

A large, stylized blue silhouette of a horse in profile, facing left, with its mane and tail flowing. It is positioned in the upper half of the page.

**Head of the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA)  
South East**

**Kent County Council**

# Content details

Introduction to Kent County Council	3-4
Structure of KCC	5-6
Job Description and Recruitment Selection Criteria	7-11
Organisational Responsibilities	12-13
Kent Values	14
Working for Kent County Council	15-17
Selection Process	18

# Introduction to Kent County Council

We are the UK's largest local authority, with a workforce in excess of 30,000 people, including maintained schools, serving a population of 1.5 million. We have various offices in central locations and a large number of service establishments throughout Kent; our corporate office is based in Maidstone.

More than two thirds of our workforce provide services directly to the public – such as domiciliary Care Workers, Classroom Assistants, Social Workers, Teachers, and Occupational Therapists etc.

Our annual budget covers a huge range of services. This translates into a host of interesting roles and career paths awaiting those who want to work in a leading edge public sector organisation.

Visit our website, [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk).

## Aims and objectives

Our focus is to work as one council to design and deliver a cohesive, modern public service offer for all Kent's residents, businesses and communities. This will bring together change projects consistently across the council and create organisational design opportunities to transform the way we work, including our people, assets, technology, structures and service delivery.

Success in delivering this aspiration will be determined using the following criteria:

- Working beyond the limit of organisational and service boundaries
- Thinking beyond the limit of our statutory powers
- Building capacity to provide sector and system leadership
- Delivering at both strategic and local scale
- Supporting economic security
- Delivering a cohesive service offer
- Flexibly uses its assets as part of public service design and delivery

The [Strategic Delivery Plan](#) is our business plan for 2020 – 2023. In light of COVID-19 this has been revised to focus on those critical activities for 2020-21.

Our business plan plays an important part in delivering the outcomes of our strategic statement.

Before the pandemic the Council was consulting on its new, [draft 5 year plan](#).. An interim strategic Plan "Setting the Course" was agreed by the County Council in December.

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/interim-strategic-plan>

# Political Arrangements

The County Council has 81 councillors and elections take place every four years.

The political composition of the County Council is as follows:

Conservative	62 members
Labour	7 members
Liberal Democrat	6 members
Green Party	4 Members
Independent Groups	2 members

The Leader of Kent County Council is Roger Gough.

There is a Cabinet of Executive Members which meets regularly to debate policy issues and make key decisions. The cabinet comprises of:

Roger Gough	Leader of Kent County Council
Peter Oakford	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services
Clair Bell	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
Susan Carey	Cabinet Member for Environment
Sue Chandler	Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services
Mike Hill OBE	Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services
Shellina Prendergast	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
David Brazier	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation
Bryan Sweetland	Cabinet Member for Communications, Engagement and People
Derek Murphy	Cabinet Member for Economic Development

# Structure of KCC

The structure of the organisation is as shown [here](#)

The Senior Officer team consists of six Corporate Directors. For more information on the Corporate Management Team please follow this [link](#)

The four directorates are as follows:

## **Growth, Environment and Transport**

The Directorate comprises a range of key frontline, strategic, policy and commercial functions, and plays a major role in making Kent a better place to live, work and visit. The services provided, and the future the directorate helps to shape, affects every household in Kent. This includes strategic responsibility for the future of the county in terms of planning, economic development, transport policy, and major transport improvement schemes, waste disposal and recycling services. In addition, GET manages country parks; libraries; and delivers enforcement services including trading standards, community safety and emergency planning.

Responsible for services that include:

Highways, Transportation & Waste, Regulatory Services, Economic Development, Community Safety & Emergency Planning, Libraries, Registration & Archives, Sport & Country Parks, Arts including Kent Film Office, Development Planning, Planning Applications, North Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Flood Risk & Environment, Sustainability & Climate Change and Heritage Conservation

## **Adult Social Care and Health**

The Directorate commissions and provides a range of services to improve outcomes for older and vulnerable adults, including those with mental health issues or disabilities, and their families. The Directorate supports vulnerable adults to live independently by promoting their wellbeing and supporting their independence. Services for adult mental health and learning disability already work in integrated teams with NHS colleagues and as a key partner in the Kent and Medway STP we are developing multi-disciplinary teams within communities to support local care.

Responsible for services that include:

Adults Central Referral Unit, Adult Community Teams, Safeguarding and quality, Kent Enablement at Home, Sensory and Autistic Spectrum Conditions Service, Integrated/Registered Care Centres, Day Centres, Community Learning Disability Teams, In-House Provision and Mental Health Services.

