Head of People and Culture
Job Description



HOPE + OPPORTUNITY

Salary: £75,000–£85,000 full-time equivalent, paid pro rata

Location: Hybrid, with regular time working alongside the team.

Contract: Fixed-term, part-time (0.4–0.6 FTE) to 30 April 2027 initially

Organisation: Home and Future – South East Regional Care Cooperative

ABOUT HOME AND FUTURE

LEADING SYSTEM CHANGE TO DELIVER THE RIGHT LOCAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Home and Future is one of the first two Regional Care Cooperatives (RCCs) to be established in England, developed in the South East following a recommendation from the Independent Review of Children's Social Care led by Josh MacAlister.

We are an independent, not-for-profit company bringing together 16 local authorities across the South East with one shared mission, to provide the right local homes, the right support, and the right workforce for our children and young people.

THE ROLE

ABOUT THE ROLE

Home and Future is the Regional Care Cooperative for the South East, working with seventeen local authorities to improve outcomes for children and young people in care. We are moving into delivery, with five regional fostering hubs to be in place by April 2027, service level agreements to be established and a planned transition to local authority ownership under Teckal.

We are seeking a **Head of People and Culture** to provide strategic and practical HR leadership to the Chief Executive and wider organisation.

You will lead the development of a fair pay and grading framework, support the transition of appropriate interim and contractor roles onto payroll, and shape the organisation design, people practices and culture needed for the five-hub model and the planned move to local authority ownership.

This is a hands-on senior leadership role, working closely with Finance, Delivery, heads of service and the Governance Director in a small and growing organisation.

The initial time commitment is 0.4 to 0.6 FTE, equivalent to two to three days per week. Hours will be reviewed after three months and may increase, reduce or remain the same in line with organisational need.

Responsibilities, Activities and Duties

Pay and Reward

- Design a pay policy and grading structure suited to a small, publicly funded organisation
- Introduce a recognised job evaluation approach and evaluate every role

- Benchmark pay against local government, regional care and comparable organisations
- Work with the Financial Manager to cost the framework, including on-costs and pension, and set out how it will remain affordable

Transition from Day Rates to Payroll

- Review each interim and contractor role and recommend whether it should become a fixed-term or permanent post, or remain a time-limited engagement
- Prepare a phased conversion plan with the Financial Manager, showing costs and any potential VAT savings
- Ensure engagements that remain on day rates have clear terms and a recorded employment status assessment under the off-payroll working rules (IR35)
- Lead recruitment for converted posts, applying safer recruitment practice appropriate to children's services

Organisation Design and Change

- Propose an organisation structure that supports the five-hub model, with clear reporting lines, spans of control and FTE requirements for every post
- Identify key-person risks and recommend practical ways to reduce them
- Advise on the people implications of the planned Teckal transition, including terms and conditions and pension options, working with legal advisers where required

Policies and Employment Practice

- Develop and implement core HR policies covering recruitment, pay, absence, performance, grievance and discipline, flexible working and expenses
- Ensure every member of staff has a compliant contract and an up-to-date job description
- Establish a clear and proportionate approval route for pay, recruitment and changes to the organisational establishment
- Provide clear advice to the Chief Executive and managers on employment practice and people-related risk

Culture, Wellbeing and Engagement

- Help the team agree shared values and ways of working as the organisation moves from set-up to delivery
- Introduce consistent induction, objective-setting and regular one-to-one arrangements
- Support a positive, inclusive and accountable culture across a distributed team
- Pay close attention to workload and wellbeing within a small and stretched organisation

A Sustainable HR Model

- Recommend how HR support should be provided once the fixed term ends, taking account of the current Lodge Court retainer and the Breathe HR system
- Build the Chief Executive's and managers' confidence in managing people matters effectively
- Provide a clear handover so that Home and Future can run its people processes without ongoing dependency on external support

Key Priorities and Expected Outcomes

- Complete an initial review of the workforce, current terms and key people risks, and agree a People Plan with the Chief Executive
- Provide a role-by-role review of interim and contractor posts, with clear recommendations and costs
- Develop a costed pay policy and grading structure, supported by job evaluation
- Put core HR policies, compliant contracts and consistent people processes in place
- Agree an organisation design that supports the five regional fostering hubs
- Recommend a sustainable future HR model and provide a clear handover plan

Knowledge and Experience

Essential:

- Chartered membership of the CIPD, or equivalent senior-level HR experience
- Significant senior HR leadership experience in the public sector, local government, children's services or a comparable environment
- Demonstrable experience of designing and implementing a pay and grading framework, including job evaluation
- Experience of moving contractor or interim roles onto payroll
- Strong working knowledge of employment law and the off-payroll working rules (IR35)
- Experience of organisation design and change within a small, growing or evolving organisation
- Experience of working hands-on without a large HR team

Desirable:

- Experience of local authority-owned companies, shared services or TUPE
- Knowledge of the Local Government Pension Scheme
- Knowledge of the social care or fostering workforce and safer recruitment practice

Skills and Capabilities

- Able to translate complex employment, pay and workforce matters into clear, practical advice
- Strong judgement and the ability to develop proportionate solutions for a small organisation
- Commercially aware, with a clear understanding that people decisions have costs and require an identified funding source
- Confident working collaboratively with finance, delivery leads, commissioners and local authority partners
- Able to coach leaders and managers and build organisational capability rather than dependency
- Comfortable handling sensitive conversations about pay, contracts and organisational change with discretion and fairness

Ways of Working

- Practical, proportionate and outcome-focused
- Supportive and coaching in approach
- Collaborative and comfortable working across organisational boundaries
- Discreet, fair and trusted when handling sensitive information
- Comfortable operating in an evolving organisation and balancing strategic leadership with hands-on delivery

Contract and Reporting Line

- Fixed-term, part-time employee role, paid through payroll rather than on a day-rate basis
- Full-time equivalent salary of £75,000 to £80,000 per annum, paid pro rata according to the agreed time commitment
- Initial time commitment of 0.4 to 0.6 FTE, equivalent to two to three days per week
- Initial contract term to 30 April 2027, with the option to extend
- Working pattern and exact days to be agreed
- Reports to the Chief Executive

Key relationships include the Financial Manager, Delivery Director, heads of service, and Delivery Leads, Governance Director, local authority partners, commissioners, external advisers, and the Board and relevant governance committees as required.

To apply:

Please send your CV and a supporting statement telling us about your experience and what inspires you about this role to: recruitment@homeandfuture.org.uk

Closing date: 20th November 2026