

Job description and person specification

Job title: Head of net zero transition

Reporting to: Director of energy transition and net zero



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Reporting to	Director of energy transition and net zero
Direct reports	None
Grade	F
Location	Currently homeworking, with the option to adopt a hybrid style of working based on individual role, style, and preference when HIE offices fully re-open. HIE has offices across the Highlands and Islands. Flexibility on office location for this role will be considered.

Position overview

HIE is the Scottish Government’s economic and community development agency for the north of Scotland and the islands. Covering more than half Scotland’s land mass and home to almost 100 inhabited islands, our region is diverse and beautiful. HIE’s focus is on population, jobs, and net zero, and we are committed to a green and inclusive economic recovery from the pandemic. Our priorities include creating the conditions for growth and a green recovery, and our actions include accelerating progress in the just transition to net zero. In doing so we aim to stimulate opportunities for communities and businesses to create green jobs.

The extensive natural resources of the Highlands and Islands, combined with a strong and diverse energy industry, presents the region with an opportunity to play a leading role in ending Scotland’s contribution to climate change by 2045. The next decade requires significant action if that longer term target is to be met. This new post will ensure that Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) plays a pivotal and influential role in accelerating and securing a just transition to net zero, embedding key principles within the organization and securing strategic opportunities for economic and community development.

As a senior member of the energy transition and net zero team, this post will play a leading role in embedding net zero throughout the organisation, engaging with colleagues on products, programmes, procurement, property and in promotion. Refining HIE’s overall approach in line with Scottish Government and stakeholder expectations to ensure the organisation is leading by example, and increasingly recognised by stakeholders and industry for credible delivery and leadership on carbon reduction, will be a key requirement of the post.

The postholder will support net zero and green recovery actions across businesses, sectors, and communities, strengthening links with partner organisations in developing circular economy concepts, input to sector-wide and transport decarbonisation plans, and supporting COP26 legacy events and programmes.

In addition, the post will lead on HIE’s response to ambitious heat decarbonisation targets, working closely with local authorities and key stakeholders to identify and progress strategic heat decarbonisation innovation and place-based demonstration projects.

The post will engage with key parts of Scottish Government in policy, programme, and finance development. It will work across the organisation to coordinate, support and, on occasion, lead on key net zero priorities. Flexibility will be required in responding to strategic opportunities, such as hydrogen, natural capital, and carbon sequestration, working closely with colleagues on Blue Economy and in Communities and Enterprise Support.

Working with the Energy Transition and Net Zero wider team, the role will be significant in leveraging other public and private sector investment. It will help stimulate demand for public low

carbon funds from the Highlands and Islands and seek private sector investment in innovative, place-based demonstration projects, whilst stimulating the local supply chain.

A key part of this role will be to bring fresh thinking to HIE's work in this field and make a positive contribution to HIE's continuous development as a progressive organisation where staff are empowered to use their full potential to benefit Scotland's economy. This is in line with our people values.

Key responsibilities

Overall, the post will play a lead role in embedding net zero within HIE and in helping secure economic and community benefit from strategic opportunities in heat decarbonisation and wider net zero policies. Specifically, the post will: -

1. Lead and co-ordinate a net zero programme to drive forward HIE's focus on embedding net zero principles within organisational activities, including advising on business support, measurement, property strategy, procurement, and promotion, all leading to direct and indirect reduction in carbon impacts
2. Provide intelligence and evidence on the impact of HIE's activities to internal and external stakeholders, providing briefings and updates to senior management and Scottish Government as required, and respond to government and regulator consultations that affect wider net zero ambitions
3. Seek innovative and client-centred enhancements to products and services, utilising data on existing demand for support, recommending improvements and ensuring best value from HIE's approach
4. As lead heat policy contact, provide expert advice to area colleagues on heat decarbonisation policy, investment, and delivery, working with stakeholders and industry to encourage demonstration projects, address challenges unique to the Highlands and Islands, and stimulate supply chain development
5. Support colleagues with wider net zero activity relating to biodiversity, natural capital (land and marine based), circular economy and carbon sequestration through strong partner engagement, and working with relevant teams to support project development
6. Engage with innovation and sector colleagues on specific sector decarbonisation plans, identifying green investment and funding opportunities, and showcasing best practice
7. Influence favourable policy and investment conditions for the Highlands and Islands through raising HIE and the region's profile on net zero priorities and strategic opportunities. This will be achieved through participation at key regional, national (and potentially international) events, targeted promotional activity with marketing colleagues, and through social media and stakeholder engagement
8. Maintain oversight of the developing government policy and funding context and ensure these are appropriately communicated and reflected in HIE's strategy and delivery, ensuring relevant teams are informed and engaged in appropriate activity
9. Actively contribute to the management of the energy transition and net zero team and wider Communities & Place directorate, contributing to a high performing and positive working environment, supporting feedback and continual improvement
10. Promote a climate of collaboration, and innovation
11. Ensure appropriate compliance with all aspects of HIE governance, including risk management and HIE audit and compliance requirements
12. Ensure optimum use of internal management systems
13. Take responsibility for own learning and development, keep continuous professional development (CPD) records up to date

For developmental or operational reasons this role may occasionally contain some elements of work that are either more or less demanding than described above.

