

Head of Contracts and Service Development

Information Pack

advice space
support & guidance

Contents

Introduction 3
Who we are 4
What we do 5
How we're organised 6
Strategy 7
Financials 8
Meet the Board 9
Job Description 11
Person Specification 15
How to apply 16
Timeline 17

Introduction

Dear Candidate

Advice Space has come a long way since it rebranded in 2018. It still retains the values and ethos of the Citizens Advice movement from which it emerged, but with a modernised structure, and an even greater emphasis on the quality of the services it provides. At the heart of these improvements is a focus on the development of the staff and volunteers who deliver the positive impact on the community that is its mission.

We are proud of the trust placed in us by our partners who help us increase our impact every year, reaching more people with a wide range of increasingly important advice and referral services. In looking back over the previous two-year period 2024-2026, Advice Space has approximately:

- Secured >2.5 million of incoming funding to enable service provision
- Assisted 60,000 people
- Dealt with 177,000 different problems for those people
- Helped them receive >£16.6 million back in unclaimed benefit entitlements

We have just recently secured 2 new service delivery contracts worth over £3million across the next 3-4 years at least and are excited about our future!

We now have a new position within Advice Space and are looking for a passionate and motivated person to take up the role of Head of Contracts and Service Development in order to lead our staff and volunteer team and operations into the next phase of our Strategic Plan.

You will be joining a great team of approximately 36 staff and four current volunteers, supported and guided by a committed board of Trustees/Directors.

If you have the skills and experience and share our passion for making a difference to our community, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

We are working with our partners Engage on this search and selection, and they will be happy to field any initial queries you might have about the role.

Peter McMahon
Chief Executive Officer

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Who we are

The name Advice Space has been around for eight years, but our ethos and values are still based on our fifty+ year legacy as part of the Citizens Advice movement. Our focus is about helping people – no matter who they are – to exercise their rights and obtain fair treatment under the law.

Advice Space grew out of 'Citizens Advice Belfast' in 2018, taking the opportunity to rebrand and grow following the closure of Northern Ireland's regional support body for CABx. Since then, as part of the Advice NI family, it has evolved into a real success story for the community it serves in Belfast and beyond, with 36 staff and a turnover of more than £1.3m set to increase to over £2.2m this year and has a healthy unrestricted reserves that will ensure sustainability and help growth.

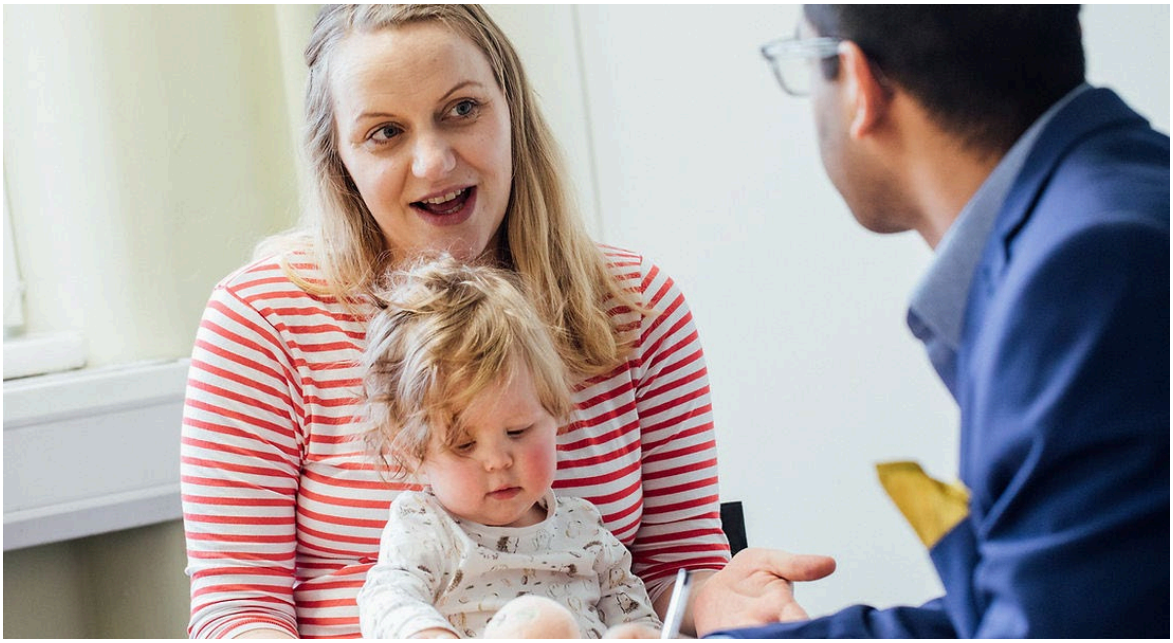
Ultimately, the purposes of the charity are to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community in Northern Ireland by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress.

