



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

# Deputy Director - People Programme, Planning and Performance

**Job Reference:**  
OWPG

**Closing date:**  
Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2026  
at 23:55

**Salary:**  
This post is SCS1 level.  
Salary circa £89,000

# Welcome from Debra Lowery, Director of People Strategy, Delivery and Assurance

The HR Deputy Director role within People and Capability is a fantastic opportunity to join the Department for Work and Pensions, the largest civil service department. If you are passionate about making a difference to the lives of millions of people and are an experienced people leader, we would love to hear from you.

The People Strategy, Delivery and Assurance team are responsible for leading our people plan and delivery of people priorities across the departmental workforce. As you can imagine, this is a very broad and dynamic portfolio, and the People and Capability Group is placed at the heart of shaping and driving the people agenda across the department.

The key to this role will be to work collaboratively with HR Directors to translate strategic priorities into deliverable people plans and provide briefings to the Director General and other senior leaders on planning and performance priorities. This role is also accountable for strategic workforce planning and resourcing across the People and Capability Group, working closely with HR Business Partners and Business Leaders to address workforce risks and optimise workforce deployment.

The candidate pack provides further detail on the responsibilities and expectations of the role. This is an exciting opportunity for someone who is passionate about leading change, influencing at the highest levels, and making a tangible difference to people's lives through the work we do at DWP.

So, if this role sounds like the kind of challenge you're ready to embrace, I look forward to hearing from you.



# About DWP

**Our mission is to improve people's quality of life both now and in the future.**

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. DWP touches the lives of every citizen in the country at some point in their life.

As the UK government's largest public service provider, providing services and support to over 20 million people, we support people into work, help disabled people live more independent lives, improve housing and address homelessness, provide the financial foundation for a secure old age through the State Pension, and ensure children of separated parents have more opportunity to fulfil their potential through a better child maintenance system.

We are passionate about making a sustainable and positive impact on people's lives every day by providing a modern, fair and affordable welfare system. We seek to be an exemplar of the Modern Civil Service so that we can better deliver for citizens and meet the challenges of tomorrow.

**At DWP, people are at the heart of what we do.** We are guided by our departmental values: we care, we deliver, we work together, we adapt, and we value everyone. We promote "I can be me in DWP" to create an atmosphere that is inclusive, allowing everyone to feel valued for being themselves, and allowing them to work to their fullest potential. We aspire to be a truly inclusive employer and welcome applications to help us reflect and understand how to best serve our customers.

There has never been a more exciting time to work at DWP.

Watch the video below to see what it's like working in DWP, or use this link - [https://youtu.be/enNv0kHk\\_-4](https://youtu.be/enNv0kHk_-4)



## What are our Values?



We care



We deliver



We adapt



We work  
together



We value  
everybody

# DWP's Employee Benefits

We have a broad benefits package built around your work-life balance which includes:

Working patterns to support **work/life balance** such as job sharing, and compressed hours



**Generous annual leave** – at least 25 days on entry, increasing up to 30 days over time (pro-rata for part time employees), plus 9 days public and privilege leave



Support for **financial wellbeing**, including interest-free season ticket loans for travel, a cycle to work scheme and an employee discount scheme



**Health and wellbeing support** including our Employee Assistance Programme for specialist advice and counselling and the opportunity to join [HASSRA](#) a first-class programme of competitions, activities and benefits for its members (subscription payable monthly)

**Family friendly policies** including enhanced maternity and shared parental leave pay after 1 year's continuous service



Funded **learning and development** to support progress in your role and career. This includes industry recognised qualifications and accreditations, coaching, mentoring and talent development programmes



An **inclusive and diverse environment** with opportunities to join professional and interpersonal networks including Women's Network, National Race Network, National Disability Network (THRIVE) and many more



To find out more about working in DWP take a look at our pages on the [\*\*Civil Service Careers\*\*](#) [page here](#)



# SCS1

## Deputy Director People Programme, Planning and Performance

DWP is looking to fill a Deputy Director People Programme, Planning and Performance role.

This is a key senior leadership appointment within one of the most high-profile and largest operational government departments. You will lead a team of circa 60 – 70 people, as one of three Deputy Directors reporting into Debra Lowery, Director of People Strategy, Delivery and Assurance. This role will be responsible for delivery of the People Transformation Plan in support of the design and delivery programme for the DWP People Story 2030.

The role requires strong and strategic leadership and will have a focus on transformational change across both the group and the department.

