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Foreword from CEO & Chairperson

We, on behalf of the Public Appointments Service, are delighted to present this Statement of Strategy, NUA26, which builds on our previous strategy, NUA23. To develop NUA26, we have reflected on and learned from the challenges and our achievements over the past three years.

We have a strong vision, driven by our mission and values. The vision, mission and values of the Public Appointments Service, first developed in 2020, reflect our role as a professional public service recruitment provider and as custodians of a tradition of independent, impartial, merit-based public service recruitment. We play a critical role in providing a centralised recruitment, assessment and selection service across the public service and NUA26 demonstrates our commitment to respond to the significant challenges we, the public service and Irish society face.

We are committed to being accountable for our service delivery and will use effective measures to assess performance and client and candidate satisfaction and will report these publicly. We will build the confidence of our client base in the quality and delivery of the services we offer. We will support public service clients to attract talent through a modernised and pro-active approach to recruitment and assessment service delivery. We will bring renewed energy to the marketing of public service roles highlighting the meaningful and dynamic work and the potential to positively impact the lives of the people of Ireland. We are focused on ensuring that the public service reflects the society it serves and understand our role in proactively attracting a diversity of people and working with our clients to ensure they provide the roles and employee experience needed to retain talent.



We have identified three strategic pillars that will guide our priorities over the coming years. Delivering recruitment excellence is the central pillar of this new strategy, in recognition of the need to improve our service delivery timescales and work with strategic partners to provide responsive and tailored recruitment solutions. This central pillar is supported by our plans to work with clients to remove barriers to delivering recruitment excellence and to leverage our insights and experience as the centralised recruiter across public service roles. The central pillar is also supported by our commitment to evolving and futureproofing how we operate and ensuring we have the necessary capabilities needed to deliver.

In delivering on NUA26, we will continuously work to provide high-quality and prompt recruitment services to our clients; we will provide fair, transparent recruitment processes that meet candidate expectations; and we will ensure that our staff work in a highly efficient, innovative, and inclusive recruitment organisation. With society's increasing concern for the sustainability of our natural resources, the Public Appointments Service will meet our responsibilities to ensure that our services are delivered through efficient use of resources and minimal environmental impact.

We want to thank all those who gave their time, energy and insights to help us identify and prioritise key objectives and design the roadmap for this Statement of Strategy. We look forward to working with the Public Appointments Service Board, the management team and all of our staff and clients to deliver on an ambitious programme for the years and challenges ahead.

Margaret McCabe *Chief Executive Officer*

Tom Moran *Board Chair Public Appointments Service*

Our Evolving World

The recruitment market is challenging and continuously evolving. The competition for talent is at an all-time high. Employers across all sectors are struggling to attract and retain talent in the face of skills shortages, fierce competition for top talent and increased flexibility and salary demands.

While the current recruitment market is classified as competitive, its future shape is uncertain. Depending on broader social, economic and geo-political issues, a variety of employment market scenarios are possible. The desire for more meaningful careers and flexible ways of working is expected to continue. The cost-of-living crisis will see a renewed focus on compensation and benefits. The green economy brings focus to improved human well-being and social equity, seeking to reduce environmental risks and ecological scarcities. The sense of insecurity provoked by war in Europe and macro-economic volatility is likely to see job security prioritised. As the centralised recruiter for the public service, we are committed to supporting the state to respond to geopolitical events, social challenges and the impact of technology on recruitment and the world of work.

We are having to work harder and smarter to attract the required quality candidates with the required skills and to maintain their interest through the recruitment process. Areas such as AI and the green economy are on the rise and vital to future economic growth and competitiveness in Ireland. The public service must bring a focus to upskilling and reskilling for these areas as well as cultivate a pipeline of skilled professionals and attract top talent for the country.

Ireland's societal makeup has changed significantly in more recent years, bringing new expression to values, beliefs and cultural practices. Inclusivity in the hiring process is vital. The recent merging of people's personal lives and the workplace, with the adoption of virtual work, highlights the need to evolve how we hire and what we hire for. Technology can be harnessed as a tool to perform volume-driven activities and serve as intelligent partners complementing human workers. Workplace cultures, organisational policies as well as legislative and policy developments need to evolve to ensure the delivery of public services.