Advice Space believes one of the best ways to deliver our Strategy and making the maximum positive impact for those who need us, is to work in partnership to deliver our services. Here is a selection of some of those we have trusted partnerships with at present:

What we do

Advice Space offers free and up-to-date factual advice to anyone who needs it. We give people the knowledge to help them fight their corner and move a difficult situation forward or act on their behalf if it helps.

Clients get help through face-to-face appointments at any of our five offices across Belfast and our outreach sessions, or they can opt to receive help by telephone, text or email. We work closely with our partners to further online digital triage and appointment services.



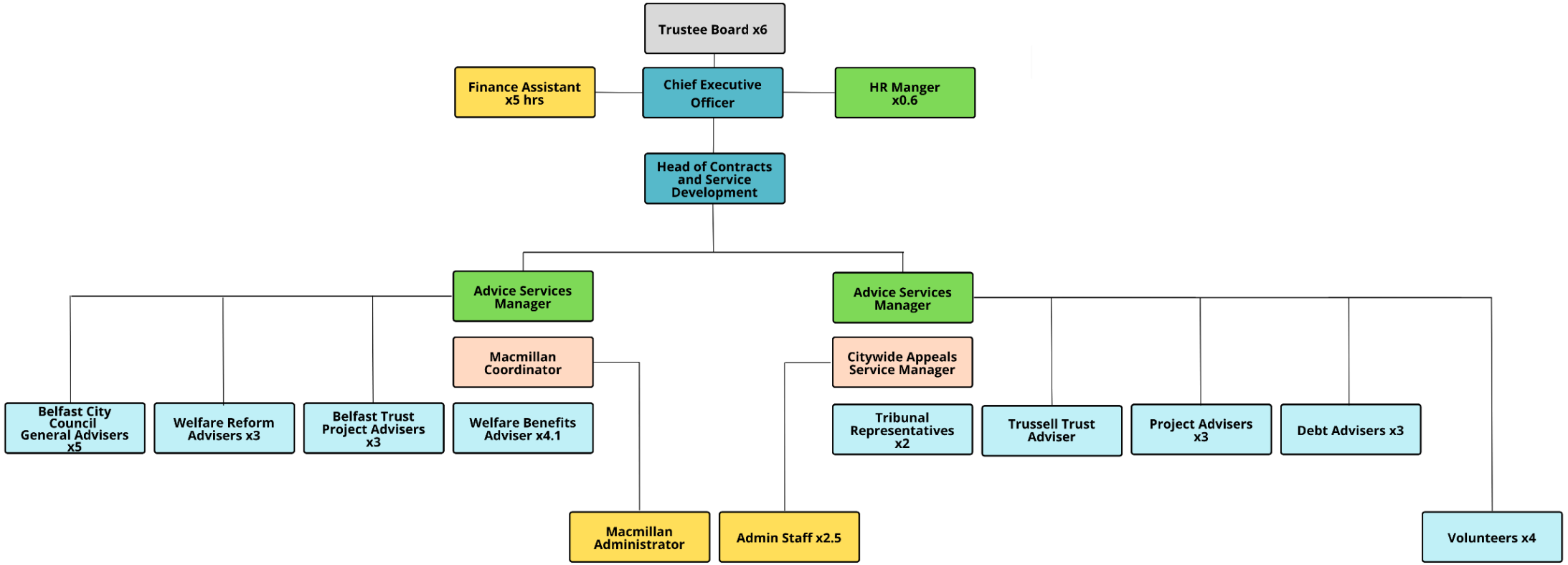
To maintain the quality of the services we provide year after year, we invest in the best training we can for our staff and our volunteers and currently developing AI tools to help ensure we remain efficient and effective at what we do and help expand our reach.

