

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Service Manager – Social Work		
Directorate	Children, Families and Education		
Reporting to			
Grade	8		
Evaluation ref:	NOM0254	Job Family ref:	
Role purpose			
<p>Provide expertise and strong management to drive performance and to commission and/or deliver the Council's priorities and meet service targets, as a member of the Council's Senior Management Group.</p> <p>Provide clarity, management and motivation in delivering the New Operating Model, the County Plan and other Council transformation programmes as required.</p> <p>Ensure the effective understanding and operation of any specific statutory or regulatory duty contained within the role.</p> <p>Advise Members and Directors in respect of operational planning and commissioning, policy matters and service delivery issues and engage with partners in the promotion, communication and delivery of services.</p>			
Responsibilities			
<u>Key accountabilities</u>			
<p>Create, agree and deliver service plans and prioritise activities and projects.</p> <p>Identify and deliver opportunities for service change and improvement and scope, plan and manage change in corporate and professional activities.</p> <p>Review performance outcomes and customer feedback in order to meet customer requirements and to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>Develop and maintain effective customer relations and feedback channels and work to improve levels of customer service and satisfaction.</p> <p>Resolve complex operational and service based problems and conflicts raised through the service escalation process and ensure positive outcomes.</p> <p>Optimise the use of financial and other resources (including commissioning frameworks, income streams etc.) to locally commission and deliver services on time, to budget and to the quality standards required.</p> <p>Recruit, review the performance of and ensure the development of individual professional and other team members.</p>			

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Operate information and communication systems to provide business and management information used to support and inform operational decision making.

Develop and maintain effective personal networks with partner agencies, suppliers and contractors etc. in order to maintain continuity and quality of service.

Communicate clearly and succinctly and use influence and persuasion to negotiate and achieve service objectives.

Duties and responsibilities

As part of the County Management Team lead the delivery of a high quality service in your team, to the children we assess, protect and look after, within our Corporate Parent role, and the carers we recruit, support and develop with the aim of ensuring the best outcomes for children and young people.

Recruit, induct, manage and mentor staff/foster carers/fostering and adoption panel members and ensure their professional development through regular supervision and appraisal and the identification and provision of appropriate training and development of staff.

Ensure staff within the team meets the relevant professional standards (HCPC) and provide suitable and timely support and challenge where this is not the case. Ensure personal continuous professional development combined with effective team leadership skills.

Manage team workloads to ensure that children and their families/carers and adopters receive the best possible service from the most suitable available practitioner and to ensure that staff have the capacity to provide this level of service consistently.

To ensure that the Operations Manager and PSW are kept fully informed of and engaged with critical case work issues (and potential resolutions) in the team.

Ensure parents/carers and children and young people are active participants in planning and reviewing services for their family and that their feedback is consistently requested and proactively used in local and county service planning. To obtain and respond to feedback from official parent/carer support groups for Disabled children/foster and adoptive carers regarding service provision.

Provide/ensure reflective formal supervision, informal casework consultation and management oversight for staff/carers in the teams to ensure high quality assessment, planning and outcomes for children.

Monitor and manage staff performance, aiming for excellent practice, by using team data, supervision, appraisal and performance processes where required to secure staff/carer development.

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To engage with the Operations Manager in case file and specific issue audits to ensure children are safeguarded and planning and assessment is clear, in pertinent, well-evidenced and timely records.

Contribute to the management and development of Children's Social Care services as a member of the county and area management teams. Work with resource colleagues, under the Operations Manager Disabilities, to develop services for children with disabilities.

To build and sustain strong local working relationships with other agencies, such as health, education, voluntary groups, CAFCASS, fostering and adoption groups, and the police, in order that organisations can work together effectively to deliver the best services for children and their families.

To chair meetings with parents/carers, children/young people and professionals (eg Public Law Outline, Care Diversion, Complex Safety, Risk Management, Placement Planning, Carer's Review and Protocol meetings) and ensure an accurate record of the outcomes and decisions are distributed promptly.

