

Warren Partners

Chief Executive Officer | Candidate brief



North West Business
Leadership Team

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A letter from Chris Woodroofe, Chair, North West Business Leadership Team

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive of the North West Business Leadership Team (NWBLT).

NWBLT is a distinctive and highly trusted leadership community that brings together senior figures from across the North West's most significant businesses and institutions. Our purpose is simple but important: to convene, connect and catalyse leadership across sectors, ensuring that the voice of business plays a meaningful role in shaping the region's long term economic and social future.

Since 2017, the organisation has been led with great energy and clarity by Emma Degg MBE, who has decided that the time is right for her to step back from the role in order to focus on her Non-Executive portfolio. Under Emma's leadership, NWBLT has strengthened its membership and influence, deepened relationships across the public and private sectors and expanded its reach at both regional and national level. Initiatives such as Diversity Drivers and Rising Stars have become important platforms for developing future leaders, whilst our strategic partnerships including Net Zero North West, Glass Futures, the Northern Nuclear Alliance and the North West Defence and Security Cluster have reinforced NWBLT's role at the centre of the region's economy.

Since its founding in 1989, NWBLT has evolved into a respected, independent and trusted voice for the North West. Over nearly four decades, the organisation has brought together diverse perspectives, built consensus and translated insight into practical action. It stands today in a strong position, with a clear sense of purpose, an engaged membership and a distinctive culture grounded in trust, collaboration and impact.

The North West is one of the UK's most important economic regions. It is diverse, innovative and internationally connected, with world leading businesses, a strong research base and a growing reputation in areas such as advanced manufacturing, digital and clean energy. At the same time, it faces important challenges, including productivity, skills, infrastructure and inclusion. Addressing these issues requires thoughtful and collaborative leadership across sectors.

NWBLT plays an important role in this environment. By bringing together senior leaders, building trusted relationships and providing a platform for informed dialogue, the organisation helps bridge the gap between business, government and civic leadership. Our ambition is to ensure that this collective leadership leads to tangible outcomes, supporting sustainable growth, strengthening communities and enhancing the North West's position as one of the best places in the UK to live, work and do business.

We are now looking to appoint our next Chief Executive to build on these strong foundations. This is a significant and rewarding opportunity to lead a highly regarded organisation at an important moment, maintaining its relevance and distinctiveness while continuing to evolve its role and impact in an increasingly complex and devolved landscape.

We are seeking a leader who combines credibility and sound judgement with the ability to convene, influence and deliver. This person will be as comfortable working behind the scenes as they are representing NWBLT externally, and will share our passionate commitment to the long-term success of the North West.

Thank you again for your interest in this appointment.

Chris Woodroofe
Chair, North West Business Leadership Team



About NWBLT

The North West Business Leadership Team (NWBLT) brings together senior leaders from across the region's most significant businesses and institutions to help shape the future of the North West.

For more than 30 years, NWBLT has played a distinctive role as an independent and trusted business voice, convening leaders across sectors to influence regional priorities and unlock opportunity. At its core, it is a community built on strong relationships, shared values and a belief in the positive power of business.

NWBLT exists to bring leaders together to shape the future of the North West as **the best place to live, learn, work and do good business**.

By combining the strength of its networks, experience and insight, NWBLT creates an environment where ideas are tested, collaboration is encouraged, and meaningful progress is achieved. Its model is deliberately curated and high-trust, ensuring that every voice is heard and every member can contribute.

The organisation operates at the intersection of business and public leadership, helping to translate perspectives, align priorities and ensure that the voice of business is clearly understood in decisions that shape the region.

An influential leadership community

NWBLT's strength lies in the quality of its relationships and the calibre of its membership. Its invitation only network brings together senior decision makers from organisations that reflect the breadth and diversity of the North West economy.

Members are united by a shared commitment to responsible leadership and to shaping long term prosperity for the region. The network is intentionally curated to maintain balance, relevance and impact, ensuring that conversations are meaningful, constructive and grounded in real experience.

NWBLT provides a platform for leaders to:

- Build trusted relationships with peers across sectors
- Share insight and perspective on common challenges
- Influence regional and national agendas
- Collaborate on initiatives that deliver tangible outcomes

Through its convening power, NWBLT connects business leaders with policymakers, investors and institutions, helping to bridge gaps between sectors and create alignment in an increasingly complex and devolved landscape.

Its work is focused on areas where collective leadership can make a difference: supporting innovation, strengthening the workforce of the future, and shaping the conditions for sustainable economic growth across the region.

