



**EHC Tribunal, Assessment & Placement Manager
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
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

Directorate:	Children, Young People and Education
Grade:	KR14
Responsible to:	Assistant Director SEND


Job outline:

Oversee the work of the county tribunals, assessment, and placement teams. Lead and manage the decisions and processes concerned with tribunal cases, statutory Education, Health, and Care (EHC) needs Assessments for children and young people in Kent, and manage the placement of children and young people in learning settings and the allocation of associated resources to settings.

Job accountabilities:

1. Overall accountability for Statements of Case to the SEN Tribunal, thereby ensuring a high quality, consistent response and representation at SEN Tribunals.
2. To deputise for the Assistant Director as necessary.
3. To contribute to KCC forum where required to support the development of coherent and cohesive practice in the management of SEN, including representing Kent on Regional and National networks related to the work of the SEN Tribunal where appropriate
4. To oversee the development and provision of training opportunities on SEN Tribunal process and practice, as required
5. To communicate, liaise and engage with parents and carers in a collaborative manner in line with directorate customer standards and SEN Code of Practice, ensuring timely ongoing communication and swift resolution of any issues, including participation in informal dispute resolution or formal mediation. This will require the post holder to develop effective working relationships with young people and the parents and carers of children and young people. Provide expert advice to the SEND Management Team to establish priorities for the service, translating these priorities into service and team-level plans.
6. Deliver the operational requirements outlined within the SEN Code of Practice and the Council's SEND Strategy, particularly in relation to assessment timescales and placement. You will also be responsible for managing performance towards achieving the requirements – resolving issues by implementing a range of improvement initiatives, and escalating risks and issues with the SEND Management Team.
7. Oversee and work closely with the SEND Quality Assurance and Practice Development Team Manager and the SEND Tribunals Team Manager to review cases, particularly tribunal cases, ensuring they inform training for officers to strengthen future defences and apply best practice across the county

8. Lead the function to ensure compliance and robustness of all decision making in relation to Statutory Assessments and Placements, including the timeliness of Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans.
9. Work as a member of the SEND Management Team to contribute to setting the long-term vision for children and young people and provide direction to achieving the vision through short-term and medium-term planning.
10. Establish viable solutions to a wide range of service delivery issues within the service using data, ensuring resolution through reporting, and delegating work to, and supporting colleagues who report to you.
11. Develop assurance of the effective delivery of the service through the production of presentations and reports to influence discussion and strategic decision making.
12. Oversee the work with parents/carers and the sector to ensure the co-production of EHC Plans through the establishment and development of new partnership arrangements. Work with internal and external stakeholders to focus on required outcomes, ensuring the cohesive joint development of services.
13. Be accountable for the monitoring, reporting, delivery, and quality of EHC Plans, the performance of the Assessment and Placement Teams particularly in relation to compliance with statutory timescales and consistency of decision-making.
14. To manage all staff for whom you have direct line management responsibility and robustly address performance and absence for those you directly line manage and more widely across the Assessment and Placement service, taking the lead on the identification of training (including induction and staff development for the Tribunal, Assessment and Placement Teams).
15. To ensure all teams adhere to key communication guidelines to always ensure the best possible levels of communication with parents/carers and early years/school settings.
16. To ensure all financial aspects of the Tribunal, Assessment and Placement process are managed in line with financial regulations and KCC policies and processes.
17. As required and in line with required timescales, to quality assure responses prepared by SEND staff to any complaints, appeals or questions made by local MPs, Members, Local Government Ombudsman, pre-action Protocols or Judicial reviews and other agencies in respect of SEN Assessment and Placement issues.
18. To ensure, working with the SEND Quality Assurance and Practice Development Team, a high quality of EHC plans in line with both local and national expectations.
19. To be responsible for developing effective working relationships with schools including providing challenge, advice, and information as appropriate as well as wider professional and key stakeholders.



20. Ensure data quality of the databases used by the team ensuring errors are identified and amended

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:

- Legal qualification, law degree, or extensive experience in overseeing and managing the tribunal cases
- Educated to degree or higher professional qualification level including managerial training with financial, budgetary and resource management components.
- Level 2 or equivalent numeracy and literacy.

Experience:

- Broad in-depth experience of working in SEND, including working with the SEN law and the code of practice.
- Understanding of the children's sector, health, education, and social care.
- Demonstrable experience of successfully dealing with tribunal cases
- Extensive strategic management experience.
- Experience of directing and translating strategic planning into operational reality.
- Managing a large service in a complex political environment including the performance management of people within the service.
- Demonstrable experience of monitoring and evaluating service activities and outcomes.
- Partnership working.
- Performance management.
- Demonstrable experience of supporting and developing work within a changing environment.

Skills and Abilities:

- Ability to grasp complex issues and manage conflicting agendas
- Excellent leadership and management skills.
- Ability to manage and lead a team of professionals and understand the strategic and operational context of which the team works.
- Extensive use of data and analytical skills to inform strategic and operational decisions.

- Strong interpersonal and communication skills to build and maintain effective working relationships with the ability to resolve conflict, facilitate meetings, contribute a clear vision to working partnerships and be an agent of change.
- Excellent budget management skills with the emphasis on managing, setting, and monitoring.
- Ability to think creatively, develop and lead new approaches to meet need and demand.
- Can do approach and the ability to coach others.
- Pro-active and able to think creatively.
- Ability to make evaluative judgements based on evidence.

Knowledge:

- Extensive knowledge and understanding of legislation, guidance, processes, and strategies about SEND.
- A clear understanding of current educational legislation and a sensitivity to the current context for education.
- Highly developed knowledge of Statements of Case
- Good understanding, awareness, and sensitivity of the political environment within Local Government.
- Knowledge of Data Protection, GDPR and confidentiality issues.
- Evidence of ongoing CPD and applying this to a specialist area of work.

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 10 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 to complete an online application form.