Benefits advice is the cornerstone of our service provision. Every year we help thousands of people navigate the complex benefits system to ensure they get all the financial and other support to which they are entitled.

Our frontline experience and expertise also equip us to help influence policy and contribute to campaigns aimed at improving the quality of life for our community.

Please visit our website for more information at: www.advicespace.me

How we're organised



Strategy

Aims

We provide free advice to people with problems, and we listen to what stakeholders say when things don't work. We speak up to improve policies and practices that affect people's lives by challenging decision-makers.

Principles

Our advice is free, independent, confidential and impartial. We help people get access to the information they need to fight their own corner and, where appropriate, act on their behalf.

Mission

Providing high quality, free, independent advice enabling people to move towards positive life solutions.

Objectives

Our current 2024-2029 objectives are centred on:

- Improving lives and promoting well-being by delivering an independent high-quality comprehensive welfare rights service and in partnership with trusted partners
- Using evidence to inform and influence positive change
- Being recognised as highly motivated, reliable and trusted experts
- Ensuring effective governance
- Minimising waste and maximising use of existing and emerging digital technology
- Having appropriate accommodation that meets organisational need
- Achieving financial sustainability



Financials

Below is a summary of our most recently published income and expenditure and balance sheet statements. You can click on the links below to see our most recent three years' annual accounts.

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2026 £	Restricted Funds 2026 £	Total Funds 2026 £	Unrestricted Funds 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2025 £
Income							
Donations and legacies	5.1	420	-	420	1,052	-	1,052
Charitable activities	5.2	90,027	1,238,831	1,328,858	87,192	1,064,572	1,151,764
Other trading activities	5.3	5,520	-	5,520	6,000	-	6,000
Investments	5.4	1,584	-	1,584	970	-	970
Other income	5.5	-	-	-	14,749	-	14,749
Total income		97,551	1,238,831	1,336,382	109,963	1,064,572	1,174,535
Expenditure							
Charitable activities	6.1	39,029	1,197,467	1,236,496	122,200	1,061,796	1,183,996
Net gains/(losses) on investments		12,371	-	12,371	8,088	-	8,088
Net income/(expenditure)		70,893	41,364	112,257	(4,149)	2,776	(1,373)
Transfers between funds		(6,839)	6,839	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the financial year		64,054	48,203	112,257	(4,149)	2,776	(1,373)
Reconciliation of funds: Total funds beginning of the year	19	604,297	27,306	631,603	608,446	24,530	632,976
Total funds at the end of the year		668,351	75,509	743,860	604,297	27,306	631,603

Annual Accounts March 2026

Annual Accounts March 2025

Annual Accounts March 2024

Meet the Board



Kevin Quigley
Chair

Kevin joined as a Trustee on the Advice Space Board in October 2025 and was elected as Trustee Chair.

Since 2012 Kevin has been the CEO of Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA) and reports to his Chair and Board. With responsibility of all aspects of the management of the Authority including all aspects of good governance Kevin brings a wealth of experience, knowledge and skill to Advice Space. Kevin has served as an Executive and non-Executive member on a number of Boards and is currently helping guide Advice Space through its mid-term Strategic Plan review.



Chris Trotter
Treasurer

Chris joined as a Trustee on the Advice Space Board in March 2023.