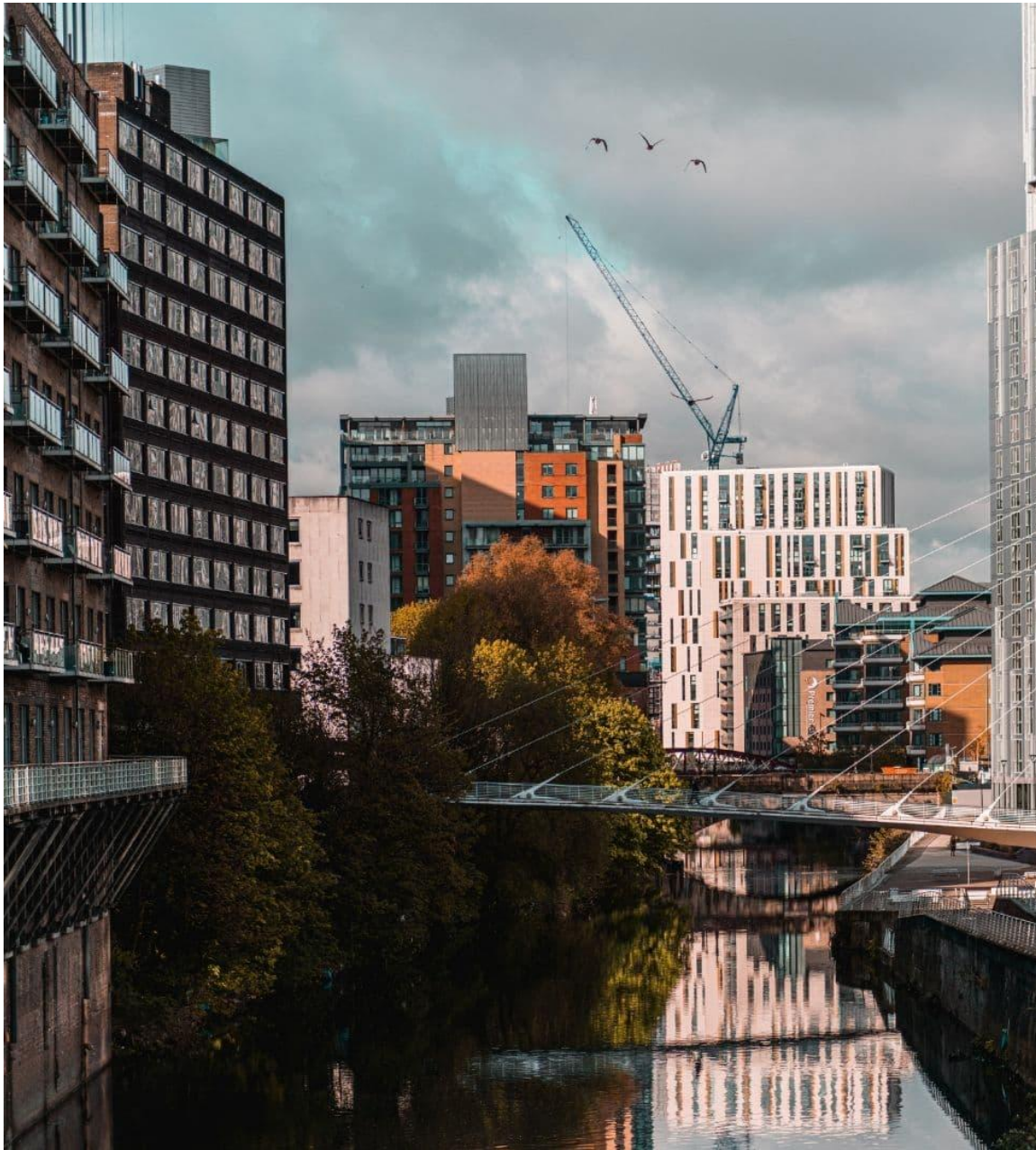
Developing talent, advancing inclusion and driving impact

Alongside its core convening and influencing role, NWBLT is committed to strengthening the region's leadership pipeline and promoting inclusive growth. Two flagship initiatives reflect this commitment:

Rising Stars supports the development of emerging female leaders across the North West through mentoring, peer networks and targeted development opportunities. The programme is designed to build confidence, capability and connectivity, strengthening the pipeline of women progressing into senior leadership roles.

Diversity Drivers focuses on supporting Black, Asian and ethnically diverse talent with leadership potential, providing a platform for development, visibility and influence. The initiative also supports member organisations to strengthen ethnic diversity within senior leadership and embed more inclusive practices.

