



The
Brain
Charity

Chief Executive Officer

Appointment brief • December 2025

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Harris Hill
Executive Search

Welcome & The Opportunity

The Brain Charity stands at a pivotal moment in its journey. As a respected national charity supporting thousands of people affected by neurological conditions, we are seeking a visionary Chief Executive Officer to lead us into our next chapter; strengthening our impact, expanding our reach, and championing our mission. This is a unique opportunity to shape the future of an organisation with a proud history and a compelling purpose.

Why The Brain Charity?

Founded in 1993 by neurologists at The Walton Centre, The Brain Charity is a Liverpool-based national charity supporting people across the UK living with neurological conditions, along with their families and carers. Our mission is to enable all those affected by neurological conditions to live longer, healthier, happier lives in an inclusive and fair society—a world where stigma, hardship, and isolation are replaced by compassion, understanding, and opportunity.

Our values—kindness, commitment, authenticity, courage, and optimism—are at the heart of everything we do. We are proud that more than half of our staff team and at least 60% of our volunteers have lived experience of neurological conditions. Our Centre in Liverpool is a vibrant hub, and our national reach is supported by hospital-based teams, digital services, and an extensive library of online resources. The Brain Charity has been recognised with national awards, including the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

What We Do

The Brain Charity offers a broad portfolio of services designed to meet the practical, emotional, and social needs of people affected by neurological conditions. Our services are rooted in our Liverpool centre but extend across Merseyside and the UK through hospital-based teams, phone and video support, and online resources.

Our core services include comprehensive information and advice, emotional support through counselling and workshops, practical assistance with welfare and legal matters, adapted fitness and rehabilitation via our Neuro Gym, opportunities for social connection through the Brain Food Café and creative activities, and specialist training and consultancy for workplaces, schools, and justice partners. We work in close partnership with hospitals, employers, and other agencies to co-design and deliver impactful services. Our support is intentionally wide-ranging, ensuring that individuals, families, carers, and professionals can access the help they need, when they need it.

Our Current Position & Ambitions

The Brain Charity is in a position of cautious strength, underpinned by a clear sense of purpose and resilience. For the year ending 31 March 2025, we achieved a turnover of £1.77 million, supported by a diverse funding mix that includes donations, legacies, service contracts, and trading activities. While we operate within tight budgets and remain subject to the usual project-funding cycles, maintaining healthy unrestricted income and reserves continues to be a strategic priority.

Our governance is robust and active. The organisation is registered as a charity (No. 1114999) and as a company limited by guarantee. Oversight is provided by a committed and experienced Board of Trustees, combining lived experience with professional expertise to guide the Charity's direction and ensure strong accountability.

Looking ahead, we are poised for strategic growth, particularly in services for children and young people. There is significant potential to reactivate partnerships in sectors such as criminal justice and prisons, unlocking new funding streams and delivering meaningful impact. Recent improvements to our ICT systems and governance provide a solid foundation for scaling with confidence.

Key Challenges & Opportunities

Like many organisations in the sector, The Brain Charity operates within tight financial constraints and a lean infrastructure. Small teams manage substantial workloads, and our business and operational capacity is stretched. Commissioners increasingly require highly evidenced, transactional delivery models, which can be difficult to reconcile with our person-centred, flexible approach.

Yet alongside these pressures, the Charity is well positioned for strategic expansion. We stand on the threshold of growth in key areas, particularly services for children and young people. Strong partnerships—such as those with the criminal justice and prison sectors—offer potential for reactivation, unlocking new funding streams and delivering meaningful impact. There is further scope to increase earned income through our training and consultancy offer, and investment in fundraising, including legacy development, will strengthen sustainability. Amplifying our voice within health and social care will enable us to engage more proactively with commissioners.



What Success Looks Like

In the first twelve months, the new Chief Executive Officer will lead the development and approval of a clear three-to-five-year strategy, supported by a detailed operational plan. Effective leadership of the Senior Leadership Team will be essential to set clear priorities and ensure continuity of services during this period of transition.

Success will be defined by securing sustainable financial health through diversified income streams and strengthened reserves, embedding a core offer that reflects our mission and values, and expanding our reach in line with strategic priorities. The Brain Charity will build credibility as a recognised and influential voice in neuro-health and among commissioners.

Culturally, the Chief Executive Officer will foster a confident, inclusive workplace that improves retention and morale, provide a clear sense of vision and direction, and champion co-production and lived experience as central to our approach. The overall outcome will be a robust, focused organisation, equipped to seize opportunities while safeguarding its person-centred, compassionate ethos.



Role Summary

The Chief Executive Officer will provide strategic leadership and direction for The Brain Charity, ensuring our mission to support people affected by neurological conditions is at the heart of everything we do. This pivotal role is responsible for shaping the Charity's future, driving sustainable growth, and championing our values of kindness, commitment, authenticity, courage, and optimism.

