

DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE (MONITORING OFFICER)

Recruitment Pack

Northumberland County Council

Land of Great Opportunities

Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) role.

Northumberland is a land of great opportunities – rich in heritage, diverse in communities, and ambitious for the future.

Our ambition is clear: to deliver value for money, drive economic growth, and tackle inequalities across Northumberland, creating a land of great opportunities for our residents, businesses and communities. This is an exciting time for us. Having already achieved a great deal, we are looking for exceptional leaders to help build on our success and shape what comes next.

The role of Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) and statutory Section 5 Officer is pivotal. You will lead the Council's legal, governance and related corporate services, ensuring the effective delivery of corporate and partnership priorities in line with the Corporate Plan. Your leadership will influence the future of our organisation and the lives of the people we serve.

We are looking for someone who shares our passion for making a difference - someone who can inspire, collaborate, and deliver in a complex and evolving environment. In return, you will join a forward-thinking, supportive team and have the opportunity to make a lasting impact on a county that is ambitious for its future.

If you share our ambition and values, and you have the vision and resilience to play a leading role in the delivery of the Corporate Plan and ongoing organisational improvements, we would love to hear from you.

This pack will hopefully provide you with the relevant information you need to make an application, however if you require further information or wish to discuss any aspect of the advertised role, please contact me for an informal professional discussion using the following details:



Dr Helen Paterson
Chief Executive
Northumberland County Council

01670 623958

Director of Law and Corporate Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Location: Northumberland

Salary: £140,656 - £158,197

Contract: Permanent

Shape the future of Northumberland as a Land of Great Opportunity.

To lead and manage the Council's legal, governance and related corporate services, ensuring the effective delivery of corporate and partnership priorities in line with the Council Plan and the Council's vision of working for everyone to benefit the people of Northumberland.



About the role

Job Purpose

To lead and manage the Council's legal, governance and related corporate services, ensuring the effective delivery of corporate and partnership priorities in line with the Council Plan and the Council's vision of working for everyone to benefit the people of Northumberland.

As the Council's Statutory Monitoring Officer, the postholder will discharge duties under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, providing strategic advice and assurance to elected members, the Chief Executive, Cabinet Members and senior officers on legal, constitutional and governance matters. The role is accountable for ensuring effective decision-making, compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, and the application of good governance, audit, scrutiny and assurance arrangements that safeguard the Council's interests and uphold public accountability.

As a member of the Executive Management Team, the postholder will provide strategic leadership and effective resource management, contributing to the delivery of high-quality, value-for-money services and organisational priorities. The role will foster a culture of integrity, engagement and continuous improvement across the Council and work collaboratively with local, regional and national partners to maximise resources, share best practice and improve outcomes for residents.

The postholder will ensure that all functions within the portfolio are delivered in accordance with legislation, the Council's Constitution, approved policies and the Council's decision-making framework.

Reference: ST116

Date: September 2026

Job Family: Strategy and Transformation / Executive Leadership, Strategy & Performance

Level: 5 | Band: 17 | Career Track: Executive

Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Corporate Management

- Provide strategic leadership for legal, governance and related corporate services, ensuring delivery of Council priorities, statutory responsibilities and high-quality, value-for-money services.
- Contribute as a member of the Executive Management Team, supporting the Chief Executive and Members in developing the Council's vision, priorities and organisational response to local and national policy developments.
- Lead, develop and manage the Directorate's senior leadership team, ensuring effective performance, service improvement, innovation and delivery of agreed outcomes.
- Lead or sponsor major corporate programmes and change initiatives, ensuring effective implementation, governance, resource deployment and achievement of intended benefits.
- Represent and negotiate on behalf of the Council at local, regional and national levels, promoting partnership working, influencing policy and safeguarding the Council's interests and reputation.

Governance, Legal and Monitoring Officer Responsibilities

- Act as the Council's Statutory Monitoring Officer, discharging duties under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and providing independent assurance to Full Council on governance, constitutional and legal compliance matters.
- Serve as the Council's principal adviser on governance, constitutional and legal matters, ensuring timely, pragmatic and professional advice to Members, the Chief Executive, Cabinet, Committees and senior officers.
- Ensure the effective application and review of the Council's Constitution, Scheme of Delegation, Contract Procedure Rules and governance framework, promoting lawful, transparent and effective decision-making.
- Promote and maintain high standards of conduct, ethics and governance across the Council, supporting relevant committees and ensuring decisions are taken in the appropriate forum.
- Ensure robust governance, assurance, scrutiny and accountability arrangements are in place to protect public resources, support improvement and maintain public confidence.
- Lead the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function, ensuring effective challenge, policy development and accountability of executive decision-making.
- Ensure the Council fulfils its statutory responsibilities relating to standards, complaints, transparency and public accountability, promoting a culture of learning and continuous improvement.
- Oversee the provision of high-quality legal services and advice, ensuring compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements and supporting the Council's strategic objectives.