Together, these programmes demonstrate NWBLT's belief that inclusive leadership is critical to long-term economic success. They contribute to a stronger, more representative business community and support the development of future leaders across the North West.



Why the North West matters

The North West is one of the UK's most significant economic engines, combining scale, diversity and opportunity. With a population of more than seven million people, representing around one in nine of the UK population, the region generates over £220 billion in economic output and accounts for close to 9% of the UK economy.

It is home to more than 400,000 businesses, spanning sectors including advanced manufacturing, energy, digital and technology, and financial and professional services. This breadth of activity underpins a resilient and diverse economy, with strong clusters in areas such as life sciences, advanced materials and low-carbon energy. The region is also supported by a highly regarded education system, with around 85% of schools rated good or outstanding, alongside a globally recognised university base that produces a consistent pipeline of talent.

The North West has established itself as one of the UK's leading centres for innovation and entrepreneurship. Its digital and technology ecosystem continues to grow in scale and sophistication, with Tech Nation research highlighting the region as a significant and expanding tech hub. This momentum is reflected in investment levels, with more than £600 million of venture capital deployed into North West businesses in recent years, supporting the growth of high potential companies across the region.

Internationally, the North West is a major trading region with a long-established global outlook. Exports of goods and services are valued at more than £30 billion annually, supported by strong links to key international markets. The region is also home to the UK's fourth busiest container port, reinforcing its critical role in logistics, trade and global connectivity, and positioning it as a gateway between the UK and international markets.

The region's economic strengths are matched by its strategic importance in areas such as industrial decarbonisation, energy transition and advanced manufacturing. With established industrial capability and growing investment in innovation, the North West is well placed to play a leading role in the UK's transition to a more sustainable and technology-enabled economy.

At the same time, the region faces structural challenges, including a persistent productivity gap and the need for sustained investment, skills alignment and infrastructure development. Closing this gap represents a significant opportunity, with the potential to unlock substantial additional economic value for both the region and the UK as a whole. Realising the North West's full potential will depend on the ability of leaders across business and the public sector to work together, connecting insight with action and ensuring that ambition is translated into tangible outcomes for the region.

Strategic partnerships

A key part of NWBLT's impact is delivered through its strategic partnerships with a select group of organisations that share its ambition for the North West. These partnerships extend the reach of the network, deepen sector insight and enable more coordinated action across areas of regional importance.

NWBLT works closely with industry-led initiatives and organisations at the forefront of innovation, sustainability and economic development. These partnerships are designed to bring together expertise, align priorities and accelerate progress on issues that matter to the region.

Examples of strategic partnerships include organisations focused on industrial decarbonisation, advanced manufacturing, energy transition and regional growth. These collaborations are typically built around shared priorities such as innovation, productivity, skills development and the transition to a more sustainable economy.



From insight to action

NWBLT is not a policy body in the traditional sense. Its impact comes from its ability to convene the right people, foster trusted dialogue and translate insight into action.

Through its work, NWBLT creates an environment where complex regional challenges can be explored openly and constructively, enabling leaders to align around shared priorities and identify practical solutions.

The organisation focuses its efforts across three interconnected areas:

Responsible business leadership

NWBLT provides a clear and credible business voice, championing responsible leadership and supporting initiatives that contribute to long term economic and social value. It brings together organisations that recognise their role not only in driving performance, but in shaping the communities in which they operate.

Place and economic development

Working with partners across the region, NWBLT helps to promote the North West's strengths, support investment and highlight opportunities for growth. Its work includes supporting innovation, encouraging adoption of new technologies and contributing to major regional initiatives, including partnerships focused on net zero and industrial transformation.

People and skills

NWBLT plays an active role in shaping the region's talent agenda, supporting initiatives that strengthen the workforce of the future and improve access to opportunity. This includes working with education providers, employers and policymakers to better align skills with the needs of the economy.

Across all of these areas, NWBLT's approach is consistent: to convene, to connect and to catalyse - ensuring that conversations lead to meaningful outcomes and that ideas are translated into tangible progress.

The role

Title

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Purpose of the role

To lead NWBLT as a trusted and influential leadership community, ensuring it continues to convene the right people, shape regional thinking and translate insight into action.

The CEO will act as both custodian and catalyst, protecting the integrity and culture of NWBLT whilst strengthening its role as a unifying voice across business and public sector leadership in the North West.

