

A large, stylized blue horse logo is positioned in the background of the top half of the page. The horse is depicted in profile, facing left, with its front legs raised in a rearing or galloping motion. The design is minimalist, using solid blue shapes to define the horse's form, mane, and tail.

QA Team Manager IRO Service

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:	KR13
Responsible to:	Service Manager – Safeguarding & QA

Job outline:

To work strategically to establish service priorities, joint working policy and practice with Multi agency partners in order to deliver a seamless, professional response to Child Protection Conferencing and Looked After Reviews, deliver to the statutory requirements and improve services for vulnerable children within Kent.

With a clear focus on those in need of protection and the wider safeguarding agenda to have the cognisance of the national agenda concerning child protection through the provision of high-quality social work interventions and effective liaison with local and Multi-agency partners. Fully accountable for the team of Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) and/or Child Protection Conference Chairs (CPC) and support staff to ensure the delivery of a high quality service in accordance with legislation, corporate and Directorate policies and within allocated budgets.

Job accountabilities:

- Using specialist knowledge and experience, lead and direct the work of a team of Independent Reviewing Officers and/or Child Protection Chairs, and support staff in order to ensure they effectively fulfill the complex changing demands of the service. Provide leadership, management support and professional supervision of Child Protection Conference Chairs and other staff when required, managing their performance.
- Accountable for the monitoring and auditing of professional standards in liaison with the relevant Head of Service/Assistant Director, Independent Reviewing Officers or Child Protection Conference Chairs at a local level and, as required, on a county basis to promote appropriate standards of professional practice and take any necessary action to rectify any areas of concern.
- Accountable for the overall monitoring, evaluation and reviewing of the Children in Care and/or Child Protection Conference database and other information sources to provide regular reports, including Annual Reports for senior managers, which alongside information from local and national audits, contributes to the effectiveness of the planning and review process and monitors the outcomes for Children subject to a Children in Care/Care Leavers and/or Child Protection Plan.
- Provide high level specialist expert advice to the senior management team, area management teams and social work staff regarding highly complex cases for children in care/care leavers or subject to Child Protection Plans and prepare reports for the relevant Head of Service/Assistant Director including responding to FOI and Elected Member requests.

- Ensure a cohesive service delivery and effective liaison with joint working arrangements between Child Protection Conference Chairs Service and the Independent Reviewing Officer Service, additionally ensuring the principles of equality and diversity are reflected in the work of the Unit.
- Responsible for the development of expert policy and practice within the area being the specialist lead for changes in national policy, legislation and government initiatives and implementing these across Integrated Children's Services. With a special focus on the Independent Reviewing Officers' role and/or Child Protection Conferences, update IRO and/or Child Protection guidance as necessary and undertake pieces of research to support the development of policy and practice as required by the Service Manager - Safeguarding & QA.
- Liaise with Principal Social Workers and other Integrated Children's Services Team and Service Managers to ensure that arrangements in planning for children and young people are appropriately and effectively linked to other children services practice and procedures, and that Care Planning is focused on achieving excellent outcomes for young people.
- Contribute to the effectiveness of the Integrated Children's Services Quality Assurance Framework and Practice Framework to ensure the highest standards of quality are met.
- Work strategically with multi-agency partners to ensure working policies and practices are in place to deliver outcomes for vulnerable children. Creating opportunities to develop strategic plans and identify, plan and deliver training, specialist knowledge workshops and updates on specialist legislation and national initiatives when appropriate, to staff both internally and on a multi-agency basis.
- Chair complex reviews and strategy meetings and undertake case reviews as appropriate including the ability to mediate and problem solve in matters relating to Children in Care and those on a Child Protection Plan.
- Effectively manage complaints on behalf of the service in conjunction with Customer Care and to resolve those complaints in a timely manner.
- Ensure the full and active participation of children, young people and their families in reviews and Child Protection Conferences.
- Ensure that any possible Criminal Injury Compensation cases have been identified and actioned by the responsible IRO.

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:

- Recognised Social Work qualification - Degree in Social Work, CQSW, DiPSW, CSS
- Registration as a social worker with Social Work England
- Evidence of continuous professional and management development

Experience:

- Significant diverse experience in children and families practice of which the majority should be post qualification experience: including Child Protection, Children in Care, Leaving Care and Family Placement.
- Multi-agency working with colleagues from Health, Education and other agencies.
- Experience of staff recruitment and selection; of supervising and developing qualified staff.

Skills and Abilities:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including ability to produce complex reports and letters and present views in a clear manner.
- Sound professional judgment and decision-making skills.
- Leadership and influencing skills.
- IT-literate with an understanding of information systems, including the child's electronic file, i.e. Liquid Logic (Liberi system).
- Able to develop effective relationships with all levels of colleagues internally and externally whilst working in a sensitive environment. To challenge assertively whilst maintaining professional integrity and deliver difficult messages without undermining professional working relationships.

Knowledge:

- High level working knowledge of the statutory framework including the Children Act 1989, The Children Act 2004, Adoption Acts and Adoption Regulations, Placement of Children with Parents Regulations, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010, Adoption Acts and Adoption Regulations, Placement of Children with Parents Regulations 1991, The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, Foster Placement Regulations, Review of Children's cases (amendments) 2004, IRO guidance, DOE guidance on the Education of Children in Public Care and DH guidance on Promoting the Health of Looked After Children.
- High level of knowledge of various models of intervention including restorative, trauma-informed and strengths-based practice.
- Research related to safeguarding children.

- High level of working knowledge of Directorate and Corporate procedures and practice relating to Children subject to a Child Protection Plan.

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 28th April 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 to complete an online application form.