Practice Development Manager

Kent County Council

Kent County Council
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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.

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
Neil Baker	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation
Clair Bell	Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services
Sue Chandler	Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services
Dylan Jeffrey	Cabinet Member for Communications and Democratic Services
Derek Murphy	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Rory Love	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Dan Watkins	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

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

Directorate:	**Children, Young People and Education**
Grade:	**KR13**
Responsible to:	**QA Service Manager**

Job outline:

To support the development, delivery, and implementation of high-quality integrated social care practice, including service standards, professional codes of practice and procedures relevant to all of Children's Services and the wider children's multi-disciplinary partnership.

To manage and enable practice officers to provide specialist and expert advice, consultation, coaching and challenge in the management and delivery of complex casework to area managers and social care staff.

Contribute as part of the management team to the creation of one organisational ethos and practice framework, working effectively in partnership with others, including the Divisional Management Team and Strategic Development Managers, to develop effective corporate solutions to the challenges Kent County Council faces as it gives leadership to the communities it serves.

Job accountabilities:

- Management and supervision of the Social Work Standards Officer and Practice Development Officers in your team.

- Support the implementation of Kent's Practice Framework for integrated services

- Provide professional leadership that promotes integrated children's social care as a highly valued part of the wider social work environment. In partnership with QA leaders, act as a lead voice for integrated services issues within the Council and across inter-agency partnerships.

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with key managers and staff in partner agencies to ensure alignment of effective safeguarding functions across the multi-agency network.

- Work alongside frontline managers, Social Work Standards Officers and Performance Development Officers to provide specialist and expert advice, consultation, coaching and challenge to improve the practice within integrated services.

- Ensure that current research in practice, policy and guidance is disseminated and accessible to all social workers, underpinning our commitment to evidential, child-centered practice.

- Promote workforce development, leading on ongoing updates and review of the professional capabilities framework, ensure the continued professional development of staff to work effectively with children and families.

- Lead, inspire and develop people within integrated Children's Services to facilitate the effective delivery of a safeguarding service to children and young people.

- Be responsible for the dissemination of quality supervision, robust quality assurance and professional development to Social Work Standard officers and Practice Development Officers.

- Work with area and specialist teams to further develop systems and processes to ensure the voice of the child continues to inform integrated practice.

- Ensure that research-based evidence informs and learning is embedded in practice.

- Undertake quality assurance activity to support and constructively challenge social work management and practice.

- Promote continuous professional development to ensure the requirements of the Health and Care Professionals Council and professional codes of practice are met.

Footnote: This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what his/her main 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:

- Educated to degree level or equivalent.
- Evidence of continuous professional development.

Experience:

- Supervision of practitioners including practice teaching.
- Enhanced specialist knowledge relevant to social work practice in children's services.
- Proven record of developing successful collaborative partnerships to improve outcomes for children.
- Proven record of formulating and leading crosscutting strategies leading to improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Experience of managing change in the pursuit of strategic objectives.
- Experience of contributing to policy formulation, implementation, and review.
- Awareness of working in a political environment.

Skills and Abilities:

- Ability to communicate effectively with children and young people, parents and carers, operational staff, Senior Managers, Multi-agency partners and people in the community.
- Ability to constructively challenge.
- Ability to produce written material to a high standard which is suitable for a range of different audiences.

- Verbal and written presentation skills including the use of multi-media.

- Ability to work to tight deadlines.

- Ability to develop and use performance management and quality assurance processes to interrogate professional practice.

- Computer literacy.

Knowledge:

- Legislation, Policy & Procedures, Practice Standards related to Children's Services together with related legal requirements.

- Up to date knowledge of lessons from research.

- Up to date knowledge of developments in social work best practice and/or Good understanding of legislative and policy framework for Education and Young People's Early Help services including proposed developments.

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 Status

This post is offered as a fixed term contract.

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 on Friday the 8th of March 2024.

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 to complete an online application form.