Success will be defined by the CEO's ability to maintain a high-quality, engaged membership, foster trusted relationships across sectors and ensure NWBLT remains impactful, relevant and focused on delivery in a resource-constrained environment.

Principal duties and responsibilities

Organisational stewardship and strategic direction

- Provide overall leadership of NWBLT, ensuring clarity of purpose, strategic focus and alignment with the organisation's long-term ambitions.
- Translate broad regional priorities into a clear and deliverable Operating Plan, maintaining disciplined execution.
- Ensure the organisation remains focused on areas where it can add distinctive value, avoiding dilution of impact.

Membership leadership, curation and engagement

- Take ownership of the development, retention and curation of a high-calibre and balanced membership.
- Ensure the right leaders are around the table, maintaining NWBLT's credibility and influence as a regional voice.
- Build deep and trusted relationships with members, providing ongoing support and ensuring high levels of engagement and value.
- Act as a cultural gatekeeper, preserving the organisation's ethos of trust, openness and collaboration.

External influence and regional connectivity

- Position NWBLT as a credible and constructive voice across the North West and at a national level.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders, including mayoralities, combined authorities and central government.
- Navigate and connect a fragmented post-devolution landscape, translating between public and private sector perspectives to enable progress.
- Represent NWBLT with authority in external forums, advisory groups and the media where appropriate.

Insight, convening and thought leadership

- Shape and facilitate high-quality dialogue across the membership, drawing out shared challenges and opportunities.
- Translate insight into clear themes, priorities and actionable outcomes that inform both members and external stakeholders.
- Ensure NWBLT's initiatives and programmes remain relevant, impactful and aligned to its purpose.

Commercial sustainability and financial discipline

- Ensure the financial health and sustainability of NWBLT, maintaining appropriate reserves and disciplined cost management.
- Lead membership growth and retention through a strong, relationship-led pipeline of prospective members.
- Clearly articulate the value proposition to existing and prospective members, ensuring continued investment and engagement.
- Maintain robust financial oversight and reporting to the Board.

Team leadership and operational delivery

- Lead and support a small and high-performing team, ensuring clarity of roles, accountability and focus on delivery.
- Create an environment of trust, quality and continuous improvement.
- Ensure effective day-to-day operations, balancing resource constraints with delivery expectations.

Governance, Board and partnership working

- Work closely with the Chair and Board to ensure effective governance and decision-making.
- Provide timely, clear and insightful information to support Board discussions and strategic direction.
- Maintain strong and transparent relationships with Board members, built on trust, judgment, and collaboration.



The candidate

Knowledge and experience

- Senior leadership experience within business, professional services, membership organisations or roles that operate across public and private sector environments.
- Demonstrable experience of working in complex stakeholder environments.
- Track record of building and maintaining high-value relationships with senior leaders, with evidence of influencing outcomes at a strategic level.
- Experience of organisational leadership, including strategy development and delivery.
- Financial and commercial awareness, including budget oversight and income generation.
- Experience working with Boards and governance structures.
- Understanding of regional economic, political and business dynamics, particularly within the North West, is desirable.

Skills, attributes and behaviour

- A credible and authentic leader, able to operate confidently with senior stakeholders whilst remaining approachable and grounded.
- A passionate and credible champion of the North West, with a genuine commitment to the region's long term success and prosperity.
- Highly skilled at building relationships, with strong influencing and negotiating capability across a diverse range of stakeholders.
- Politically aware, with sound judgement and the ability to navigate ambiguity and competing agendas.
- A natural facilitator, creating environments where trust, openness and constructive challenge can thrive.
- Curious and intellectually open, with a strong desire to learn, explore different perspectives and continually develop insight.
- Commercially aware, with a focus on sustainability, value and delivery.
- Personally resilient, adaptable and comfortable operating within a small and resource-constrained organisation.
- A clear and demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, embedding inclusive behaviours and thinking across all aspects of the organisation's work.

This role will suit

- A relationship-led leader with strong judgement and a deep appreciation for the power of convening, someone who is as comfortable operating behind the scenes as they are representing the organisation externally.
- An individual who values substance over profile, and who can balance influence, stewardship and delivery to ensure NWBLT continues to play a meaningful role in shaping the North West's future.



