

A large, stylized blue horse logo is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the page. The horse is depicted in a rearing posture, facing left. It has a flowing mane and tail, and its legs are extended in a dynamic pose. The entire logo is rendered in a single shade of blue, matching the background.

**Head of Fostering Service 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](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>	<b>Children, Young People and Education</b>
<b>Grade:</b>	<b>KR14</b>
<b>Responsible to:</b>	<b>Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting</b>

## Job outline:

- To directly manage and be accountable for Kent Fostering Service including Recruitment and Assessment, Fostering Support, Specialist Fostering, and Training.
- To manage the recruitment and assessment of Kent Supported Homes Hosts who provide supported lodgings within a family environment.
- To jointly lead of increasing the numbers of registered Foster Carers for Kent including the provision of Parent and Child carers, Emergency bed carers and carers for Disabled children.
- To take lead responsibility for the strategic and operational development and management of the Fostering Service across Kent County Council, with a specific lead for the East area.
- To provide tactical leadership and management of the Fostering Service to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and young people are achieved.
- Maintain robust systems to support Kent Children's Service progress and track all children who require permanency.
- Provide a relentless focus on service delivery, which provides timely advice and guidance in relation to decision making for children and their placements options.
- Managing multiple Fostering teams that deliver a total Fostering service that provides a seamless, excellent service to children and foster carers.
- To prepare and manage inspections and achieve excellent outcomes.
- Working closely with other agencies, develop, lead and manage the local delivery of appropriate fostering support services.
- Make informed, sound and immediate professional judgements in the management of risk to children, young people, families and the community.
- Manage commissioning partnerships that support and enhance the delivery of fostering services.
- Work across Kent County Council, building and maintaining engagement across departments supporting the promotion of positive work practices.
- Management of performance data both qualitative and quantitative. Being accountable for the work of the teams and the delivery of results and good outcomes for children and families.
- Manage the budget within cash limits and develop efficiencies.

- Ensure that areas of responsibility are delivered in line with Legislation, and Regulations (National Minimum Standards) Fostering.

### **Job accountabilities:**

- Oversee the Recruitment Strategy, Statement of Purpose and Business Plan for Kent Fostering to ensure that corporate targets are achieved.
- To ensure that sufficient numbers of foster carers are recruited and prepared to meet the diverse needs of Kent County Council's Children in Care.
- Co-ordinate the development and management of service delivery of specialist teams including Placement Stability and Foster carers caring for Disabled children.
- Management oversight of 6 Kent Fostering Panels and taking lead responsibility for county initiatives to ensure quality and consistency of fostering Panel work, across the county, ensuring compliance with standards.
- Undertake the role of Fostering Agency Decision-Maker to make considered decisions that take account of all the information available, including the recommendation of the fostering panel and, where applicable, the independent review panel.
- Develop the use of specialist teams within the Fostering service, with a focus on service users, ensuring they are represented in all appropriate aspects of the service. Develop the monitoring and evaluation of feedback questionnaires, to ensure that service user involvement is an integral part of the Kent Fostering Service.
- Develop and manage the delivery of high-quality training to all foster carers across the County, ensuring that they have the relevant training to meet the needs of all Children in Care, and compliant with National Minimum Standards.
- Operate within allocated budget to deliver best value whilst maintaining required standards.
- Take a lead role in the collection and collation of information and data with regard to the inspection of fostering services across Kent.
- Make arrangements to ensure Kent County Council's functions are discharged, using Delegated authority and having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- Ensure compliance with child protection processes and procedures to run a safe fostering service.
- Ensure the active participation of children, young people and their families in the development, monitoring and review of services to ensure that there is continuous improvement in service delivery and that services delivered are responsive to client needs.
- Maintain and implement Kent County Council wide processes as directed for performance management, communicating and embedding all agreed policies and processes in a timely manner to ensure that consistency with the rest of the service and organization are maintained.
- Support the Assistant Director of Corporate Parenting in driving forward the culture, workforce and other changes necessary to ensure high quality services are delivered for children in care and care leavers.



- Work in partnership with the Head of Fostering for West.
- Work closely with the finance and human resources departments to ensure that sufficient financial, staffing and other resources are available to maintain service standards within agreed budgets.
- Ensure that commissioned services deliver to the agreed contractual standards and this is evidenced through quarterly monitoring reports.
- Ensure that briefings for senior managers and elected members are provided in a timely way including the Kent Fostering Annual Report and Business Plan.
- Identify and develop sound mechanisms to record information and needs data required to inform performance monitoring, internally and externally.
- Ensure compliance with statutory requirements, including equality and anti- discrimination legislation and ensure arrangements are in place for the effective management of complaints.
- Monitor delivery of the Practice Framework and reflective supervision to Team Managers.
- Manage the reputation of Kent County Council through effective representation, both internally and externally.
- Undertake evening and weekend work for participation activities as required.

# 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:

- Degree or equivalent in a related discipline, e.g. Social Work.
- Management qualification
- Registration as a Social Worker with Social Work England

## Experience:

- A sound working knowledge and experience of operational, strategic planning and service delivery within children's services in local government or an independent fostering agency, able to demonstrate a proven record of achievement
- A detailed understanding and awareness of the requirements of leading and managing cultural and service change within a large, complex organization
- Experience of preparing and managing successful inspections
- Experience of developing and implementing service planning, performance and quality assurance frameworks in a multi-disciplinary and partnership environment
- Detailed understanding and awareness of fostering legislation, research and best practice
- Experience of managing budgets within the allocated budget allocation
- Experience of writing and presenting high quality reports to a diverse audience including elected members

## Skills and Abilities:

- Computer literacy
- Provide visible leadership and effective operational management.
- Communicate well in writing and verbally.
- Work in partnership with users, both adults and children, to identify and build on their potential.
- Organise work efficiently and effectively, having the ability to manage own work as well as that of others.
- Work as part of a team.
- Use performance management structures appraisal, supervision and consultation appropriately.
- Manage staff to ensure optimum performance and take remedial action where necessary.
- Work with HR to respond to a range of HR issues, flexible working, retirement, disciplinary, and capability.

## Knowledge:

- Excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant legislative and policy frameworks and impact on service (including Fostering Regulations).
- Knowledge of the Connected Person regulations and procedures.
- Work to and embed the Corporate Parenting principles

- Excellent knowledge and understanding of social work theories and research relating to child in care and Fostering Services.
- Detailed knowledge of corporate procedures and practice, especially those relating to Children in Care, Children in Need and Children in the Child Protection System
- Familiarity with recent government and corporate initiatives.
- Knowledge of corporate financial regulations and ability to manage a budget.
- Managing and motivating staff performance.
- Impact of child development, including the impact of trauma and loss. Awareness of clinical approaches to ensuring successful family work and ability to work to Kent's Practice Framework.
- Impact of family dynamics including marital relationships and use of motivational interviewing within assessments.
- An understanding of the impact of differences of culture, religion and class on identity and patterns of family life.
- Attachment and trauma relevant research and theory.
- To have an understanding of permanency planning structures and policies.

# 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 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

## 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.