directly contributing to the safety and wellbeing of the people of West Yorkshire.

What You'll Do:

Reporting to the Director of People and Culture, you'll lead the People function, ensuring that all people-related matters across the employee lifecycle are managed effectively. Your key responsibilities will include:

- Developing and implementing people strategies and policies that align with our service objectives.
- Overseeing recruitment, performance management, employee relations, grievance and discipline processes, and sickness absence management.
- Delivering expert HR support, ensuring we have a highly skilled and engaged workforce.
- Creating a culture that puts people at the centre of decision-making, helping our colleagues thrive and succeed.

This is a senior leadership role where you'll work closely with senior management to influence and shape organisational culture, advance employee experience and drive continuous improvement.

What We're Looking For:

We're seeking a compassionate, value-based leader with a proven track record of managing change and driving high-quality people services. You will bring:

- **Extensive experience** in HR management, including HR operating model design, employee relations, performance management, and cultural change.
- A **strong business partnering approach** and the ability to influence and collaborate across all levels of the organisation.
- **Resilience under pressure**, with the ability to navigate ambiguity, respond with agility and adapt to a fast-paced, changing environment.
- A commitment to **evidence-based practice** and a passion for employee engagement.
- **CIPD qualification** and a thorough understanding of current HR best practices and employment law.

What We Offer:

In return for your expertise and dedication, we offer a competitive benefits package that includes:

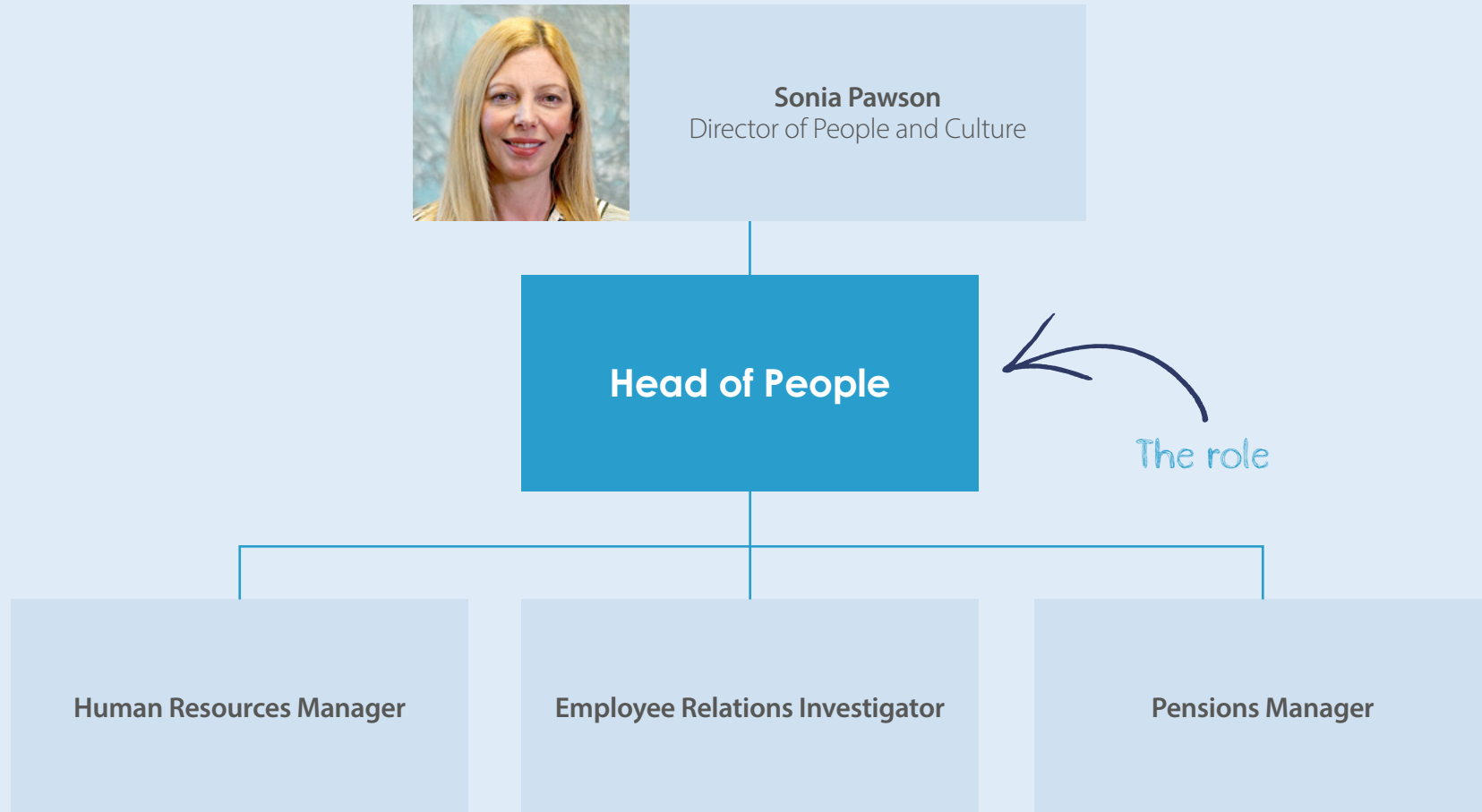
- A **Local Government Pension Scheme**.
- **Car salary sacrifice scheme**.
- **Free parking** and access to an on-site gym.
- **Flexible working** arrangements.
- **Employee assistance programme**.
- Training, development opportunities, and **sports and social clubs**.