Duties and Responsibilities

Partnership, Policy and External Relations

Develop and maintain effective relationships with Members, officers, partner organisations and stakeholders, fostering collaboration, mutual respect and shared outcomes.

Lead and promote multi-agency and cross-sector partnership working to maximise resources, share best practice and improve outcomes for residents and communities.

Monitor and assess legislative, regulatory and public policy developments, advising on their implications and ensuring the Council responds effectively to opportunities, risks and change.

Contribute to the effective management of the Council's reputation through transparent communication, stakeholder engagement and promotion of good governance and decision-making.

Resource and Performance Management

Ensure the effective management and deployment of financial, people and physical resources within the Directorate, maintaining sufficient capacity and capability to deliver priorities.

Provide assurance that appropriate financial controls, risk management and governance arrangements are in place across the portfolio and other areas where designated as lead officer.

Monitor performance and service delivery to ensure compliance with statutory requirements, corporate standards and continuous improvement objectives.

Culture, People and Inclusion

Lead and role model Our PACT, creating the conditions for colleagues to deliver with purpose, take accountability, adapt with agility, collaborate openly and build trust together, while fostering a culture where people are empowered, supported and proud to work.

Lead by example in fostering an inclusive culture where diverse voices are valued, collaboration is encouraged, and equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded within policies, services, employment practices and decision-making.

Democratic and Emergency Responsibilities

Support the Returning Officer in the delivery of local and national elections and other democratic processes, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.

Fulfil designated responsibilities within the Council's Emergency Planning and Civil Contingencies arrangements, including availability during major incidents and emergencies.

Ensure all functions and responsibilities within the portfolio are undertaken in accordance with legislation, the Council's Constitution, governance arrangements, policies and procedures.

Special Conditions

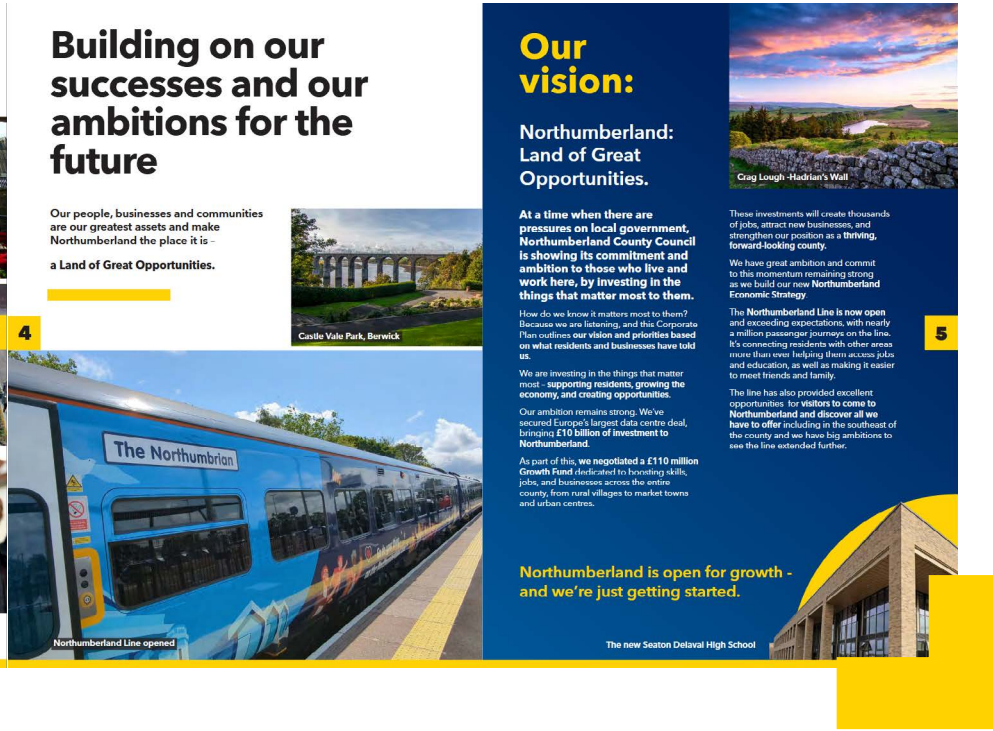
This position has been identified as a politically restricted post under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Therefore, the post holder is restricted from undertaking or participating in any political activity.

Our Corporate Plan

Our Corporate Plan sets out what the Council – Members and staff - will do, working with partners and communities to deliver on our Vision and Priorities for all of Northumberland's residents in the coming years. It outlines how we will ensure we are a Best Value Council, delivering value for money services to residents, businesses and visitors to the county.

[You can read the 2026-30 Corporate Plan here.]





