



Role profile

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| Role title | Head of Service for Children & Family Services (Social Work) |
| Directorate | Together for Families |
| Service | Children and Family Services |
| Grade | P |
| Reports to | Service Director – Children and Family Services |
| Version | 4.0 |
| JE code | 009067 |

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| Approving manager | Ben Davies, Service Director |
| Date | December 2021 |

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Role purpose

The Head of Service (Social Work) for Area and Specialist Social Care Services is a member of the Senior Leadership Team for Children and Family Services and works collaboratively with colleagues across the multi-agency partnership to shape and deliver the 4 year Service Improvement Plan that supports the delivery of the Council Business Plan and Corporate Strategy.

Acting as the lead for the full range of professional functions within their span of control, the Head of Service provides leadership to a large multi-disciplinary workforce that delivers children's social care services from early help, including Family Hubs, to specialist, statutory social work. The post holder is responsible for developing and maintaining effective partnerships within a geographical area or specialist area of need, working to integrate service delivery in line with the One Vision Partnership Plan.

Under the direction of the Service Director, and operating as a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Head of Service leads and manages a wide range of services that safeguard and deliver improved outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people within a geographical or specialist functional area of need and across the whole of Cornwall as required.

Specifically, as directed by the Service Director, the Head of Service leads and manages specialist, statutory social work services within the complex and acute tiers of need determined by Our Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The post holder is responsible for ensuring a proportionate response to assessed need with the aim of keeping the child safe within their family or, failing that within their wider network of family and friends. Where a child cannot live safely within their family or wider family and public care is assessed as being in the child's best interests, the post holder ensures that the child is provided with a placement that meets their needs, with the potential to help the child achieve emotional permanence, through a safe and consistent care as quickly as possible and within the legislative timescales. This can include support for re-unification.

The post holder ensures that decision making by front line practitioners and managers is compliant with legislation, regulation and case law aimed at safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Within this context, and in consultation with the Service Director, the post holder has the professional lead for maintaining the quality and consistency of practice and the effectiveness of service delivery in line with defined practice quality standards for the provision of family assessment and support, services to children in need including children in need of protection, disabled children, children in care, care leavers and children subject of Special Guardianship, and Adoption Orders.

The post holder also has Cornwall-wide portfolio responsibilities for agreed areas of need/risk, practice and service delivery.

The post holder leads, manages, develops and continually improves front line practice and service delivery, processes, strategy and governance in order to meet the Ofsted criteria for 'Good' in all aspects of service within their line management, sustaining an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating overall.

Dimensions

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| Annual financial accountability |
| As delegated by the Service Director. Approximate £5-8 million |
| Management accountability |
| <p>The Head of Service (Social Work) is accountable for a combination of several of the following areas of service delivery, depending on geographical or functional role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Help Offer across 2 Locality areas • Family Hubs • Family Assessment & Support, including Gweres Teylurow • Children in Need • Gweres tus Yownyk, including Youth Offending Services • Disabled Children • Occupational Therapy • Portage • Child Protection • Kinship Carer Assessment & Support • Children in Care • Fostering and Adoption • Care Leavers • Specialist Services <p>Number of staff managed: 10-12 managers directly, and up to 250 staff indirectly</p> |

Accountabilities

We are a dynamic organisation and the particular duties and accountabilities may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the role or the level of responsibility entailed. Individual objectives will be agreed via the PDS appraisal process