Salary and benefits

We aim to appoint at the minimum end of the salary scale to allow progression throughout the grade range.

This post comes with a competitive benefits package including excellent contributory staff pension arrangements, life assurance, generous annual and special leave entitlements, flexible working, continuing professional development and a variety of staff benefits, e.g., employee assistance programme, employer supported volunteering, cycle to work scheme, health and wellbeing club membership subsidy and other staff discounts.

Aspiring to make a difference

HIE is an outward-looking, forward thinking, customer-focused organisation whose staff are empowered to use all their talents, skills, and knowledge.

For over 55 years HIE's activities have been characterised by a drive to innovate and make a difference and our staff identify very strongly with this. The strength of HIE's culture is evidenced by a committed workforce passionate about building a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable region attracting more people to live, work, study, invest and visit.

HIE's organisational values:

- We are passionate about our purpose and proud to make a difference to the region we serve
- We are outward-looking and think long-term
- We are customer-focused
- We work together and learn from each other
- We are committed to excellence and innovation
- We encourage diversity and respect each other
- We network and collaborate - inside and out
- We listen and communicate clearly

Our commitment to equality, diversity, and Fair Work

We are committed to recruiting, promoting, and developing our people solely on the basis of their ability to contribute to HIE's objectives, without regard to their sex, race, disability, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, or marital status.

HIE employs staff in locations across the region, encourages flexible working and seeks to employ people with different ideas, styles, and skill sets, each able to contribute in unique ways. This diversity engenders a richer, more creative environment – one in which our people develop, and clients are better served.

This diversity and the sharing of knowledge, skills, and experience make us a stronger organisation. These are qualities we value and continue to enhance which are in line with our people values.

As a public sector employer, HIE has a key focus on the wider social inclusion agenda. HIE is accredited as a Living Wage employer and supports a number of national initiatives ranging from; demonstrating commitment to the Social Impact Pledge, encouraging volunteering, engaging in the Digital Public Services agenda, meeting the Investors in People standard, developing the young workforce, adopting Fair Work principles as well as being recognised nationally as an

award-winning family friendly employer by Family Friendly Working Scotland, Carers Scotland, and Working Families UK.

KEY CRITERIA	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educated to degree level in a relevant subject or demonstrable equivalent work experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-graduate degree level in a relevant subject
Work experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience of programme management, including working with multiple partners ▪ Evidence of effective partnership working at local, regional, and national level ▪ Experience of government/parliamentary engagement ▪ Experience of working in an environment with high standards of governance and accountability ▪ Experience of working as part of a team but also ability to work on own initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience of delivering net zero related support and guidance to colleagues, businesses and/or communities ▪ Experience of project appraisal and grant delivery ▪ Experience of government/parliamentary engagement at senior policy level ▪ Experience of business case creation, appraisal, and implementation ▪ Experience of procurement and contract management
Skills and abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge of the climate change and economic development policy context and associated opportunities for the region ▪ Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, and ability to engage and influence partner organisations and stakeholders ▪ Project management skills ▪ Contract management skills ▪ Budget management, event planning and management skills ▪ Strong IT skills, particularly in the use of Microsoft office, e.g., Word, Excel, and Outlook ▪ Ability to assess information and produce high quality written work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Firm grasp of climate change and economic development policy landscape, including the associated opportunities and challenges for businesses and communities within the region ▪ Appreciation of challenges for SMEs and communities in transition to net zero ▪ Awareness and understanding of respective roles and responsibilities of partner agencies supporting net zero actions ▪ Gaelic language skills (speaking, reading, or writing)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confidence to present and speak at public meetings and meetings with partners/stakeholders ▪ Ability to work without close supervision ▪ Ability to flex and change as the role may evolve over time 	
Job circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to travel as required in response to business needs including requirement for some overnight stays away from home ▪ A full, current driving licence and access to a vehicle or alternative means of transport for access to remote locations for client visits 	

HIE has equal respect for Gaelic and English. We welcome any communication in Gaelic. We will respond to Gaelic communication just as quickly as we respond in English.

Tha spèis cho-ionannachd aig HIE airson na Gàidhlig agus na Beurla. Tha sinn a' cur fàilte air conaltradh sam bith anns a' Ghàidhlig. Freagarraidh sinn conaltradh sa Ghàidhlig ceart cho luath 's a fhreagras sinn sa Bheurla.