**Grade:** SCS Pay Band 1

**Salary:** Circa £89,000

External candidates will be expected to start at the salary minimum if successful. Existing Civil Servants will be appointed in line with the Civil Service pay rules in place on the date of their appointment. This will usually be the salary minimum or within 10% of their existing salary for those applying on promotion. Individuals appointed on level transfer will retain their existing base salary.

**Pension:** Alongside your salary, the Department for Work and Pensions contributes 28.97% towards you being a member of the Civil Service Defined Benefit Pension scheme. [Find out what benefits a Civil Service Pension provides.](#)

**Location:** Birmingham / Blackpool / Cardiff / Glasgow / Leeds / Newcastle-upon-Tyne / Sheffield/Manchester

As a member of the Senior Civil Service, you are expected to spend a minimum of 60% of your working time in person in the office or face to face with colleagues on official business. Regular travel to other sites will be required. Please be aware that this role can only be worked in the UK and not overseas.

**Security clearance:** Successful candidates must hold, or be willing to obtain, security clearance to SC level. Find out more information [about the vetting process here.](#)

**Contract type:** This role is being offered on a permanent basis. The role is subject to assignment duration of 3 years.

**Working pattern:** 37 hours per week, excluding lunch breaks.

This is a full-time role, flexible working and **existing** job-share arrangements are welcomed and will be considered. You should discuss your needs with the hiring manager if you are invited to interview.

# Role Responsibilities

## Strategic Planning and Leadership

- Lead the development and implementation of the Group's in-year planning, ensuring alignment with the overarching People Strategy and departmental objectives.
- Working collaboratively with HR Directors, translate strategic priorities into deliverable people plans to include a monthly reporting cadence on progress.
- Provide high-quality strategic advice and briefings to senior leaders, including the Director General on planning and performance matters.

## Financial Management Coordination

- Coordinate the Group's financial planning, working closely with Finance and HR Business Partners to ensure effective budget management, in-year forecasting, and financial governance.
- Support senior leaders in strategic resource prioritisation and evidence-based decision-making.

## Workforce Planning and Resourcing

- Accountable for strategic workforce planning and resourcing across the Group, ensuring alignment with future capability needs, succession planning, and inclusion objectives.
- Work closely with the HR Business partner and business leaders to address skills gaps, workforce risks, and optimise workforce deployment.

## Statutory Compliance and Assurance

- Provide strategic leadership of compliance and assurance functions, including Parliamentary Questions (PQs), Freedom of Information (FOIs), risk management, audit actions, and business continuity planning.
- Ensure the Group operates within a robust internal governance framework and meets statutory and regulatory obligations.

## Communications and Engagement

- Oversee the design and delivery of the Group's internal communication and engagement strategy to build a cohesive, informed, and engaged community.
- Foster a culture of transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement across the Group.