Chris joined the Advice Space Board in March 2023 and was appointed Trustee Treasurer and is also a member of the Advice Space Finance Sub-committee of the Board. As Treasurer Chris helps exercise financial oversight and support to the Board of Trustees with financial planning. As a finance professional working in venture capital and supporting high-growth private sector companies, Chris brings valuable experience, skill and insight offering to Advice Space.



Ian Davison

Ian joined as a Trustee on the Advice Space Board in May 2022.

Ian works within an independent Advisory firm providing specialist corporate finance and restructuring services in NI and is a Director within a Corporate Restructuring team. Ian has broad commercial experience and prides himself on providing robust client focused advice. With a number of accreditations including being a Licensed Insolvency Practitioner and a Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants Ian brings his commercial experience and diligence to Advice Space and is a keen advocate of good governance.



Estella Dorrian

Estella joined as a Trustee on the Advice Space Board in August 2023.

Estella is delighted to be part of the Advice Space community contributing to the growth of a service which has been an integral and critical part of the Belfast Agenda. Estella has a long career in Equality and a keen interest in social justice. Working with other Trustees and the CEO Estella has helped Advice Space review many policies and protocols to ensure good practice (e.g. Safeguarding) and AccessNI and continues to help with complex HR issues and advise on DEI matters to help guide good governance of Advice Space.



Peter Grimley

Peter joined as a Trustee on the Advice Space Board in January 2025.

Peter is passionate about the potential of technology to improve lives and outcomes for people and is excited to help Advice Space adapt to the ever-changing digital landscape. Peter has over 20 years of experience in ICT across the private and public sectors, specialising in digital transformation, strategic leadership, and delivering impactful technology solutions. Peter is currently helping and advising Advice Space with its procurement for IT & telephony services.



Peter Murray

Peter joined as a Trustee on the Advice Space Board in July 2025.

Peter provides expert investment management services. Peter began his financial services career at Citi, before joining RBC Brewin Dolphin's Belfast office in 2016 and is a Chartered Wealth Manager and Member of the Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment. Peter's knowledge and experience assists Advice Space in navigating its current Investment Strategy.

Job Description

Job Title	**Head of Contracts and Service Development**
Reporting to	**Chief Executive Officer**
Direct reports	**Advice Service Managers x2**
Location	**Belfast**
Hours	**35 hours per week (Monday to Friday)**
Salary Package	**£43,400**
Benefits	**4 x Annual Salary (death in service life insurance benefit)** **8% (employer 3% + employee 5%) Pension** **Generous free cash back & healthcare scheme**
Leave	**25 days annual leave plus 13 statutory days and birthday off**
Duration	**Permanent full time, with six-month probationary period**

Job Purpose

The Head of Contracts & Service Development shall provide strategic and operational leadership for all funded advice services delivered by the charity, whilst ensuring the right infrastructure is in place to support operations and deliver the Advice Space Strategic Plan.

The role will oversee development and implementation of high-quality, compliant, and financially sustainable advice services aligned with our charitable objectives and regulatory requirements and ensure the appropriate infrastructure is in place.

The postholder will lead contract management, service performance, quality assurance, service development and areas of budgetary management thus ensuring clients receive accessible, inclusive, and outcome-focused support.

MAIN DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Strategic Leadership

- Lead the strategic development and growth of advice services in response to need, strategic plans, policy change, and funding opportunities.
- Contribute to the Strategic Management Team (SMT) in supporting organisational strategy and business planning.
- Develop and agree annual business planning targets and key performance indicators (KPIs) for advice services and contracts to ensure service delivery and growth.

- Identify and pursue new funding, tender, and partnership opportunities in line with strategy.
- Develop service models that promote innovation, accessibility, and digital inclusion.