## Children, Young People and Education Directorate

This Directorate combines and integrates the statutory responsibilities of Specialist Children's Services together with Education services and the targeted and universal services for children and young people within Early Help and Preventative Services. There is a strong focus on alignment of resources to help ensure achievement of one of the key County Council strategic outcomes: 'Every child and young person in Kent gets the best start in life'. To improve outcomes for children and young people, services within the Directorate are working together with relevant partners to deliver the vision set out in the Children and Young People's Services Integration Programme.

### Responsible for services that include:

Children's Social Care, Adoption & Fostering, Standards & School Improvement, Skills & Employability, Early Years and Childcare, Provision Planning, Fair Access, Educational Psychology, SEN Assessment & Placement, Youth Justice, Outdoor Education Centres, Children's Centres and Youth Hubs, Inclusion & Attendance, Early Intervention and Community Learning & Skills and Disabled Children and Young People Teams.

## Strategic and Corporate Services

The Directorate supports the delivery of our front line services. The Directorate leads and co-ordinates major change, organisational design, development and provides a critical client and contracting role with our trading companies including property, legal and customer contact. It provides organisational wide governance, financial management and a major contribution to our political and external relationships.

### Responsible for services that include:

Engagement, Communications, Organisation Design & Development, Finance, Governance & Law, Infrastructure, Policy and Strategic Commissioning including Procurement & Business Intelligence and Public Health

# Job Description

<b>Directorate:</b>	Children, Young People and Education
<b>Grade:</b>	KR14
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Regional Adoption Agency Executive Board Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting Kent

## Job outline:

Head of Adoption Partnership South East, a partnership between the London Borough of Bexley, Kent County Council and Medway County Council.

To manage the Regional Adoption Service, and to lead innovative developments providing high quality adoption services across the region, securing good outcomes for children, adopters and those affected by adoption.

To collaborate with other RAAs to champion adoption practice and contribute to the strategic planning and delivery at both a local and national level.

To communicate on behalf of the RAA and partner local authorities in responding to national and local political requests for information.

To be the Agency Decision Maker for Adopter's and fulfil the statutory responsibilities in relation to adoption for the partner local authorities in the Regional Adoption Agency, including the monitoring and maintenance of all the DfE adoption indicators.

## Job accountabilities:

To embed a strong leadership culture focusing on performance, driving continuous improvement, and playing a key role in enabling and encouraging creative and productive networks to form. Leadership that gives staff a clear vision, which inspires and motivates, ensuring they are all working together towards agreed objectives.

To lead strategic development and operational service delivery within the Regional Adoption Agency reporting to the RAA Strategic Board to agree priorities, performance targets and outcomes.

Ensure that there is robust performance monitoring and quality assurance in place, to monitor performance and practice. Use this to report to stakeholders via a Business Plan and Annual Report including presentation of these to the Corporate Parenting Panel for each Local Authority.

Facilitate partnership working with multi-agency services including Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAA) to deliver co-ordinated and effective services as part of a multi-agency approach to ensure good outcomes for children.

To promote safeguarding the welfare of children where adoption is the agreed care plan ensuring it meets local and national requirements and safeguarding of children who have been adopted.

Ensure that each local authority within the RAA receives a high functioning and flexible service that supports care planning within the case holding teams.

Provide high level advice and leadership when required to the Governance Board on any issue, operational or strategic, associated with the adoption of children and promotion of their wellbeing, which might give rise to media attention or external scrutiny.

To be accountable for a large and complex budget and to be responsible for effective deployment of resources to meet statutory and regulatory requirements, best practice standards and to develop opportunities for income streams and innovation.

To ensure effective communication and liaison with key individuals including Local Authority Partners, Elected Members, Chief Executives and Directors. To produce reports/briefings to the Board, DfE and to individual local authorities as required, including Cabinet and other Elected Member forums.

To be responsible for commissioning and procurement of services, in conjunction with specialist commissioning and contracting staff, to ensure an appropriate range of high quality and effective services are available, as determined by needs analysis, in a manner which maximises opportunities, ensures operational delivery is in line with commissioning intentions and evidences value for money.

To be accountable for compliance with DfE expectations in terms of funding and reporting.

Support families to achieve permanency for children, including early permanency matching.

To act as the Lead Advisor on internal and external reviews of adoption practice including Ofsted inspections within the RAA itself and within the partner local authorities.

To be part of the Kent County Council's Corporate Parenting Senior leadership team, participating in children's activity events and deputising for the Assistant Director and other duties appropriate to the grade of the post.

### **Additional:**

- To use and assist others in the use of information technology systems to carry out duties in the most efficient and effective manner.
- To carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with the council's commitment to customer service excellence and ensure compliance with the customer care standards.



