

Person Specification

Executive Director

The Pickering Cancer Drop-in Centre

Role	Executive Director
Reports to	Chair of the Board of Trustees, on behalf of the Board
Hours	Part-time, 3 days per week (22.5 hours)
Salary	£50,000 – £70,000 FTE (pro-rata to 0.6 FTE: £30,000 – £42,000 actual)
Contract	Permanent, subject to satisfactory references, an enhanced DBS check, and safeguarding checks appropriate to the role

This Person Specification should be read alongside the Executive Director Job Description. It sets out the experience, skills, knowledge and personal qualities the Board is looking for, and the criteria that will be used for shortlisting and interview.

What we are looking for

This is Pickering's first paid role, and the person we appoint will set the standard for what paid leadership looks like at this charity. We are looking for someone who already knows how to do this job well — who has held a senior, accountable position in a charity or comparable organisation, and can bring that experience to bear from day one, rather than someone for whom this would be a stretch or first step into seniority.

Essential Criteria

Experience and track record

- Significant, demonstrable experience in a senior leadership role with genuine authority and accountability within a charity, social enterprise, or comparable mission-led organisation — for example as a Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Director, or Head of Service. This is not an entry-level leadership role, and candidates should be able to evidence having held real decision-making responsibility, not solely project or team-level management.
- A track record of reporting to, and working directly with, a board of trustees or non-executive directors, including presenting at board level and being held to account by a board.
- Proven experience leading through other managers rather than doing the work directly — able to support, develop and hold accountable a small number of experienced people (in this case, both currently volunteers), rather than managing a large directly-employed team.

- A track record of leading organisational change and evidencing that it was genuinely adopted, not just delivered on paper — with specific examples ready to discuss at interview.
- Experience of making a leadership role or function pay for itself, through income generation, cost savings, or both, with concrete examples of the net financial impact achieved.
- Experience of fundraising income diversification: grants, trusts, community fundraising, or corporate partnerships.

Skills and knowledge

- Strong working knowledge of charity governance and the Charity Commission's trustee duties, and a clear understanding of where governance ends and operational delivery begins.
- Sound financial literacy: comfortable preparing and interpreting budgets, management accounts and financial controls, and working closely with a Treasurer.
- Working knowledge of safeguarding practice and regulatory requirements, and confidence to act as, or oversee, a charity's designated safeguarding lead.
- Understanding of risk management and regulatory compliance appropriate to a small but growing charity (health and safety, GDPR, employment law).
- Excellent written and verbal communication, including experience producing clear, candid board-level reports.

Personal qualities

- Credible and confident with a long-standing, highly experienced volunteer community — able to earn trust through competence and respect, not authority alone.
- Comfortable holding overall accountability for an operation while working through others rather than around them.
- Resilient and diplomatic: able to lead through a period of organisational change with empathy, patience and consistency.
- A genuine, demonstrable commitment to Pickering's mission and the people it serves.

Desirable Criteria

- Direct experience within the cancer support, wider healthcare, or hospice sector.
- Lived experience of cancer, either personally or through supporting someone close to them, relevant to the community Pickering serves.
- Familiarity with Tunbridge Wells and the surrounding local community.
- Experience leading a rebrand, service redesign, or a physical relocation of premises.

Safeguarding

This role involves contact with, and responsibility for the safeguarding of, adults who may be vulnerable by virtue of serious illness. The appointment is subject to an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references. The Executive Director will act as, or directly oversee, the charity's designated safeguarding lead, and all candidates should be able to demonstrate a clear, practical understanding of safeguarding responsibilities in a charity setting.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Pickering is committed to equality of opportunity for all and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified candidates regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Shortlisting and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person against these published criteria. A copy of our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy is available on request.