At WYFRS, we're proud of our inclusive and supportive culture, and we're looking for someone who will lead by example, embrace our values, and champion continuous learning.

If you are passionate about people, evidence-based practice and would like to make a meaningful impact on our Service, we want to hear from you!

Please contact Sonia Pawson, Director of People and Culture for an informal conversation on **07813 727030**, or email sonia.pawson@westyorksfire.gov.uk.

Organisation chart



Main duties and responsibilities of the role

- Supporting the Director of People and Culture to design and deliver the WYFRS People Strategy to enable the **Community Risk Management Plan** (CRMP).
- Providing exemplary strategic and operational leadership to the People, Professional Standards and Pension teams, developing capability, evidence-based practice and embedding an empowered, high-performance culture.
- Building strong business partnering relationships across the Service to ensure successful delivery of people priorities.
- Identifying 'best in class' people practice within WYFRS, including workforce planning, resourcing and succession planning to support Service performance and productivity whilst ensuring alignment with National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) initiatives and guidance.
- Leading recruitment, selection and onboarding of all employees, ensuring a continuous flow of diverse talent into all roles.
- Leading HR policy and ensuring practice is continuously reviewed in accordance with regulation, employment law, professional/safer recruitment standards and operational demands of the Service.
- Initiating, preparing and delivering, as appropriate, reports to Strategic Leadership Team, the People and Culture Committee and internal/external stakeholders.
- Leading, reviewing and evolving business partnering arrangements to maximise people service and solution delivery whilst ensuring strategic alignment, influence and efficiency.
- Driving employee engagement and evolution of WYFRS culture, working closely with the Culture Action Board and colleagues across the Service.
- Providing timely data insights and management information to facilitate improved individual and organisational performance and enable continuous improvement within short- and long-term budgetary limits.
- Ensuring agile development, deployment and implementation of HR systems, where necessary commissioning services from corporate teams and external service providers.
- Partnering with employee networks and representative bodies, actively involving them in both strategic and operational issues and ensuring appropriate consultation and negotiation arrangements are in place.
- Leading the pre-employment and DBS checking processes including the recording and monitoring the renewal of high-level checks for Senior Management posts.
- Championing and integrating Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in every aspect of the role.
- Overseeing all safeguarding procedures regarding employees by identifying potential concerns, ensuring employees report concerns appropriately, and maintaining staff training on internal safeguarding practices.
- Managing delegated budgets in line with financial procedures and regulations.
- Being an active member of Strategic Leadership Team, providing visible day to day leadership and role modelling the NFCC Core Code of Ethics.
- Supporting the Director of People and Culture to design and implement a directorate operating model fit for the future and develop organisational structures across the Service.

Organisational wide responsibilities

- Adherence to the **NFCC Core Code of Ethics**.
- A satisfactory Standard Disclosure and Barring check is required for the role.
- This post has been designated a hybrid working post which means the postholder's working time will be split between the workplace and home. The actual pattern and number of days at each will be agreed locally with the line manager and will be determined based on the service needs.

Knowledge, skills and experience requirements for this role

Experiences

- ➔ Experience of leading high performing HR teams that have achieved service excellence and positive people results. ✔ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ Demonstrable experience of managing complex relations, including direct personal leadership of consultation and negotiation with trade unions. ✔ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ Experience of leading the development of departmental business plans, including objective setting and performance management of outcome delivery. ✔ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ Experience in short- and long-term workforce planning and workforce redesign initiatives. ✔ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ Experience of delivering people focused, transformational change programmes/new operating models inclusive of agile development of systems and platforms. ✔ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ A proven ability to coach and develop team members and to encourage, enable and support them to reach their potential. ✔ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.