We need to build momentum around recruitment excellence initiatives and further establish our role as a trusted partner and thought leader in the sector. Recruitment service delivery requires a modernised approach to include alternative routes to careers and new pathways; apprenticeship offerings and mobility to move outside the more traditional recruitment processes, maximising efficiencies across recruitment and assessment service delivery.

Our new strategy and its supporting actions are critical to building resilience in a challenging market. It is built on our long-term ambition to grow an effective public service and workforce reflective of the society it serves. We are committed through this strategy to delivering on our mission and vision to meet the challenges of this evolving world.



Our Challenge

Increasingly, maintaining panels of candidates has been a significant challenge, with panels being exhausted very quickly, high rates of attrition and delays in general grade assignments.

Our clients require a prompt and responsive recruitment service that offers a tailored approach; that responds to challenges and delivers high calibre staff, all the while focusing on equality, diversity and inclusion as core drivers of innovation and productivity.

Candidates increasingly expect a high-quality, efficient and personalised service. We will provide candidates with a positive experience when engaging with us directly and through publicjobs.ie. We will provide services that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse candidate pool by taking a strategic approach to recruitment, applying innovative systems and processes and improving digital service delivery.

We will continually drive recruitment excellence by identifying future needs, predicting trends, harnessing our data to better understand the market and setting the standards for recruitment across the Irish public service.



Our Opportunity

The Public Appointments Service continues to play a critical role in providing a centralised recruitment, assessment and selection service across the public service. In recent times, we have demonstrated the value of what we provide to our clients as they have responded to significant challenges in a rapidly changing environment, such as those brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. We have continued to adapt our service delivery model, systems and structures to meet the changing needs of clients and candidates and we anticipate further change on an on-going basis.

As an organisation, despite the challenges we face, we must ensure the delivery of high-quality services and drive excellence in recruitment, assessment and selection across the public service. By continuing to innovate and embrace change, we can leverage the opportunities of an evolving economic, social, technological, employment and environmental landscape, to increase our strategic capability and build a more dynamic, responsive and agile organisation to deliver better outcomes for our clients and candidates.

We will realise this opportunity by reimagining our recruitment model to optimise service delivery and meet the changing needs of clients and candidates. We will develop our systems, data capability and use of new technologies to drive efficiencies and redesign processes, placing customer experience at the forefront of our activities. We will proactively influence best practice recruitment in the public service, using our platform to highlight issues that inhibit delivering recruitment excellence and labour market access. We will ensure good governance and organisational structures and work with our strategic partners to ensure our funding model is fit for purpose. We will develop our client and market knowledge and insights. We will develop, engage, and empower our people, creating a sustainable working environment that is reflective of society and based on the needs of our people and the values of our organisation.

Our Mandate



The Public Appointments Service derives its mandate and was established under the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Acts 2004 to 2013. The majority of Public Appointments Service recruitment campaigns are carried out under the Office of the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) Code of Practice. The Code of Practice sets out guidelines and standards for internal and external recruitment in the public service.

The Public Appointments Service operates within a broad framework of national and EU statutes, policies, codes of practice and strategies, across a range of areas relating to the labour market; skills; equality, diversity and inclusion; and the Irish language. As an organisation, we are committed to fulfilling our obligations and showing leadership to deliver on our mission of ‘recruiting a diversity of people for the public service with the talent, character and commitment to deliver for Ireland’.

This strategy is underwritten by our obligations under relevant statutes including the Equal Status Acts 2000-2015, the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015, the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014) and the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021. The strategy has also been developed in line with wider civil and public service strategies including the Civil Service Renewal Strategy 2030, Better Public Services – the Public Service Transformation 2030 Strategy, Our Public Service 2020, and Connecting Government 2030: A Digital and ICT Strategy for Ireland’s Public Service; and will seek to support the implementation of wider national strategies including Project Ireland 2040, Ireland’s National Skills Strategy 2025, the Strategic Plan on Making Ireland the Best Place in Europe to be LGBTQI+ 2023-2027, the National Action Plan Against Racism and any further national strategies of relevance to the work we do.