2. Contract & Performance Management

- Lead on the successful implementation and delivery of the Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service (BCTS) contract in conjunction with the relevant Advice Services Manager ***(commencement date: Apri/26).***
- Lead on the successful implementation and delivery of the new Macmillan contract with Advice Space as the new NI Regional Lead in conjunction with the relevant Advice Services Manager ***(commencement date: June26).***
- Oversight and management of all Belfast City Council/DfC generalist, debt and welfare reform grant programmes to ensure funding is secured as it becomes due and the associated programmes of work are implemented.
- Oversight and overall management of all other Advice Space grant-aid and contract funding *(e.g. NICHS/Cystic Fibrosis/BHSCT/Positive Life/Trussell etc.).*
- Ensure compliance with all contractual requirements, KPIs, GDPR requirements,
- safeguarding, and quality standards including reporting and dealing with potential
- breaches.
- Monitor performance data and produce reports for business plans, funders, trustees, and senior management.
- Lead future new contract negotiations.

3. Impact and Impact Measurement

- Lead the development of Theories of Change for advice services to set out pathways for long-term change and ensure the Advice Space customer journeys are adapted to help maximise opportunity for achieving impact and positive change.
- Ensure a robust framework for data collection, impact measurement, and continuous improvement is developed for Advice Space that is both managed appropriately and operational across all operational services ensuring appropriate levels of accountability throughout.
- Take forward and lead on implementing the recommendations arising from the DfC
- Refresh policy review underway *(as at 2026).*

4. Service Delivery - Quality Assurance

- Ensure delivery of high-quality advice in line with the expectation of the NI Advice Quality Standard **(NIAQS).**
- Oversight of casework quality, supervision frameworks, and service audits/case reviews carried out by relevant Managers.
- Maintain effective safeguarding, risk management, and data protection procedures in line with quality assurance requirements.
- Champion equality, diversity, and inclusion across all services.

5. Financial & Budgetary Management

- Prepare & build timely service/project & contract budgets annually and also for new service/project bids and submissions as required.
- Monitor and manage budget income and expenditure within designated area of responsibility and identify and report on variances while identifying, agreeing &

implementing remedial action.

- Prepare finance reports to CEO, Finance sub-committee and the Trustee Board on budgetary performance highlighting variations and providing explanations and agreed remedial action.
- Maximise contract value by agreeing and monitoring unit costs and ensure effective resource allocation and value for money.
- Meet with Auditors monthly to monitor budgets and variances and to assist with identifying remedial action early to be responsive to addressing variances.
- Ensure timely reporting to funders for all projects, funders and contracts as required to ensure compliance and good practice.

6. Funding & Fundraising

- To scan environment and identify funding opportunities for growth in line with Strategy
- To take forward and lead in building and submitting new funding applications and procurement bids for new and renewing contracts to maintain existing and secure new income for Advice Space

7. People Strategy & Leadership

- Lead, manage, and develop the Advice Service Managers including their learning and development.
- Support workforce planning including staff and volunteers.
- Oversee recruitment within advice service teams.
- Oversee performance management with Advice Service Managers within advice service teams.
- Lead in the development of a new *Academy of Learning and Development* to support
- staff and volunteer personal and professional development across the organisation.
- Foster a positive, inclusive, and high-performing culture.

8. Partnerships, Stakeholder Engagement & Marketing

- Develop strong relationships with key stakeholders including BCC and DfC as well as with all funders, and community partners.
- Represent the organisation at strategic forums and events as required.
- Promote and market Advice Space brand awareness effectively through a range of mediums including organisational social media channels.

9. Governance & Compliance

- Support the CEO and Trustees with performance reporting and strategic insight.
- Ensure services meet regulatory, legal, and network compliance requirements.
- Contribute to organisational risk management planning.
- Contribute to business continuity planning.
- Contribute to policy influencing and development.

10. Infrastructure Support

- Ensure appropriate ICT support is in place to enable function and delivery of effective and efficient advice services including for: Telephony, AdvicePro case recording system; IT hardware and appropriate Adviser resources.

- Lead in the development of innovative technologies for provision of advice services to clients including Al technology to ensure the most efficient and effective use of Advice Space resources and that help maximise impact for clients.
- Ensure with the Advice Service Managers that all office locations and facilities are fully operational, resourced and compliant and managed adequately on a day-to-day basis.