Our Values

PACT is our shared set of values and behaviours – shaped by our people across NCC – that guide how we work, make decisions and deliver for our communities every day.

Our Cultural Vision

United by our PACT, we put residents and communities at the heart of everything we do – while building a council where our people are empowered, supported, and proud to work.

Our PACT values - Purpose, Accountability, Agility, Collaboration and Trust - underpin how that vision is achieved through day-to-day behaviours, decisions and ways of working.



Deliver with Purpose

We deliver with purpose by focusing on what matters most - creating outcomes that make a real difference for residents, communities and colleagues.



Take Accountability

We take accountability by owning our actions and outcomes, supporting each other to succeed.

Adapt with Agility

We adapt with agility by staying resilient, embracing change, and learning as we go.



Collaborate openly

We collaborate openly by sharing ideas, listening, and shaping solutions together with colleagues, residents and communities, and partners.



Build Trust together

We build trust together by acting with integrity, keeping our promises, and creating a workplace we're proud of.

A Land of Great Opportunities

Choose Northumberland

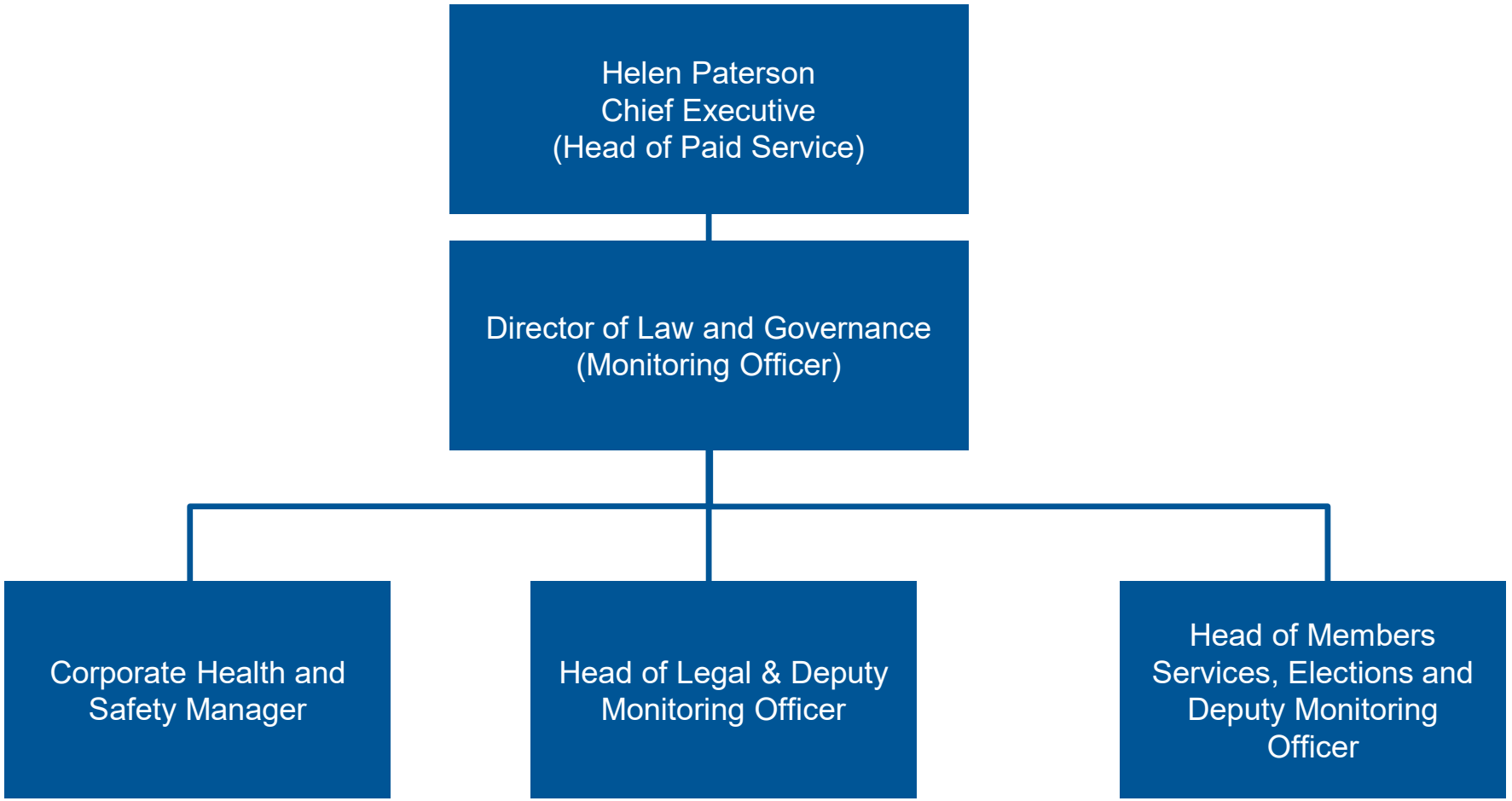
Northumberland is a land of great opportunities. It boasts stunning landscapes, spectacular castles, picturesque market towns and a beautiful coastline.