“ Must have proven experience of leading high performing HR teams. ”

Knowledge, skills and experience requirements for this role



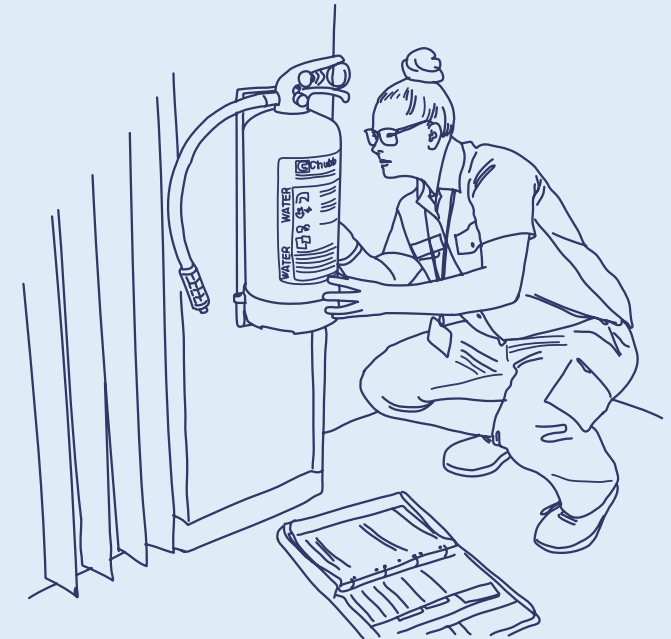
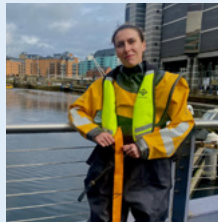
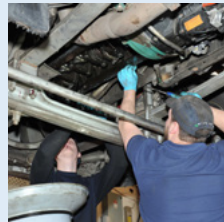
Chartered Member or Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (MCIPD/FCIPD) or equivalent professional HR qualification.

✓ **Essential.**

Application.

Essential qualifications

“ The successful candidate will have a track record of driving transformational change, experience of embedding a positive climate at work and championing service excellence through evidence-based, data-driven decision making ”



Knowledge, skills and experience requirements for this role

Knowledge



Expert knowledge of current employment legislation, HR issues and the strategic people agenda.

✓ **Essential.**

Application and Selection Process.



A good understanding of designing, delivering and evaluating people policies, programmes, interventions and strategies.

✓ **Essential.**

Application and Selection Process.



Practical application of evidence-based practice theory and methodology.

✓ **Essential.**

Application and Selection Process.