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| <p>Specific accountabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To deliver services in line with the Statement of Vision, Mission and Values, promoting a culture of social justice and pro-social learning ○ To deliver services in line with the Service Improvement Plan for Children & Family Services ○ To deliver improvements in the areas for development identified in Ofsted inspections and Joint Targeted Area Inspections ○ To provide early help and support to children and families, reducing the needs and risk of harm experienced by children ○ To improve outcomes for children and young people who have experienced the trauma of neglect and abuse ○ To ensure that the child's wishes and feelings inform an understanding of their lived experience and how to improve their outcomes ○ To encourage the full participation of children and their families in assessments and plans to help them resolve their problems ○ To work effectively in partnership with other agencies, services and professionals to meet the assessed needs of children and young people |
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- To make and implement decisions in complex and sensitive social care cases where the safety and liberty of the child is at stake, seeking professional advice from the Service Director for Children and Family Services as appropriate
- To help and protect children and young people in accordance with relevant legislation, regulation and statutory guidance
- To provide suitable alternative care placements as a last resort for children who cannot live safely within their birth families or wider network of family and friends
- To help children in care to recover from trauma and to achieve emotional permanence through safe and consistent care, including child arrangement orders, special guardianship and adoption
- To help care leavers to prepare for independence and make a successful transition to adulthood
- To work closely with health commissioners to integrate children's community health and social care services
- To work closely with children's community and acute health services to promote the health and wellbeing outcomes of children in need and children in care
- To work closely with early years settings, schools, colleges and education colleagues to promote improved educational outcomes for children in need and children in care – ensuring that children in care with additional or special educational needs receive appropriate assessment and support
- To organise and chair cross-agency meetings to resolve professional differences and inter-agency disputes.
- To promote the resilience of individuals and teams, safeguarding the wellbeing of staff and reducing sickness absence caused by stress
- To develop and maintain a learning organisation through high quality supervision, mentoring, coaching, appraisal and access to post-qualifying learning opportunities
- To promote the understanding and use of evidence-based approaches and practice across all areas of service
- To ensure practice quality standards and service delivery in line with Ofsted inspection criteria of 'Good' aiming to achieve 'Outstanding'
- To maintain performance in all areas of practice and service delivery in the top quartile of local authority children's services
- To prepare for, organise and contribute to successful Ofsted inspections of settings, children in need of help and protection, children in care and care leavers
- To take part in sector-led improvement and inter-authority peer reviews of practice and service delivery
- To implement the Framework for Quality Assurance and Performance Management, holding all staff to account and dealing appropriately with poor performance, incapability, negligence and misconduct
- To encourage learning from professional and service user feedback, including representations, complaints and the escalation of professional differences
- To hold the strategic lead for specific and specialist areas of practice and service delivery across Cornwall as designated and delegated by the Service Director for Children & Family Services
- To promote cultural competence and anti-oppressive practice, in all aspects of practice and service delivery
- To lead on organisational and cultural change in line with strategic objectives, including the integration of children's community health and social care
- To provide specialist advice on safeguarding to corporate colleagues, Members and partners
- To represent the Service Director as required at Regional and National meetings

- To maintain HCPC and LGA standards in the employment of social workers and other professional roles

Resident focus

- Develop collaborative relationships with internal and external partners to ensure optimal outcomes for residents
- Represent the interests of Cornwall to promote the county and enhance the Council's reputation and profile
- Develop or deliver customer feedback systems for the managed functions and ensure feedback is taken into account to improve outcomes for residents, service users or communities
- Promote the localism agenda and deliver a visible and meaningful presence with Cornwall's residents to build trust and legitimacy

Service delivery

- Deliver functional objectives and priorities that align with the Council and Directorate plans and other corporate strategies
- Provide functional expertise to the Council Leadership team, the Council Directorate Team and Members to inform wider corporate plans and strategies
- Work with colleagues and partners to develop or deliver cross-cutting corporate projects or priorities
- Ensure the development and maintenance of performance indicators for the managed functions that reflect the service plan and wider corporate strategies
- Monitor policy, legislation and best practice to ensure the most appropriate structures for delivering the managed functions and deliver continuous improvement

Leadership & management

- Provide operational leadership and management of the service, role modelling behaviours, motivating staff and holding them to account for performance
- In conjunction with colleagues, implement communication, recognition, talent development and succession planning strategies that maximise levels of staff engagement
- Ensure the effective governance, delivery and embedding of change programmes, empowering staff to play an active role in delivering and realising the benefits
- Ensure the functions operate within all regulatory, legislative and best practice requirements and that the service is suitably positioned to adapt to and address forthcoming requirements

Finance

- Contribute to the budget setting process for the wider service
- Ensure adherence to the Council's financial regulations, that spend is within agreed budgets, and savings are delivered in line with the service plans
- Identify and realise opportunities for the service to secure funding and establish sustainable income streams

Corporate accountabilities

- Information security and governance: Manage information in line with the Council's policies, procedures and guidance on subjects such as Data Protection, Freedom of Information, confidentiality, information security and sharing, the

information lifecycle and data quality, to ensure compliance and efficient and effective information governance