We are proud to call ourselves the place for prosperity and innovation and we are a county that boasts international leaders in industry, investment-ready locations, welcoming communities, a rich history and proud heritage, and globally significant tourist attractions, culture and landscapes.

Our communities are vibrant and welcoming with distinctive characteristics, culture and heritage, and together we are working towards a cleaner, greener, sustainable environment. Whether you enjoy surfing at the coast, eating at top-rated restaurants or experiencing vibrant nightlife, we believe there's no better place to live and work.



Structure Chart



Person Specification

Professional and Technical Requirements

Qualifications

Relevant professional qualification e.g. qualified solicitor or barrister with full practicing certificate.

Evidence of relevant up to date leadership and management training.

Evidence of recent relevant Continuous Professional Development

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Proven success operating within a large, complex organisation with significant scope, responsibilities and resources.

Experience of working effectively within a politically sensitive environment while maintaining accountability for delivery and outcomes.

Strong analytical and evaluative capability, using evidence, option appraisal and innovation to achieve organisational objectives within financial constraints.

Experience of establishing and maintaining effective relationships with senior stakeholders across public and private sector organisations.

High levels of personal and professional integrity, credibility and accountability.

Core Competency Requirements

Communication: Represents the council externally with authority and clarity. Leads strategic communication and influences reputational outcomes.

Collaboration: Leads system-wide collaboration and enables communities to shape and deliver place-based outcomes.

Service Delivery: Leads organisational transformation to meet strategic goals. Delivers value for money, economic growth, and public trust through innovation and strategic alignment.

Decision-Making: Leads high-stakes decisions with long-term strategic impact.

Digital & Data Literacy: Leads digital transformation and governance. Ensures ethical and secure use of technology. Uses advanced data analysis to shape strategic decisions and build public trust.

Core Competency Requirements

Adaptability: Shapes organisational culture to embrace innovation and change. Leads strategic improvements and supports teams to deliver effective transformation.

Problem-Solving: Leads resolution of systemic and sector-wide challenges, fostering innovation and continuous improvement to meet strategic goals.

Community & Customer Focus: Shapes place-based strategies that reflect the needs of all communities and deliver high-quality customer outcomes.

Leadership: Sets strategic vision and leads system-wide change. Oversees leadership development, supports peer learning and enables reflective practice across the organisation.

Strengths

Strategic: You look at the big picture. You consider the wider factors and long-term implications of decisions.

Responsible: You take ownership for your decisions. You hold yourself accountable for what you have promised.

Influencer: You influence others, you articulate the rationale to gain their agreement.

Analytical: You seek and analyse information to inform your decisions, based on the best available evidence.

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.

Desirable

Experience of working within a local government (council) environment.

An up to date understanding of local government legislation and standards.

Additional information can be found under the corresponding section in the Job Description.

Interview arrangements and provisional timetable

The indicative timetable is as follows:

Advert open: 12th October 2026
Closing date for applications: 8th November 2026
(shortlisted candidates will be invited to undertake a Technical Assessment).

Technical Assessments: Week commencing 23rd November 2026 TBC
Formal Interviews & Selection: Thursday, 10 December 2026
(including a Lumina Assessment, Stakeholder Panel and Formal Interview with Presentation)

Appointment confirmation will be subject to Staff & Appointments Committee and full Council approval.

For a confidential discussion please contact our retained consultants at Penna: Nick Raper on 07715 690463 or Tom Niven on 07860 657044.

In order to apply candidates will be asked to send a CV and supporting information to Penna. For further information on the process, and to complete your application please visit: https://penna.com/jobs

Relevant Documentation and Information

Working for Northumberland County Council: nland.cc/WorkingForNCC

Additional Information and Appointment Arrangements

Employment References

Please include name, address and telephone number of two referees. Candidates should state their relationship with each referee.

Employment references will be taken up for the successful candidate only. If candidates wish to be advised before we contact their referees, this should be indicated clearly beside their names.

Evidence of qualifications

Candidates will be required to bring evidence of their qualifications to the assessment day if shortlisted.

Occupational Health

The successful applicant will need to satisfy the requirements of the role. Any offer of employment will be subject to passing occupational health clearance.

Disclosure and Barring Service Check

Due to the nature of this post, they are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and convictions, whether spent or unspent, must be declared.

Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 – Prevention of illegal working

Candidates must be eligible to work in the UK. The successful candidate will be required to provide original evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK. Further guidance will be made available to shortlisted candidates.



Northumberland
County Council