Our Mission

Recruiting a diversity
of people for the public
service with the talent,
character & commitment
to deliver for Ireland.



We, the people who work for the Public Appointments Service:

- Recognise that we are operating in a challenging recruitment environment: with an ambitious government reform agenda; widespread social change and disruption; the continuous requirement to respond to the changing world of work and rapidly evolving technologies; increasing stakeholder expectations of highly efficient, personalised and customer-focused service provision; and a national imperative for productivity improvement in all services.
- Recognise that the people we recruit into public service roles have a wide-ranging and significant impact on the economic, social and environmental development of Irish society and the lives of the people of Ireland.
- Understand the importance of our role as custodians of a tradition of independent, impartial, merit-based public service recruitment and continuously strive to ensure we fulfil our obligations under the Code of Practice of the Commission for Public Service Appointments.
- Understand the key role we have in delivering a public service that is reflective of all the people it serves.
- Are proud of our role in building trust in public services, shaping the Irish public service and the future of a changing Ireland and minimising the environmental impact of how we work and deliver services.

Our Vision

Recognised as the
centre of excellence
in recruitment,
trusted by those
we serve.



Guided by our core values, we aim to be the very best recruiters in Ireland:

- We will enhance our reputation as the standard bearer of excellent recruitment practice recognised internationally for innovation, efficiency and inclusion.
- Our clients across the public service will trust us to continuously deliver high-quality and timely services in meeting their recruitment needs.
- The Public Appointments Service will provide fair, transparent recruitment processes that deliver an experience that proactively meets candidate expectations.
- We will drive and maintain high standards in public service recruitment in line with the Code of Practice of the Commission for Public Service Appointments.
- We will consolidate and strengthen our market share focusing our recruitment activities where they will best meet the needs of Irish society.
- Staff will be proud to work in a highly efficient, innovative and inclusive public service recruitment organisation.

Our Values





TRUST

- We value the trust placed in us to deliver a timely & excellent service and we have trust in our stakeholders and colleagues
- We take pride in our history and will maintain the office's reputation for fairness, independence and probity
- We always act with integrity, uphold the highest ethical standards and safeguard the confidentiality of all aspects of our process
- We respect the resources entrusted to us, working to reduce our environmental impact



INNOVATION

- We embrace change and see challenges as opportunities for improvement and growth
- We value and support curiosity and trying new approaches
- We are innovative and actively review our services and processes to support continuous development
- We aim to be an organisation that is agile and can flex with an ability to respond to external factors



CUSTOMER FOCUS

- We are a demand-led organisation and the customer (clients, candidates and people of Ireland) is at the centre of everything we do
- We aim to provide our clients with excellent service, collaborating with them to meet their recruitment needs
- We aim to provide candidates with a positive experience whatever the outcome
- We communicate with our customers, listen to and value their feedback



LEADERSHIP

- We embrace our unique role in the public service and as recruitment professionals equip ourselves to support individuals and organisation to reach their full potential
- We share our insights and experience and work with colleagues across the public service to achieve high performance and the ability to adapt to the changing workplace
- Our people show leadership at all times, particularly in times of challenge



EXCELLENCE

- We expect and strive for excellence in everything we do
- We achieve and deliver value for money
- We seek to adopt the latest technologies and most advanced thinking to optimise our performance
- We support each other and are committed to our ongoing professional development to deliver excellence in recruitment and selection
- We set high standards for service delivery and are comfortable with challenge



INCLUSION

- We recognise and value diversity and embrace opportunities to demonstrate inclusive leadership
- Our workplace is an inclusive environment where everyone is treated with dignity, respect and courtesy
- Our services and processes support everyone to achieve their true potential
- We strive to appeal to diverse audiences, attracting them to public sector careers



Developing our people, systems & culture

Evolve how we work

Future-proof Public Appointments
Service capability

Driving recruitment excellence

Delivering for our clients and candidates

Ensure Client & Candidate experience is
at the centre of everything we do

Driving Excellence

Transform insights into action

Remove barriers to deliver
recruitment excellence

Delivering Recruitment Excellence
is the central pillar of our
organisation and of this strategy.