- Safeguarding: Maintain awareness of Council policies and practices regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and/ or adults who may be at risk. Report concerns/ allegations in accordance with corporate guidance and procedures
- Equality & Diversity: Work to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and report incidents as they occur. Treat everyone with dignity and respect and ensure individual's needs are met. Challenge inappropriate behaviour and language constructively, advising on alternatives so the opportunity for change can be considered

Competencies and other requirements

We use the following criteria below to assess your suitability for the role; please refer to the recruitment & selection column to establish at which stage the criteria are assessed. Requirements assessed at the 'Application' stage represent the minimum essential requirement for shortlisting purposes

| Behaviours | Recruitment and selection |
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| <p>Working together You understand and focus on customer needs and work well with colleagues and partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You understand and are attentive to the needs of your customers • You listen to the views of others and seek them out • You support and show consideration for others • You work well with colleagues and partners and acknowledge the different ideas, perspectives and backgrounds of others • You are committed to the protection and safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults • You share information and expertise with others • You are honest, you respect and you build relationships of trust • You share your achievements and acknowledge the achievements of others | <p style="text-align: center;">Interview</p> |
| <p>Personal responsibility You take responsibility for your work, your environment and your development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are trustworthy and reliable • You pay attention to your own health, safety and wellbeing and that of others • You acknowledge errors, report them as appropriate and play your part in addressing them • You appropriately challenge unhelpful behaviour • You seek feedback and review your own contribution • You are open to change and improvement • You take responsibility for your development • You are enthusiastic about and take pride in your work | <p style="text-align: center;">Interview</p> |
| <p>Resourceful You apply expertise, solve problems and make improvements to deliver good customer outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You plan and organise your work and manage your time effectively • You gather relevant information, analyse it and make timely informed decisions in the course of your work • You are flexible and adaptable | <p style="text-align: center;">Interview</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You respond constructively to change You demonstrate financial awareness relevant to the job you do You use your initiative and are creative in problem solving You deliver results and manage customer expectations | |
| <p>Engaging leadership You create a healthy and engaging work environment by building trusting and supportive relationships, encouraging development, recognising achievement and tackling underperformance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You give clear direction, you delegate appropriately and you provide a supportive environment in which team members can learn, grow and take responsibility You take opportunities to influence and contribute to strategic planning and development You help your team to understand how their work contributes to what the Council is trying to achieve You create opportunities to interact personally with all members of your team, you actively encourage team members to share their views and concerns and you give feedback on the outcome You take time to understand the strengths of your team and you encourage and support their development You coach your team to fulfil their potential and recognise individual and team achievements You identify and effectively address your responsibilities for people, finance, performance and change management | Interview |

| Knowledge, skills & experience | Recruitment and selection |
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| Relevant social work qualification at degree level or equivalent and membership of Social Work England and evidence of continuous professional development | Application |
| An up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the law, government policy, regulatory and inspection frameworks and evidence-based practice in relation to the functions within the portfolio | Application/ Interview |
| Significant experience and professional expertise in the management and leadership of relevant functions at management level in children's social care, including experience of managing multi-disciplinary social care teams and resources, safeguarding, protection and court work within a local authority or other organisation of comparable scope and complexity | Application |
| Ability to articulate a clear vision for delivery of specialist services and how to improve and transform services to deliver improved outcomes | Interview/ Assessment |
| A proven record of successful change management, delivering new working policies and practices alongside cultural and structural change | Interview |

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| Experience of successful budget management within tight financial limits in a complex organisation | Application |
| Ability to build individual and team resilience, promoting the wellbeing of staff and reducing levels of sickness absence. | Interview/Assessment |
| Applied understanding of quality assurance and performance management processes and the ability to produce accurate and timely performance reports for senior management and for external agencies and partners | Interview |
| Experience of giving advice to, building relationships and working effectively with senior management, elected members and/or Board members, partners to achieve improved outcomes | Application |
| Successful track record of achieving equality of opportunity in both employment and service delivery | Interview |
| To be able to demonstrate resilience and effective decision-making in meeting conflicting demands | Interview |

| Other requirements | Recruitment and selection |
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| This position is subject to a DBS check | Enhanced |
| This is a politically restricted position | Sensitive |
| The role-holder must exercise satisfactory travel mobility in order to fulfil the obligations of the role. For those journeys where an alternative form of transport is unavailable or impracticable the role holder will be required to provide a suitable vehicle | |