11. CEO Support

- To deputise for the CEO as required and assume lead responsibility in areas designated under deputising role.
- To act in an Ambassadorial role for Advice Space in absence of CEO and as required at events, functions, conferences etc.

12. Other

- To be responsible for own learning and development
- To adhere to the values of the organisation
- To carry out any other duties required that are reasonable to ensuring the success of the role.



Person Specification

Essential

- A minimum of 3-years senior management experience *(defined as a member of a senior/strategic management/leadership team)* in the last 7 years *(at Aug26)* within an advice organisation, charity, public sector organisation, or within commissioned services
- 3 years demonstrable leadership experience, leading a multidisciplinary team.
- Demonstrated responsibility in public procurement contract bid writing & submitting
- Strong experience managing public procurement contracts and related performance frameworks
- Demonstrated responsibility in writing and submitting funding applications to charitable grant making organisations *(philanthropic sources)*
- Strong financial management experience with direct budgetary responsibility in excess of £200k *(To include preparing/building budgets, monitoring budgets, reporting variances, identifying & implementing remedial action and reporting to a CEO, Finance Committee or Board)*
- Experience leading multidisciplinary teams, including volunteers
- Knowledge of safeguarding, GDPR, and quality assurance frameworks.
- A strong degree of interpersonal skills is required
- IT proficiency in the Microsoft Suite of applications

Desirable (to be used in shortlisting in the event of a high number of applications)

- Prince2 *(Project Management)* Qualification
- General knowledge of welfare benefits, debt, housing and employment advice services and issues
- Understanding of commissioning environments

Additional Information

- The postholder is required to be based in-person at our Belfast Central office but may be required to travel *(largely across our Belfast offices and those of our partners but also from time-to-time across N.I. - relevant travel expenses are paid)*
- Evening or occasional weekend work may on occasion be required but a TOIL system will operate if required
- Appointment subject to satisfactory references
- Advice Space also reserve the right to heighten the criteria if a significant volume of applications is received

How to apply

Please forward a **CV, maximum three A4 sides,** together with a completed **Supplementary Questions form** available from www.engageexec.co.uk, ensuring you have included mobile, work and home telephone numbers, as well as any dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with from the recruitment timetable. You will also be asked to submit a separate **equality form** (see below).

The deadline is **Noon on Monday 5 October 2026.** Applications should be made by email to: **apply@engageexec.co.uk**

Contact Lesley Dugan-Clarke on 07734 378618 if you have any queries about the role or the application process.

Equality Monitoring
Along with the CV and Form, you will be asked to complete and return the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form in a separate document. This will not be disclosed to anyone involved in shortlisting your application.

Disability
In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act a person is disabled if they have, or have had, "a physical or mental impairment which has, or has had, a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities".

If you consider yourself to have a disability relevant to the position for which you are applying, please contact Lesley Dugan-Clarke so that we can process your application fairly, make any specific arrangements for your interview, and make any necessary reasonable adjustments or adaptations, or provide any aids to assist you in completing the duties of the post if appointed.

Equal Opportunities
Advice Space is an Equal Opportunities Employer and all applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

By submitting an application for this position, you are consenting for your personal information to be processed and used for the duration of this recruitment campaign.

Timeline

CV, Supplementary Questions and Equality Monitoring forms to be submitted	**Noon, Monday 5 October**
First Interviews	**Monday 12 October 2026**
Second Interviews (may include a seen or unseen task)	**Friday 16 October 2026**



Please address any enquiries relating to the advertised position, and your submission, to Advice Space's recruitment partners:

Lesley Dugan-Clarke

ENGAGE
EXECUTIVE TALENT

Tel: 07734 378618
Email: lesley@co3.org.uk

www.engageexec.co.uk

advice space
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Enquiries unrelated to this recruitment can be addressed to:

Advice Space
Merrion Business Centre
58 Howard Street
Belfast, BT1 6PJ

Tel: 0300 1233 233
Web: www.advicespace.me

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