# People and Capability

**Julie Blomley**

People and Capability Director General

**Director  
(SCS2)**

HR Transformation  
and DWP Synergy

**Director  
(SCS2)**

People Services  
and Resourcing

**Director  
(SCS2)**

Capability,  
Learning and  
Talent

**Director  
(SCS2)**

Partnering

**Director  
(SCS2)**

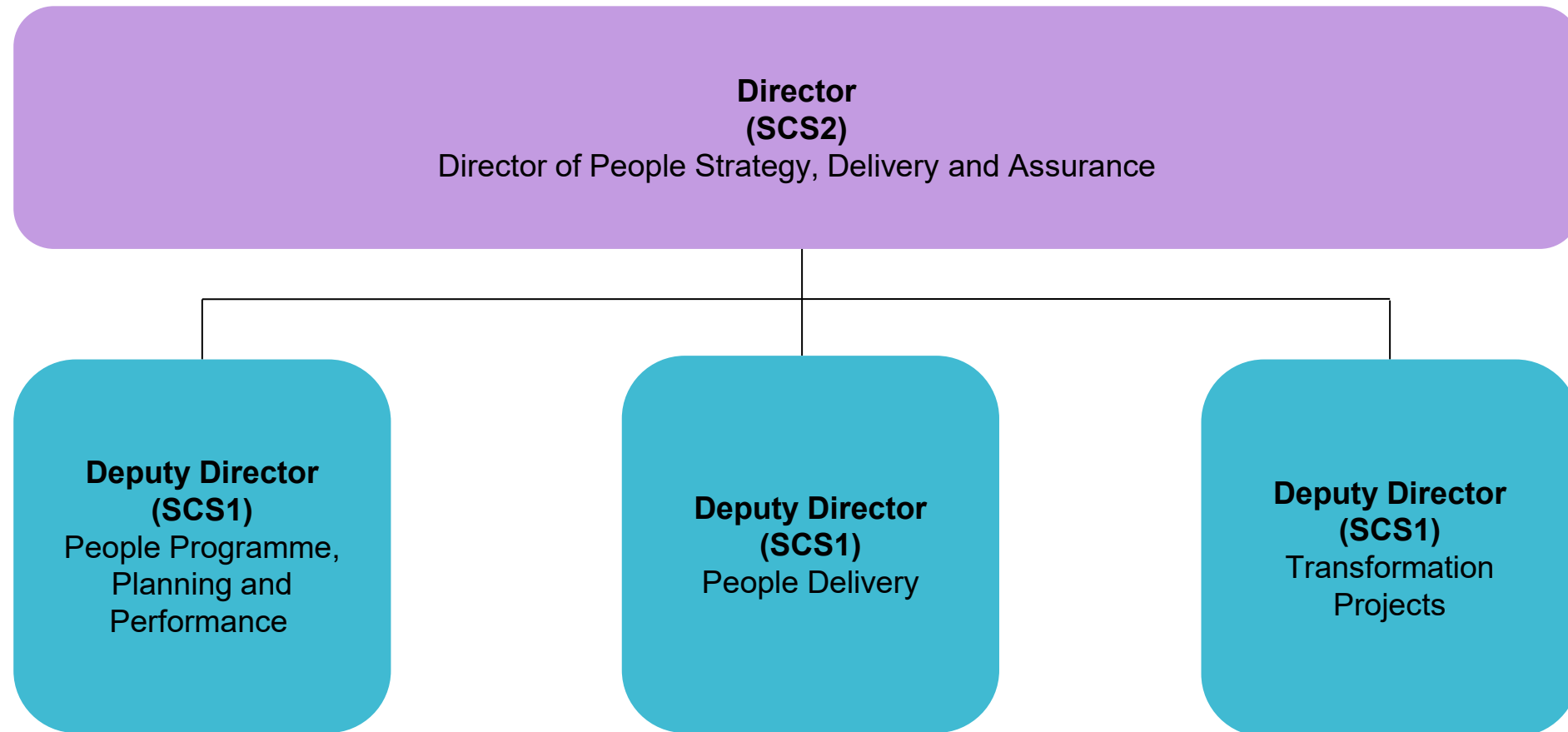
People Strategy,  
Delivery and  
Assurance

Key:

DG

SCS2

# People Strategy, Delivery and Assurance



Key:

SC  
S2

SC  
S1



# People Programme, Planning and Performance

**Deputy Director, People Programme, Planning and Performance**

**G6**  
**Head of People**  
**Transformation**

**G6**  
**Head of People**  
**Analytics**

**G6**  
**Head of People**  
**Strategy**

**G6**  
**Head of P&C**  
**Planning and**  
**Prioritisation**

Key:

SC  
S1

SC  
G6

# Person Specification

**The successful candidate must be able to demonstrate their knowledge, experience and skills against the following essential criteria:**

- Aligning strategies with organisational goals, monitoring performance, and ensuring adaptability to change.
- Effective governance of strategies with a framework that encompasses clear vision, strategic direction, accountability, transparency, and robust risk management.
- Effective experience managing statutory and regulatory compliance across a complex organisation.
- Proven track record of leading strategic and workforce planning and assurance functions at a senior level.
- Experience in coordinating financial planning and budget management at a senior level.
- Excellent communication and stakeholder engagement skills, including influencing at senior levels.
- Excellent leadership and people management skills, with a track record of building and developing high-performing teams.

- Exceptional communication, influencing, and stakeholder management skills, with the ability to engage and influence effectively at all levels, including at Executive Team level.
- You must have achieved CIPD Chartered Fellow membership or be willing to work towards this upon commencement of your role.

## Success Profiles

The Civil Service recruits using [Success Profiles](#). This means for each role we advertise; we consider what you will need to demonstrate in order to be successful.

This gives us the best possible chance of finding the right person for the job, drives up performance and improves diversity and inclusivity.

Throughout the selection process we will be considering the following Behaviours:

- Leadership
- Seeing the Big Picture
- Communicating and Influencing
- Making Effective Decisions

# Selection Process – Part 1

## 1. Application Process

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the Department for Work and Pensions on this appointment. Candidates should apply for this role through Saxton Bampfylde's website at [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments) using code OWPG no later than 23:55pm on Friday 2 January 2026.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload the following:

- A CV setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements. Please ensure you have provided reasons for any gaps within the last two years.
- A personal statement (maximum 1250 words) explaining how you consider your personal skills, qualities, and experience provide evidence of your suitability for the role, with particular reference to the essential criteria in the person specification.