Working closely with the Board of Trustees, Senior Leadership Team, staff, volunteers, and partners, the CEO will deliver high-quality services, strengthen financial resilience, and expand our reach and influence. The successful candidate will be a visionary and compassionate leader, able to inspire others, foster a culture of inclusion and collaboration, and represent The Brain Charity with credibility and passion at local, regional, and national levels.

For further details about the responsibilities, requirements and expectations for this role, please refer to the full Job Description and Person Specification included at the end of this brief.

Terms of Appointment

Job Title: Chief Executive Officer

Salary: £75,000 per annum + 10% company pension

Contract: Permanent

Location: The Brain Charity, Norton Street, Liverpool, L3 8LR

Hours: Full-time - 37.5 hours per week

Holiday Entitlement: 30 days plus bank holidays

Other Benefits: Medicash, Employee Assistance Programme, free parking at the Centre



How to Apply

To apply, please send an up-to-date CV, a completed Registration Form and a supporting statement (no more than two A4 pages) demonstrating how you meet the criteria outlined in the Person Specification and explaining your interest in becoming the Chief Executive Officer of The Brain Charity. Submit your application to executive@harrishill.co.uk by 9am on Monday 19th January 2026.

Timeline

Applications close: 9am, Monday 19th January

Shortlisting: Week commencing 26th January

First-stage interviews (remote): Week commencing 26th January

Second-stage interviews (in person): Week commencing 2nd February

For queries or to arrange a confidential conversation, please contact Jenny Hills at Harris Hill (executive@harrishill.co.uk).

Contact & Further Information

For further information, visit www.harrishill.co.uk or contact Harris Hill Ltd at 020 7820 7321.

We actively welcome applications from all sections of the community and are committed to equitable and inclusive recruitment.



Job Description

Job Purpose

To lead and develop the work of The Brain Charity, fulfilling the purpose of the organisation in line with its constitution. Securing a successful and sustainable future for the Charity.

Principal Tasks

The Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for achieving the following:

Strategic Planning

- Provide clear, strategic leadership with a strong vision for the future direction of the Charity.
- Develop and articulate a compelling strategic plan in collaboration with Trustees, staff, and wider stakeholders, ensuring it underpins all aspects of the organisation's work.
- Lead service-user consultations to ensure that the voice of individuals with neurological conditions forms the basis of the organisation's strategic planning.
- Write and implement strategic plans for the organisation and report quarterly to the Trustees on progress against key strategic goals.
- Provide strategic leadership that aligns resources for long-term impact, ensuring all programmes and funding activity contribute to sustainable outcomes.
- Prioritise effectively in a shifting social, political, and funding landscape, balancing the big picture with operational constraints.
- Explore opportunities to expand and develop the role of The Brain Charity and the services it offers.
- Review and strengthen the organisational structure and prepare the Charity for further growth.
- Champion and embed equality, diversity & inclusion principles across the organisation.

Leading People

- Inspire, lead, and motivate staff and volunteers to deliver excellence, fostering a collaborative and inclusive organisational culture.
- Lead by example and earn the respect and confidence of the team through integrity, visibility, and authenticity.
- Lead and develop the workforce through strong performance management and effective delegation.
- Provide inspirational leadership and direct line management to the Senior Leadership Team, offering ongoing support through the Charity's supervision and appraisal framework.
- Foster open and clear communication at all levels of the Charity.
- Lead with empathy and humility, recognising the emotionally demanding nature of frontline roles and supporting staff and volunteers to thrive.

- Foster a people-centred culture that motivates, supports wellbeing, manages conflict effectively, and encourages inclusion and diversity.
- Build strong, resilient teams by providing purpose, clarity, and a healthy working environment.
- Focus on wellbeing, creating a support infrastructure for staff, volunteers and the Charity's wider community.

Financial Management

- Provide oversight of financial strategy and fundraising plans, ensuring financial sustainability in collaboration with the Senior Team and Trustees.
- Work closely with the Head of Finance to develop an annual budget, monitor monthly cash flow and check and report on levels of income and expenditure.
- Work closely with the Treasurer and the Head of Finance to ensure financial transparency and that all financial regulations are adhered to.
- Demonstrate sound financial acumen, enabling strategic financial decision-making without direct day-to-day involvement in operational finance.
- Communicate financial strategy clearly to funders and stakeholders, building confidence in the Charity's capacity to manage and grow income effectively.
- Stand willing and ready to take, and swiftly implement, potentially difficult headcount decisions to maintain the financial stability of the Charity.

Operational Management

- Monitor the quality and quantity of the services delivered, their outcome measures and report on impact of services as and when required.
- Develop new services to expand the existing portfolio in line with the needs of the service users.
- Hold overall responsibility for the delivery of quality checking and impact measurement systems.
- Closely monitor progress towards any contractual obligations and ensure that effective systems are in place to provide accurate outcome data for internal and external use.
- Produce regular written reports as required by the Trustee Board, funders and other relevant parties.
- Work closely with the Head of Business Operations to ensure our Centre is utilised to its maximum potential and is a safe and welcoming environment for service-users, volunteers, visitors and staff.
- Demonstrate agility and resilience in navigating crises, responding to policy shifts and funding volatility with calm, mission-focused leadership.
- Make difficult decisions under pressure, while maintaining momentum and direction through uncertainty and change.