- To be committed to the Council's core values of public service, quality, equality and empowerment and to demonstrate this commitment in the way duties are carried out.
- To ensure that duties are undertaken with due regard and compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations and other legislation.
- To carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and relevant Health and Safety legislation.
- At all times to carry out responsibilities/duties within the framework of the Council's Dignity for all Policy. (Equal Opportunities Policy).

Footnote:

This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what his/her duties are. It may be amended from time to time without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of post.

# Recruitment Selection Criteria

The qualifications, knowledge and experience criteria below will be used in shortlisting. Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

## Qualifications:

Recognised social work qualification and registered with Social Work England.

Relevant Management qualification or agreement to work towards achieving management qualifications as required.

## Experience:

Experience of operating at a senior level with leadership and management responsibilities for a range of operational teams and associated budgets.

Experience of successful partnership and collaborative working across organisational boundaries and at a local, regional and national level. Ability to represent the RAA and partner local authority councils internally and externally, both professionally and in a leadership role.

Experience of managing a budget with a good understanding of financial and budget management processes and systems.

## Skills and Abilities:

Ability to lead by example, inspiring confidence and trust, tackling performance issues if they arise and creating a 'can do' culture.

Ability to create strong networks and a culture which ensures systems and procedures are in place to promote stakeholder involvement and continuous improvement in the delivery and evaluation of services.

Ability to analyse performance data and work with public agencies to identify themes and gaps in service provision to inform service planning.

Ability to use a range of management tools and techniques to analyse and address problems and an ability to embed evidence based best practice in services.

Ability to lead a range of different teams, including multi-agency teams and deliver needs led services and positive outcomes.

Ability to create and encourage a culture of innovation, flexibility and responsiveness to respond to swiftly changing priorities.

## Knowledge:

Extensive knowledge of RAA's, adoption legislation, permanency planning, adoption support and other aspects of Children's Social Care, including relevant legislation and practice guidance.

Awareness, understanding and commitment to the protection and safeguarding of children and young people and vulnerable adults.

## Behaviour:

- Service leadership: Motivates staff to achieve a shared team/service vision and models social work values in practice.
- Creative Thinking: Identifies trends in successful service delivery and able to share ideas about how to improve performance.
- Partnership Working: Works collaboratively across teams and partners to secure the most effective outcomes for the service and its customers.
- Managing Performance: Ensures staff know what is expected of them through goal setting and activity monitoring performance. Takes steps to address poor performance and provides positive recognition and feedback to staff.
- **Other qualities**
  - Discretion
  - Commitment to Equal Opportunities
  - Professional credibility
  - Initiative
  - Flexibility
  - Truth and judgement
  - Sense of urgency
  - Open
  - Invite Contribution and challenge
  - Accountable

# Organisational Responsibilities

All Corporate Directors, Directors and Heads of Service have an explicit responsibility to work as part of a team to deliver, collectively, the agenda of the County Council. These are fundamental elements of their role not an addition and are summarised as follows

## Whole Council

- Seek to improve the lives of all residents in Kent and the economy of Kent
- Act as corporate parent to the Council's Looked After Children
- Take an active role in promoting and ensuring the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding are met
- Understand, communicate and contribute to the delivery of KCC's strategic aims
- Meet statutory obligations and promote and ensure compliance with policies and procedures and the Council's Code of Conduct (Kent Code)
- Advise elected Members and support the democratic process
- Promote the Council brand and enhance the overall reputation of the Council
- Understand and monitor the measures of performance, including customer insight, which define successful outcomes for KCC services
- Maintain and ensure a relentless focus on the customer
- Act to support the Council-wide need to deliver services within budget, thereby avoiding an overspend that could damage the financial viability of the Council
- Overcome professional and service silos to achieve the County Council's objectives

## Integration of Services

- Focus resources where they have the biggest impact
- Deliver services that are flexible and adaptable
- Integrate services within KCC and work with partner agencies to ensure a seamless customer experience
- Fully and inclusively engage all staff in the delivery of services, demonstrating the Council's leadership values and competencies

## **Embedding Commissioning and Engaging Relevant Markets**

- Establish an outcome focused organisation
- Meet the financial regulations and standing orders of KCC
- Challenge the status quo and engage with the market to constantly improve
- Ensure all services are delivered effectively and efficiently
- Proactively and continuously seek to improve service delivery
- Proactively manage risk to avoid inertia whilst not exposing the Council to needless and avoidable challenge or loss

