



## **Job Description and Person Specification**

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# **Head of Specialist Services**

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## **Job Description**

**Job Title:** Head of Specialist Services

**Salary:** £66,017 - £73,352

**Post Number:** ED/20/001

**Location:** Wirral

**Responsible to:**

The Director of Children's Services

**Purpose of the Job:**

To lead the area of Specialist Children's Services in order to build on current improvement and transform the performance of the service, so that it continues to improve its standard of service delivery.

## **The Role of Head of Service**

### **Leadership in Democratic Organisations**

#### **1. Strategic and Corporate Leadership**

- Provide inspiration, leadership and direction for the service its staff, service users and partners.
- Ensure that Council policies and procedures are implemented within the service.
- Advise and support Members, the Director of Children's Services, the Strategic Director: Families and Wellbeing, and the Chief Executive, and play a full part in corporate and partnership working.
- Represent and advocate for the Council at regional, national and international level.
- Support the Council and Members to perform their democratic role and play a part in sustaining open and democratic governance.
- Support the Chief Executive in connection with the discharge of the Council's responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004).
- Develop and implement a strategy for the service area which advances the Council's vision, core values and organisational beliefs.
- Lead, champion and model the Council's Values and Behaviours.
- Work across boundaries, within the Council and amongst partners, to improve the lives of the people of Wirral and to achieve better value for money.

- Play a part in system leadership, across the local government family regionally and nationally, to contribute to service improvement and enhance the reputation of Wirral.

## **2. Corporate Governance**

- Focus on Community Requirements.
- Deliver services in an effective and efficient manner.
- Deliver the Council's risk framework and processes, identify and advise on new risks and issues, and assess, monitor and escalate risks appropriately.
- Deliver excellent standards and codes of conduct.
- Provide and adhere to transparent structure and process.

## **3. Service Development**

- Drive organisational learning and continuous improvement for the service.
- Ensure that key stakeholders and partners are engaged and involved in the development of the service.
- Engage with citizens in our communities to inform the service strategy.
- Work with partners to build community capacity, increase fairness and reduce inequality.

## **4. Equality, Diversity and Fairness**

- Demonstrate an open commitment to actively celebrating the rich diversity of Wirral.
- Recognise a broad definition of diversity and support programmes to support social inclusion and community cohesion.
- Ensure that all proposals and decisions affecting the service are assessed for impact on protected groups with appropriate actions identified.
- Develop and implement programmes that will improve the social and economic wellbeing of the people of Wirral.
- Ensure that targets to reduce inequality and promote social inclusion are met.

## **The Leadership of Complex Organisations**

### **5. Management of People and Performance**

- Ensure that effective performance management arrangements are in place, linked into the Council's corporate systems, to ensure that our objectives are achieved and the best possible service is provided to the people of Wirral.
- Promote an environment that is supportive, fair and open, encouraging all employees to meet the expected performance standards.
- Ensure that excellent performance is shown by teams and individuals within the service and that appropriate action is taken to improve performance.
- Actively participate in performance appraisal to improve your own performance and that of senior colleagues.
- Set, monitor and manage targets to improve standards reached by the service.
- Ensure that key risks are identified and mitigated and that risk is managed by the service.

### **6. Management of Resources**

- Ensure that effective and efficient use is made of the resources allocated to the service.
- Ensure that activities are performed within agreed budgets, in accordance with the financial policies and regulations of the Council.
- Ensure that all activities within the service meet the standards of good corporate governance.
- Ensure that at all times there is the highest standard of probity and integrity and that the confidence of Wirral people is well placed.

### **7. Communications**

- Maintain and promote effective communication and partnership working across the Council and with partners.
- Build and maintain strong working relationships with stakeholders including citizens, other public bodies, voluntary, community and faith groups, the private sector and national Government.
- Promote a positive image of the Council locally, regionally and nationally.
- Champion and implement the Council's framework for communication.