Developing our capabilities as an organisation
and **driving** excellence internally and
externally support this central pillar.

Delivering Recruitment Excellence

is a strategic priority because...



People are central to our business and it is our priority to provide our clients with an efficient and prompt service, recruiting high calibre candidates to support a diverse public service.

In a competitive environment, we recognise the need to strengthen and evolve our recruitment model to respond to the changing needs of our clients and our candidates.

We recognise our key role in shaping a high performing, values-led public service workforce for the people of Ireland.





By the end of this strategy we will...

Deliver for our Clients and Candidates

- Consistently meet our timeline targets for all recruitment competitions in line with our KPIs.
- Provide responsive and tailored recruitment solutions that meet the range of client and candidate expectations.
- Consolidate and strengthen our recruitment offering, focusing our activities on where they will best meet the needs of the whole of Irish society.
- Have reviewed our risk appetite to increase our agility, enabling us to proactively respond to an evolving recruitment market.
- Have optimised our structures and processes to support the modernisation of recruitment operations.
- Apply evidence-based and inclusive assessment and selection approaches to deliver our mission, ensuring a diversity of people across the public service.
- Better utilise and map data to understand and meet clients' needs.
- Continue to undertake research and analysis in collaboration with our clients to better understand the current and emerging recruitment industry trends and practices to better meet clients' and candidates' needs.
- Have maximised our use of technology and automation to deliver customer-focused services.
- Assess and report on our service delivery, customer satisfaction and organisational performance, using a suite of Key Performance Indicators and proactive engagement through frequent customer touchpoints.

Ensure Client and Candidate Experience is at the centre of everything we do

- Better meet the needs of clients by working with our customers, applying user-centric design principles to improve our service offering.
- Monitor market trends, working closely with our clients to identify innovative ways to attract and assign quality candidates.
- Better understand candidate pipelines and trends to inform the development of effective and tailored attraction strategies.
- Have embedded an ED&I focus across all recruitment operations and advanced our equality monitoring data, reducing barriers to entry and increasing the diversity of candidate pools.
- Have adopted a strategic approach to our interview board member model and increased the supply and diversity of our interview board member pool.
- Have a fully implemented brand and customer communications strategy, delivering a consistent and user-centric experience to our clients and candidates across all touchpoints of the recruitment journey.
- Have a fully embedded hybrid service delivery and operating model.

Driving Excellence

is a strategic priority because...



Readying the public service for the workplace of the future will require working in partnership with the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, our clients and stakeholders to guarantee system-wide commitment to removing barriers, particularly for underrepresented groups and adopting an agile approach to attracting and retaining talented and diverse candidates to public service roles.

We recognise the value of developing foresight and the power of leveraging our networks to gain insights into the labour market, recruitment trends and the evolving skills requirements that will ensure our recruitment and assessment processes are inclusive and meets the needs of the workforce of the future.





By the end of this strategy we will...

Transform insights into action

- Be recognised as a thought leader for attraction, recruitment and selection, informing inclusive practices in the public service.
- Proactively undertake research and analysis, scan for changing trends, opportunities and threats to develop foresight for the benefit of Public Appointments Service and our clients and understand and anticipate future skills and developments in recruitment and assessment.
- Have supported the public service to meet the commitments of the Official Languages Act by establishing new approaches, pipelines and key metrics.
- Lead in the development and actively support recruitment related networks for minority, marginalised and underrepresented groups.
- Have supported the public service and our clients to meet the commitments of national equality strategies.
- Have fully embraced the digital opportunities to develop insights, drive excellence and stay current with recruitment trends.
- In partnership with the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (D/PENDER), have supported a strengthening of the capacity and skills profile of the public service through our targeted recruitment and selection, to ensure the public service is prepared for and can effectively respond to new and emerging challenges.
- Actively support and provide our professional advice to clients on recruitment related issues to facilitate better recruitment practices and outcomes across the public service.