Failure to submit both documents will mean the panel only have limited information on which to assess your

application against the criteria in the person specification.

As part of the online application process, you will be asked a number of diversity-related questions. If you do not wish to provide a declaration on any of the particular characteristics, you will have the option to select 'prefer not to say'. All monitoring data will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be provided to the selection panel. The information you provide when submitting your application will help us monitor our progress towards the Civil Service becoming the most inclusive employer.

### Virtual Engagement Session

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> December **Time:** 13.30 – 14.30

This virtual session is an opportunity for you to find out more about the role and what it's like leading the People and Culture Group. You'll get the opportunity to hear directly from the vacancy holder, Debra Lowery, Director of People Strategy, Delivery and Assurance who will provide an overview of the role and hold a Q&A session.

[Join Live Engagement Session here](#)

## 2. Longlist

Longlisted candidates will be invited to meet with Saxton Bampfylde for a preliminary interview sometime during w/c 19/01/2026.

## 3. Shortlist

A panel, including the hiring manager, will assess your application to select those demonstrating the best fit with the role by considering the evidence you have provided against the criteria set out in the person specification section of this pack. Failure to address any or all of these may affect your application.

The timeline later in this pack indicates the date by which a decision is expected to be made, and all shortlisted candidates will be advised of the outcome as soon as possible thereafter.

# Selection Process – Part 2

## 4. Assessment

If you are shortlisted, you will be asked to take part in a Stakeholder Engagement Exercise and an Individual Leadership Assessment in advance of the interview. These assessments will not result in a pass or fail decision. Rather, it is designed to support the panel's decision making and highlight areas for the panel to explore further at interview.

Shortlisted candidates may have the opportunity to speak to Debra Lowery, Director of People Strategy, Delivery and Assurance prior to the final interview. This is an informal discussion to allow candidates to learn more about the role and is not part of the assessment process.

## 5. Interview

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a panel interview in order to have a more in-depth discussion of your previous experience and professional competence in relation to the criteria set out in the person specification. You will be asked to prepare a 5-minute in-tray exercise, based on some data that will

be shared at this point in the process. Full details will be provided prior to the interview.

Your interview will be face-to-face. The interview panel will be chaired by Debra Lowery, Director of People Strategy, Delivery and Assurance who will be supported by additional panel members. The final panel interview will be a blended interview, covering \*\*Behaviours, Strengths and Experience A blended interview aims to be more of a conversation exploring the candidate's capability for the role.

## 6. Offer and Feedback

Regardless of the outcome, we will notify all candidates as soon as possible. We will offer the opportunity to discuss feedback for all candidates who reached interview.

A reserve list will be held for up to 12 months, which we may use to fill future similar vacancies for candidates who are considered appointable following interview.

### Expected Timeline

Closing Date	Friday 2 January at 23:55
Longlist Meeting	w/c 12 January
Shortlist Meeting	w/c 26 January
Assessments	w/c 2 February & 9 February
Interviews	Friday 20 February
Results Notified	w/c 23 February

We will try and offer as much flexibility as we can, but it may not be possible to offer alternative dates for assessments or interviews. You are therefore asked to note the above timetable, exercising flexibility through the recruitment and selection process, to meet the dates given. Please note that these dates are only indicative at this stage and may be subject to change.

# Selection Process – Part 3



## Reasonable Adjustments

At DWP we value diversity and inclusion and actively encourage and welcome applications from everyone, especially those that are underrepresented in our workforce. We consider visible and non-visible disabilities, neurodiversity or learning differences, chronic medical conditions, or mental ill health. Examples include dyslexia, epilepsy, autism, chronic fatigue, or schizophrenia.

If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, you should contact [Maria.Dodson@saxbam.com](mailto:Maria.Dodson@saxbam.com) as soon as possible, before the closing date to discuss your needs.

## Disability Confident Scheme

The Civil Service embraces diversity and promotes equal opportunities. DWP is recognised as a Disability Confident Leader, demonstrating the departmental commitment to attracting, recruiting and retaining disabled people and supporting them in achieving their full potential. We run a Disability Confident Scheme (DCS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria for the advertised role. To be considered for an interview, you must have:

- a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term (over 12 months) adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities; or a long-term health condition; **and**
- demonstrated that you meet all the minimum qualifying criteria set out in the advertisement for the post at the application and testing stages.