Business Development

- Ensure the financial stability of the Charity by developing and securing appropriate and diverse income streams.

- Lead and deliver a strategic approach to income generation, with a significant focus (30–40% of time) on fundraising and relationship-building.
- Inspire confidence in donors and funders through clear, values-driven communication and a compelling narrative of impact.
- Develop long-term partnerships that go beyond tactical fundraising, ensuring recurring income and deeper alignment with the Charity's mission.
- Lead the way in the development of new business ideas, formulating strategies and plans.

Governance

- Ensure that the Charity is meeting its purpose and doing so within clear governance frameworks.
- Work closely and transparently with the Board, maintaining clear boundaries between executive and governance roles.
- Set and uphold high ethical standards across all areas of the organisation, ensuring the Charity's reputation is protected and stakeholder confidence maintained.
- Embed integrity and values-based decision making into leadership practice, not simply focusing on metrics.
- Develop and manage financial security and governance and ensure rigour is applied to our finance and fundraising activity.
- Act as principal advisor to the Board of Trustees on all matters relating to their legal obligations and charity law.
- Lead on compliance, health & safety and safeguarding.
- Keep the Board of Trustees appraised of the financial and operational status of the Charity, advising on risks and providing recovery plans as appropriate.
- Be responsible for the development and appraisal of existing policies, procedures and best practice guidelines.

Partnership Work & Stakeholder Management

- Manage and build positive relationships with existing and potential funders, commissioners and all other key stakeholders.
- Forge relationships with existing and potential new strategic partners and influential individuals.
- Build appropriate relationships with statutory agencies, private and voluntary organisations locally, regionally and nationally.
- Champion the Charity's mission both internally and externally, acting as a visible and credible leader with a deep belief in the organisation's purpose.

Representation

- Chair and attend all relevant internal or external meetings / steering groups.
- Be the public face of and the lead representative for The Brain Charity.
- Represent The Brain Charity across the sector and within the media.
- Be a skilled and adaptive communicator who can engage varied audiences – including staff, donors, the media, and policymakers – with clarity, authenticity, and inspiration.

Person Specification

Area	Detail of requirements	Essential / Desirable
Qualifications	<p>Degree or equivalent in a relevant / transferable discipline</p> <p>Health and Social Care and/or social science qualification at NVQ Level 4 or above and/or a relevant professional qualification</p>	E D
Skills & Abilities	<p>Leadership skills to inspire and empower a high performing team of professionals by supporting talent development and building a strong culture of continuous learning, challenge, flexibility and knowledge sharing</p> <p>Ability to think strategically and to create coherent, visionary and inspirational strategic plans. Plus the ability to then drive forward and deliver against said plans</p> <p>Exceptional communication skills and the ability to command credibility with key stakeholders and build deep collaborative partnerships</p> <p>I.T. literacy</p> <p>Ability to build highly effective and trusting relationships with various stakeholders including local authorities, volunteers, government and healthcare organisations</p> <p>Astute business and financial acumen, able to successfully manage local authority funded contracts and externally funded projects. Able to deliver at pace, manage risk and reach sound financial judgements</p>	E E E E E E E
Knowledge & Experience	<p>Minimum of 3 years experience working as a Chief Executive Officer, or equivalent</p> <p>Experience of policy and procedure development and implementation</p> <p>Knowledge of safeguarding and data protection</p>	E E E

	<p>Minimum of 3 years in a senior management role within social care, health, employment, housing, welfare benefits or education and a successful track record of working for people who have a disability and/or a neurological condition or other vulnerable adults</p> <p>Experience of successfully managing local authority funded contracts and externally funded projects</p> <p>Minimum of 3 years' experience of working for people who have a disability and/or a neurological condition or other vulnerable adults.</p>	D D D
Personal Attributes	<p>Strategic</p> <p>Dynamic and drive</p> <p>Confident and approachable</p> <p>Decisive and ready to take difficult decisions when required</p> <p>Creative and entrepreneurial</p> <p>Committed to equal opportunities for all</p> <p>Empathic, kind and sensitive to the needs of those around them</p> <p>Logical thinker</p> <p>Diplomatic and tactful</p> <p>Keen interest in technological developments</p>	E E E E E E E E E E
Other	<p>Commitment to the Mission and Values of The Brain Charity</p> <p>Satisfactory completion of an enhanced DBS Check</p> <p>Degree of flexibility, including occasional travel as needed to support business priorities</p>	E E E

29 years' expertise in
charity recruitment

1,000+ placements
per year

8 years average
staff tenure

600+ charity clients
per year

20 specialist
consultants

4.8 stars from 200+
Google reviews

SPECIALISMS

chief executives & directors • data management • fundraising • finance
human resources • marketing, pr & digital • operations, admin & support
policy, advocacy & campaigns • projects & programmes • temporary & interim



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bringing *remarkable* people together



Harris Hill
charity recruitment specialists