## **Managing Change**

- Understand and support the Authority's overall change agenda
- Deliver required outcomes of service specific change on time and to budget
- Understand the quality of staff, support their development, nurture those with talent
- Identify the skills for the future and the level of staff through robust workforce planning
- Identify and deal with underperformance
- Deliver to agreed budget and income targets

# Kent Values

- We are **brave**. We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge
- We are **curious** to innovate and improve
- We are **compassionate**, understanding and respectful to all
- We are **strong together** by sharing knowledge
- We are all **responsible** for the difference we make

Our values enable us to build a culture that culture is:

**Flexible/agile** - willing to take (calculated) risks and want people that are flexible and agile

**Curious** - constantly learning and evolving

**Compassionate and Inclusive** - compassionate, understanding and respectful to all

**Working Together** - building and delivering for the best interests of Kent

**Empowering** - Our people take accountability for their decisions and actions

**Externally Focused** - Residents, families and communities at the heart of decision making

As a senior leader you will be expected to role model and drive the Council's cultural aspiration and its related values. In doing this the leadership traits we expect of you are:

- Courage and integrity
- Making a difference – sense of purpose
- Compassion and inclusion – community leadership
- Drive for results -
- Curiosity and learning

# Working for Kent County Council

## Salary and Notice

The appointment will be subject to 3 months' notice.

KCC pays salaries to bank accounts on the 25th of the month unless this falls on a weekend or public holiday.

## Terms and Conditions

The appointment is subject to the terms and conditions contained within the Kent Scheme of Conditions of Service.

30 days annual leave is provided excluding Bank Holidays. You will also receive paid time off for public holidays plus a concessionary day at Christmas.

An excellent relocation package is available to assist with costs, including removal companies, temporary lodgings and professional expenses.

The postholder will be expected to provide a car for official journeys.

## Personal Interests

Kent County Council policy requires all employees to declare membership of any organisation that falls within the following definition:

Any lodge, chapter, society, trust or regular gathering or meeting, which:

- is not open to members of the public who are not members of that lodge, chapter, society or trust;
- includes in the grant of membership an obligation on the part of the members to make a
- commitment (whether by oath or otherwise) of allegiance to the lodge, chapter, society, gathering or meeting; and
- includes, whether initially or subsequently, a commitment (whether by oath or otherwise)
- of secrecy about the rules, membership or conduct of the lodge, chapter, society, trust, gathering, or meeting

A lodge, chapter, society, trust, gathering or meeting as defined above, should not be regarded as a secret society if it forms part of the activity of a generally recognised religion.

## **Pensions**

The post holder will have the choice of contributing to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Further details will be available for the successful applicant.

## **Politically Restricted Posts**

This is a politically restricted post which means that the post holder cannot stand for public elected office (other than to a parish council) and is subject to further restrictions on more general political activity.

## **Whole Time Employment**

The person appointed will be required to devote their whole time service to the work of Kent County Council and should not engage in any other business without the express consent of the County Council.

## **Health and Safety Policy**

The County Council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer, and will take positive action to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees and other persons who may be affected by its operations, by providing safe working conditions and a healthy and safe working environment.

## **Sickness Provision**

Our sickness benefit scheme exceeds statutory requirements. Actual paid absence depends on how long you have worked for KCC and the circumstances of your absence. For example, after 6 years' service your benefit would be 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay.

## **Training and Development**

KCC is committed to supporting staff to reach their full potential through annual appraisal and personal development plans, enhanced by a range of career development opportunities.

Managers from KR9 to KR20 will be required to undertake our Kent Manager standard programme within the first year of employment.



## Green Travel

Our Green Travel Plan is exploring alternative modes of transport to improve travel choice and reduce congestion and pollution. This includes:

- Car sharing and emergency taxi home.
- Discounted fares, free tickets, trip planning and improved travel information.
- Pool car and bikes

## Other benefits

KCC offers a range of family friendly policies including:

- A generous maternity scheme
- Emergency leave
- Parental leave
- Special leave
- Help Fund – all employees have the opportunity both to pay into the fund and to apply for help from it when experiencing financial hardship
- An in-house confidential counseling service and Occupational Health Service
- Kent Rewards - discounts at over 1,200 retailers ranging from reduced rates at Health Clubs to house and car insurance to holidays

## Living in Kent

With great schools, vibrant cities, golden beaches and stunning countryside Kent has lots to offer you. Find out more about [locations in Kent](#).

# Selection Process

## Closing Date

This post will close at midnight on 20 March 2023

Interviews to be take place: 29 March 2023

## Selection Process

As part of the interview process for this role you may be required to complete an occupational personality questionnaire prior to your interview.

## How to Respond

To apply please visit [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk) to complete an online application form.