[A full definition and examples of conditions can be found on this webpage.](#) You will be asked at the initial application stage if you wish to apply via the scheme

# The Panel

## Deb Lowery - Director of People Strategy, Delivery and Assurance



Deb has been a proud civil servant for 40 Years, undertaking a range of lead operational roles, her varied career has included partnering and building capability in HMRC, HR operations and pay in Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and also as the HR lead for NHS Test and Trace during the Covid 19 pandemic. Deb is currently working for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and has recently undertaken the role of the Operations Hub Director providing enabling and support services to operational teams to make a real difference for citizens. Deb's current role is HR Director for People Strategy. Her career theme and personal passion is for public service and providing creative people and workforce solutions to support challenging programmes of transformation. Deb mentors across Government and continues to champion leadership and career development.

## Andrew Brookes – HR Director



Andrew joined the Civil Service over 30 years ago, and following some time in Operations, has enjoyed a range of roles in HR including Capability, Employee Policy, HR Casework, Leadership Development, Pay and Reward, Resourcing and Strategic Workforce Planning. Andrew currently business partners the Directors General for Corporate Transformation Group and People and Capability Group. Andrew enjoys working for DWP. There are very few organisations in the UK where you are involved in people change and transformation on this scale and impact.

## Ambia Quinlan - HRBP



Ambia is an experienced HR Business Partner in DWP's People and Capability group. She began her Civil Service career as a Senior Civil Service Recruitment Campaign Manager, leading high-profile initiatives to attract exceptional leadership talent.

With a strong background in HR and talent management from the private sector, Ambia is passionate about creating inclusive environments where diverse teams thrive and future leaders are developed. She values the scale and complexity of DWP, where meaningful impact can be achieved. Joining DWP means being part of a dynamic organisation where your skills and ideas can drive real change.

# FAQs

## Can I apply if I am not currently a civil servant?

Yes. We welcome applications from all sectors and this role is open to suitably qualified people in the external market and to existing civil servants and those in accredited Non-Departmental Bodies.

## Can I claim back any expenses incurred during the recruitment process?

No. Unfortunately, we will not be able to reimburse you, except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance.

## What should I do if I think that I have a conflict of interest?

Candidates must note the requirement to declare any interests that might cause questions to be raised about their approach to the business of the department. If you believe that you may have a conflict of interest, please contact [senior.recruitment@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:senior.recruitment@dwp.gov.uk) before submitting your application.

## Does this role have an assignment duration?

This role has a minimum assignment duration of three years.

An assignment duration is the period of time a Senior Civil Servant is expected to remain in the same post to enable them to deliver on the agreed key business outcomes. As part of accepting this role you will be agreeing to the expected assignment duration set out above. Please note this is an expectation only, it is not something which is written into your terms and conditions or indeed which the employing organisation or you are bound by. It will depend on your personal circumstances at a particular time and business needs.

## Dual or Multi Based Workers?

Where you have more than one permanent workplace or regularly travel to an alternate workplace and carry out a substantial range of your duties there, without a clear end date to the working arrangement or for a period expected to exceed 24 months, you may be considered to be dual based or

multi-based. HMRC consider all these workplaces to be your permanent workplace for tax purposes. Where you have two permanent workplaces this is classed as Dual Based and where you have three or more permanent workplaces this is classed as Multi Based. Where you are Dual or Multi Based, the process for booking travel and claiming travel and subsistence related expenses is different.

## What is the role of the Civil Service Commission in relation to recruitment into the Civil Service?

The Civil Service has two primary functions:

- To provide assurance that selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit, based on fair and open competition, as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles. For the most senior posts in the Civil Service, the Commission discharges its responsibilities directly by overseeing the recruitment process and by a Commissioner chairing the selection panel.

- To hear and determine appeals made by civil servants under the Civil Service Code which sets out the Civil Service values. Honesty, Integrity, Impartiality and Objectivity – and forms part of the relationship between civil servants and their employer.

## What do I do if I want to make a complaint?

The law requires that selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the [Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles](#).

If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the Recruitment Principles and you wish to make a complaint, you should in the first instance contact: [senior.recruitment@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:senior.recruitment@dwp.gov.uk)

If you are not satisfied with the response, you receive you can contact the [Civil Service Commission](#).





Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

# Thank you for your interest in this role

This is an amazing opportunity for you to become our next leader in People and Capability. If you are passionate about making a sustainable and positive impact to people's lives, we'd love to hear from you.

We encourage applications from all candidates who feel they would be a good fit for the role.

If you would like to discuss the role in more detail, or you require assistance with the recruitment or application process, please contact [senior.recruitment@dwf.gov.uk](mailto:senior.recruitment@dwf.gov.uk) or [maria.dodson@saxbam.com](mailto:maria.dodson@saxbam.com).