Knowledge, skills and experience requirements for this role

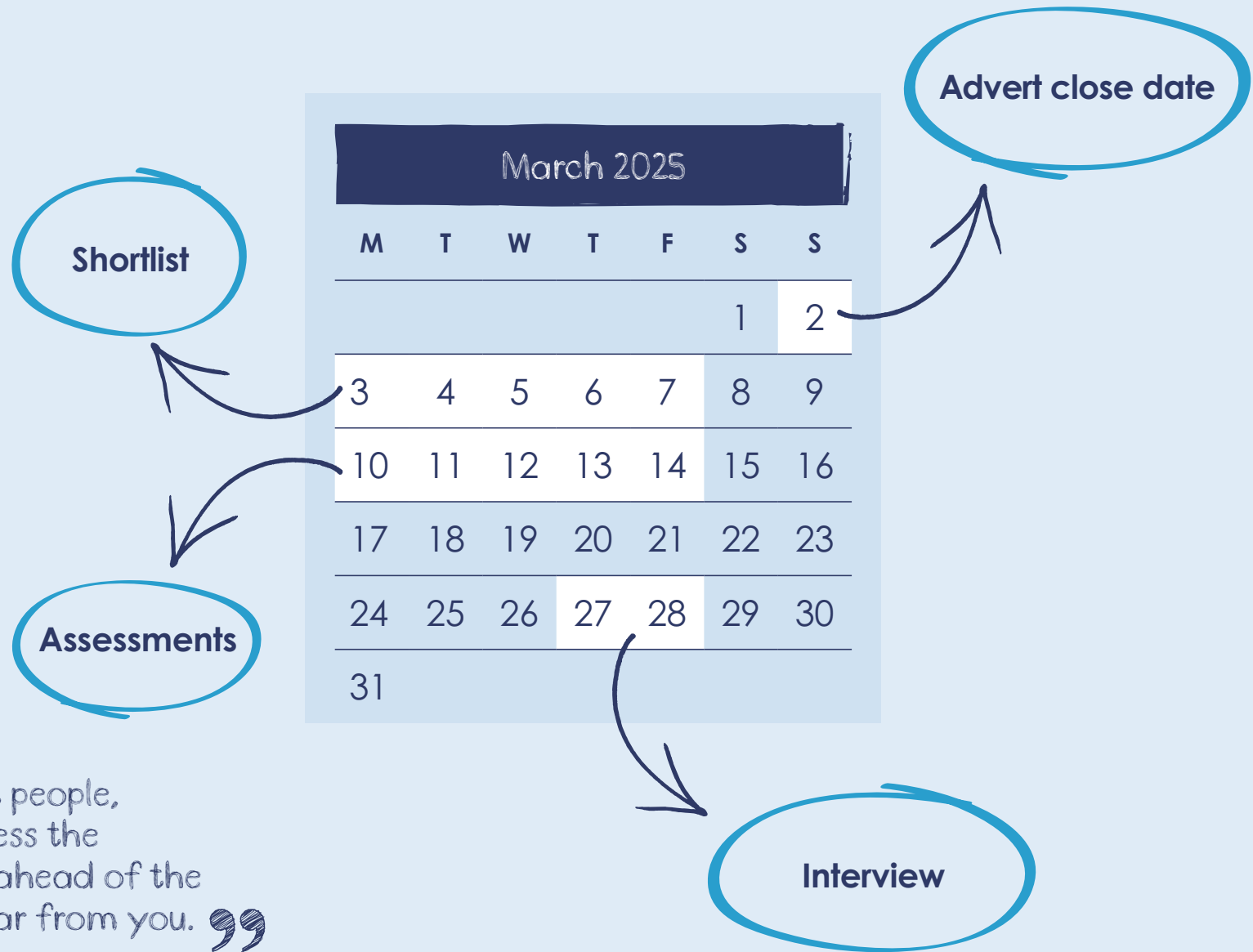
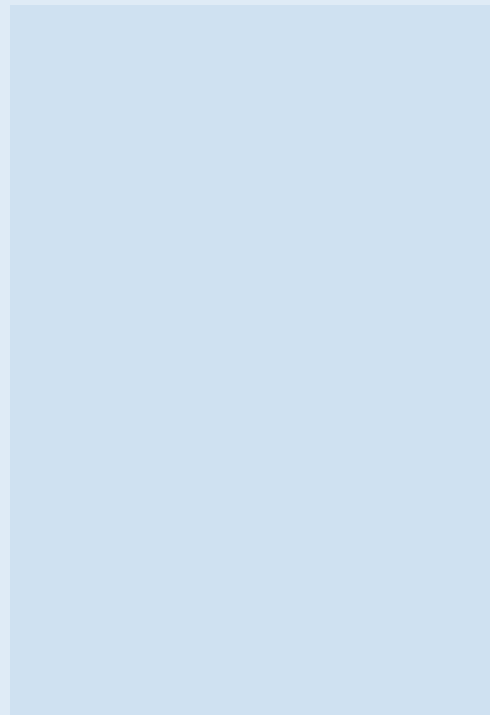
Skills

- ➔ Highly articulate (in writing and orally) with strong engagement and influencing skills. ☑ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ An empowering, compassionate, collaborative and motivating leadership style with the ability to engage and motivate people to deliver results in line with strategic objectives. ☑ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ Politically astute and able to navigate organisational politics and culture effectively. ☑ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ Has strong analytic and critical reasoning skills, is capable of effective problem solving and uses data to drive decision making. ☑ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ Comfortable with ambiguity, resilient under pressure and can work effectively in a complex environment. ☑ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ Demonstrates commitment to the values and principles of public service and NFCC Core Code of Ethics in particular. ☑ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.
- ➔ Driving licence and/or ability to travel between Fire Service properties within West Yorkshire. ☑ **Essential.** Application and Selection Process.



“ Must have an empowering, compassionate, collaborative and motivating leadership style. ”

Indicative timeline



“
If you are passionate about people,
service excellence and possess the
thought leadership to stay ahead of the
curve, we would love to hear from you. ”



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