## **8. Roles Specific to the Head of Specialist Services**

### **Accountabilities**

- To be accountable to the Director of Children's Services for the delivery of the strategy to provide specialist services to children, young people and their families, planning, commissioning, and delivery of those services for the Council.
- To facilitate, co-ordinate and lead services to ensure safe and efficient arrangements are in place across Specialist Services, maximising opportunities across the Borough to develop partnerships and effective outcome frameworks.
- To ensure the effective use of resources and the proper administration of Specialist Services to meet the objectives of the Council.
- Responsible for the following service areas:
  - Children's Social Work Services
  - Services for children in need, including children with disabilities
  - Services for children who are looked after including adoption, fostering and leaving care services
  - Children in Care Council and children's involvement

### **Key Responsibilities**

- To manage and provide leadership for all aspects of children's social care, including services for children in need, children needing protection and looking after, with an emphasis on evidencing the impact of timely interventions on the improvement in outcomes for children, young people and families.
- To manage and provide leadership for high quality inclusive services for children with disabilities which plan for their needs into adulthood.
- To manage the interface between specialist and targeted services, making sure there are effective step up / step down arrangements, and that the rationale for all decision making is clear and transparent.
- To ensure the coordinated and effective delivery of services to children in care and care leavers, ensuring that children and young people achieve safe, stable placements and that children and young people's needs for permanence are met in a timely manner.
- To ensure that Management Information Systems are in place and well maintained to monitor the workload of the Service and to measure the outcome for individual children and families of services provided.
- To take a lead operational role in representing the Department at the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and in partnership arrangements to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children.
- To liaise with Elected Members over matters concerning Child Care and to provide reports as required for Committees.

- To ensure the service and department meets all legislative requirements related to work with children and families and to ensure that the DFE guidance is followed and monitored within the service and Department.
- To discharge the function of “Agency Decision Maker’ in respect of Adoption.

## **9. Other**

- This job description forms part of the contract of employment of the person appointed to this post. It reflects the position at the present time only and may be changed at management’s discretion in the future.
- As a general term of employment, the Council may effect any necessary change in job content, or may require the post holder to undertake other duties, at any location in the Council’s service, provided that such changes are appropriate to the employee’s remuneration and status.
- As a term of your contract of employment, the Council reserves the right to vary your hours of work and require you to work outside the range of your typical working arrangements, specified in your Statement of Particulars. This will also include weekend working. The Council reserves the right, at its discretion, to effect this condition of your employment, Should this be necessary, you will be given reasonable notice of any proposed changes.

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All of the criteria will be assessed throughout the recruitment process.

## **Knowledge and Experience**

### **1. Leadership in democratic organisations**

- An excellent track record of working in a complex political environment.
- A comprehensive understanding of local government, the national political context within which it operates and the current challenges and opportunities.
- Success in leading change from the formulation of policy, through the development of strategy to the realisation of improved outcomes.

### **2. The leadership of complex organisations**

- Achievement at a senior level in a large and complex organisation.
- A track record of leading change and service improvement.
- Experience of personal leadership in embedding change and maintaining excellent service.
- Experience of establishing and maintaining a strong and effective performance culture that is responsive and customer focussed.

### **3. Specialist Services**

- Experience of leading a specialist social care service providing excellent services to children in care and children in need.
- Experience of establishing robust systems for the delivery of effective children's social care practice and policy.
- Understanding of the role of social care professionals in providing high quality services to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of these practices.
- Understanding of the importance of high quality, joined up services for children with complex disabilities.

- Experience in developing services to meet needs in a high quality, cost effective way.
- In depth understanding of the current issues and challenges in children's social care practice, and of the role of the Council.

## **Skills, Abilities and Personal Qualities**

### **4. Leadership in democratic organisations**

- An ability to relate to and win the confidence, trust and respect of employees, partners and the wider community.
- An ability to operate sensitively in a political environment to develop relationships with all Members that command respect, trust and confidence.
- An ability to provide clear, unambiguous, balanced and appropriate advice.
- An ability to manage competing priorities within financial constraints whilst maintaining a clear overview of the issues facing the Council.

### **5. The leadership of complex organisations**

- Excellent leadership skills that encourage commitment from others and promote a positive, motivated organisational culture.
- Excellent communication and negotiation skills and an ability to influence outcomes reasoning, persuasion and tact.
- An empowering style, valuing the contribution of others and a commitment to employee development.
- An open leadership style, committed to organisational learning and organisational development.
- Strong financial and commercial awareness, with excellent analytical skills and a creative approach to problem solving.
- An ability to lead change that is transformational, sustainable and produces benefits for service users.
- An ability to anticipate issues, weigh competing priorities and make strategic decisions.
- An ability to manage a diverse workload and heavy demands whilst adhering to tight timescales.
- An ability to manage corporate, team, individual and personal performance to raise standards.



- A personal style that demonstrates pace, drive and resilience.

## **6. Specialist Services**

- The ability to engage with and relate to service users and carers in a way that commands respect and support.
- The ability to analyse patterns of need and trends over time and to use this in service planning.
- The ability to focus the efforts of the service on meeting the needs of service users, carers, partners, customers, and the Council.

## **7. Qualifications**

Qualified Social Worker.