Remove barriers to delivering recruitment excellence

- Through strategic partnerships, move towards a more agile funding model and progressive organisational structures that deliver for clients and drive excellence.
- Have worked with our clients to strengthen the promotion and marketing of public service Employee Value Propositions through streamlined, integrated and compelling marketing offerings in support of key recruitment campaign areas.
- Have identified external barriers to realising our ambitions and delivering recruitment excellence and worked with strategic partners and clients across the public service to reduce or eliminate structural, operational and policy barriers.

Developing Our People, Systems & Culture

is a strategic priority because...



We value a workplace culture that embodies excellence, innovation, trust and inclusion and want to lead others by our example.

We take pride in what we do and want all staff to embrace our identity as professional recruiters for public service careers that matter.

Building our capacity to be customer-centric, results-driven and open to change will equip us to meet the challenges of today and the future.





By the end of this strategy we will...

Evolve how we work

- Ensure that all staff are customer and results focused with customer experience informing our decision making.
- Be demonstrably committed to the highest standards of corporate governance, accountability and controls, cyber security and data protection.
- Have developed organisational capacity to deliver and adopt digital transformation, maximising the potential of automation technologies and paperless solutions to drive more efficient and effective processes and services.
- Have replaced our current recruitment system with a modern and future proofed recruitment solution.
- Have developed a comprehensive data management strategy and data infrastructure that supports a data literate and data enabled culture.
- Have adopted an integrated approach to our risk management across digital transformation, business continuity, use of AI and automation, cyber security and data protection.

Future-proof Public Appointments Service capability

- Have built a leading workplace culture based on the needs of our people.
- Have undertaken a capacity review and have externally benchmarked the structures and capabilities needed to deliver.
- Have applied an agile internal resourcing model and ensured that our organisation structures are fit for purpose in an evolving work environment with the capacity to respond to unforeseen challenges and demands.
- Ensure that our organisation's values and priorities inform our decision-making, enabled by inclusive leadership.
- Have adopted a strategic approach to knowledge management.
- Have identified future skills and upskilled and professionalised our workforce and leaders to deliver in the current and future work environment.
- Have a diverse, inclusive and engaged workforce and work environment where staff wellbeing is valued and there is a clear and compelling Employee Value Proposition.
- Have a strategic approach to achieving Environmental Sustainability Goals.

Our Commitment

We are committed to being accountable for our service delivery and will develop effective measures to track performance and client and candidate satisfaction and will report on these publicly. We are committed to delivering our recruitment services in line with timelines agreed with clients. We will respond to recruitment challenges and deliver on our mission to recruit a diversity of people for the public service with the talent, character and commitment to deliver for the society of Ireland.

To build organisational capability and service excellence, this strategy will be delivered through a comprehensive implementation framework and a set of supporting action plans and strategies. This includes our People Strategy; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy; Digital Strategy; Innovation Strategy; Marketing Strategy; our Environmental, Social and Governance Framework; and Information Governance Framework.

The Public Appointments Service will implement a new digital recruitment solution to support the delivery of our strategic objectives. Adopting a contemporary, best in class digital recruitment solution will support our aim to adopt robust, efficient, and innovative recruitment processes that provide quality outcomes and attract a diverse range of top-quality candidates. The new system will enable us to provide responsive and flexible services for clients and meet our commitments to clients and candidates.



In recognition that we are an operational organisation, focused on improving service delivery, we commit that...

95%

of posts will be filled

85%

of recruitment campaigns will be delivered within the timeframe agreed with clients

85%

of generalist positions will be filled within the target timeframe

85%

of clients will be satisfied with the quality of new entrants

90%

of clients will be satisfied with the service provided by the Public Appointments Service

85%

of candidates will be satisfied with the service provided by the Public Appointments Service

100%

increase in awareness of publicjobs.ie as the key gateway for opportunities in the civil and public service

20%

increase in representation of candidates from disability and ethnic minority groups at application and assignment stages



This strategy and the associated implementation framework is a living organisational resource that will provide direction and guidance to the Board, the management team and the staff of the Public Appointments Service, enabling us to effectively deliver our mission and work toward realising our vision.



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