The terms of appointment

Base salary

Competitive six figure base salary

Bonus

Performance related bonus up to 10% of base salary

Location

The successful candidate will be expected to maintain a visible presence across the North West, with regular engagement across the region and flexibility to attend key meetings and events

Pension

8% company pension contribution

Holiday entitlement

29 days plus bank holidays

Notice period

Six months

The recruitment process

NWBLT recognises the importance of a well-structured and transparent recruitment process. The approach is designed to provide both the candidate and NWBLT with sufficient opportunity to assess alignment in terms of values, expectations and ambition. Our objective is to ensure there is clarity around the role, including the key challenges, opportunities and priorities, enabling both parties to make informed decisions.

- First stage discussions will be with **Khurram Hussain** of **Warren Partners** to position the role and complete an initial assessment.
- Selected candidates will have a follow-up conversation with **Joëlle Warren MBE**, Life President of **NWBLT**.
- Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a psychometric assessment and will be invited to interview on **15th July**. This final stage will comprise two elements:
 - A **stakeholder panel discussion**, facilitated by the candidate, involving a group of NWBLT stakeholders, including Katie Bray, Deputy Chief Executive Officer.
 - A **formal panel interview** with the Board of NWBLT, including a presentation.

Every effort will be made to coordinate diaries to ensure an effective use of time.

Diversity, inclusion, and corporate social responsibility

NWBLT is committed to creating an inclusive and supportive environment where diverse perspectives are valued and respected. The organisation believes that better outcomes are achieved through the contribution of people with different backgrounds, experiences and viewpoints.

NWBLT encourages applications from individuals of all backgrounds and is committed to ensuring that its recruitment processes are fair, transparent and accessible.

More broadly, NWBLT promotes responsible leadership across the region, supporting initiatives that contribute to inclusive growth, social value and the long-term sustainability of the North West economy.

Appendix I | The NWBLT organisation

Emma Degg MBE FRSA | Chief Executive

Emma is Chief Executive of the North West Business Leadership Team. She has spent her career focussed upon bringing together business leaders and policy makers to make a tangible difference, nationally, across the North West and in local government. Emma regards the promotion of responsible business leadership as essential to the future of the UK economy, in particular the importance of inspiring and encouraging young people to achieve their full potential. She is currently a member of the independent House of Lords UK2070 Commission, Board member of Net Zero NW, Made Smarter NW, and a Trustee of 'We Mind the Gap' and Best for Britain.

Katie Bray | Deputy Chief Executive

Katie is Deputy Chief Executive of the North West Business Leadership Team. She manages their Rising Stars and Diversity Drivers programmes. Katie has over 30 years experience of managing projects and running events for a number of different companies whilst running her own consultancy. She has also worked in community development and in marketing for a number of North West organisations.

Andy Hulme FRSA | Head of Innovation and Growth

Andy is Head of Innovation and Growth and is leading the development of the NWBLT's Enterprise and Innovation work. The role is focused on making a difference to the economy and communities of the North West Region and currently includes work around industrial decarbonisation and net zero, the role of innovation in boosting growth and improving access to innovation finance. Prior to joining NWBLT he was Head of Policy and Strategy at Cheshire and Warrington LEP for seven years, leading on development of the Strategic Economic Plan, draft Local Industrial Strategy and Covid Recovery Plan for the sub-region.

Emily Mathew | Head of Stakeholder Engagement

Emily is Head of Stakeholder Engagement for the North West Business Leadership Team. She leads for them on their People & Skills workstream. Emily previously led Bruntwood's Equity, Diversity & Inclusion programme as their Social Impact Project Manager, and brings extensive and unique experience within not-for-profit, charitable foundations as well as corporate businesses.

Jeanette Carruthers | Executive Assistant

Jeanette joined the NWBLT in March 2022 as EA to the Chief Executive and Office Manager. Jeanette has over 25 years' experience supporting C-Suite Executives, and prior to joining the NWBLT, worked for Liverpool John Lennon Airport for 16 years.

To find out more about our Team please visit: [NWBLT](#)

Appendix II | The Board



Chris Woodroffe
NWBLT Chair
Managing Director, Manchester Airport



Simone Peppi
NWBLT Deputy Chair
Founder & Owner, Pilot Group



Andrew Finlayson
NWBLT Board Member
UK Northwest Regional Lead, Accenture



Kirsty Rogers
NWBLT Board Member
Chief Sustainability Officer, DWF Group



Nicholas Dobbs
NWBLT Board Member
Head of Family Office and Rural Estates, Grosvenor Estates



Macolm Buchanan
NWBLT Board Member
Regional Managing Director, NatWest

To find out more about our Team please visit: [NWBLT](#)



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Khurram Hussain
Partner



Tim Kemp
Partner



Clare Gibson
Consultant



Megan Yates
Assignment Manager

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