Manage the resources pertaining to the CLA, CIN and transport budgets delegated by the Operations Manager, to ensure that funds are used appropriately and prioritised for the most vulnerable families. Ensure fieldwork staff follows specific policies and practices as appropriate with regards to finance, such as direct payments and personal budgets.

To ensure that all referrals are responded to in a prompt and timely manner and that children most in need are prioritised and responded to accordingly.

To ensure that every child supported by the team has an up to date, and outcome focussed plan that clearly states the necessary actions, the responsible professional(s) and agreed timescales for completion

To ensure that every child supported by the team, is visited and monitored in accordance with best practice standards and statutory and procedural requirements.

To authorise casework assessments, plans and reports as required by the Operations Manager, ensuring that they are high quality, reflect the views of children and their parents/carers and provide clear and evidenced analysis and planning.

Manage 1st stage complaints on behalf of the service and ensure learning from complaints is embedded within their team.

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Impact

Resources

A Team Manager will typically have a team of Social Workers at varying stages of their career progression, ranging from newly Qualified and less experienced Social Workers to experienced Social Workers. They will also be responsible for differently qualified staff providing support for children. A Typical Team will consist of up to 15 staff and be responsible for a manageable number of children or carers at any one time (as designated by the Operations Manager).

Ensure effective management of the Team based resources, direct payments and personal budgets.

Relationships

The principal purpose of the role is to ensure that a consistently good standard of service is delivered to children and families in Somerset meeting or exceeding Statutory, Council or Service standards. This will involve the full range of day to day management activities including priority setting, conflict resolution and team communication. In addition, the postholder will support the Operations Manager in identifying service improvements and implementing those improvements within their team.

The postholder will need to develop and maintain a locality based network of colleague Somerset Council Managers, private, voluntary and community sector leaders and managers and other bodies/agencies in order to ensure that combined resources are optimised in the delivery of services and a coherent approach to service improvement.

The postholder requires good communication skills to ensure effective feedback arrangements from clients and customers and to enable effective management of local teams during changes to achieve new ways of working.

	Essential	Desirable	
Knowledge			
Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of the statutory, policy and strategic commissioning framework within which specialist services operate and their context within local government as a whole.	X		
Good understanding and ability to develop and implement effective performance management and quality assurance frameworks.	X		
Knowledge and understanding of implementing equality and diversity in commissioning and reviewing service delivery.	X		

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Experience			
Significant experience of working successfully with Members and Directors on complex issues and the development of strategic direction.	X		
Track record of operating corporate projects and providing clear advice on policy options and policy development.	X		
Experience of developing and delivering representational and communication activities that successfully deliver key messages to the public and internally.	X		
Demonstrable experience of partnership working, including the ability to influence and, where required, lead multi-agency projects and initiatives with particular reference to standard setting and whole service commissioning.	X		
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications			
Relevant degree or professional qualification.	X		
Evidence of work related continuing professional development in their specialist field.	x		
Skills			
Promotes the need for change and acts as a role model for change.	X		
Positive, committed, adaptable, thorough and confident approach.	X		
Ability to work to deadlines and to motivate others to work effectively and demonstrate a duty of care.	X		
Committed to diversity in service delivery and employment.	X		
Innovative and creative approach to service improvement and value.	X		
Customer and Communities focussed.	X		
Personal Integrity.	X		
Drive and self motivation - "can do" attitude.	X		
Sound analysis and decision making in dealing with complex service delivery and/or policy development matters.	X		
An understanding and commitment to effective customer and community engagement leading to service redesign and change management.	X		

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Working Conditions

Working Arrangements

Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.

Corporate Responsibilities

Provide clear leadership to deliver the Council's strategic priorities and meet the Council's financial targets, as a member of the Directorates Senior Leadership Team.

Update and advise Elected Members in respect of operational and policy issues in relation to the Children and Families Services teams.

Lead Children and Families teams with a clear identity in terms of flexible and responsive ways of working, inclusive and diverse culture, and high level of employee engagement and wellbeing.

Undertake representational and communication duties on behalf of the Council to promote and protect the Council's interests in matters concerning their specialist areas.

Create, monitor, and review frameworks of performance measures and quality standards to be applied in the delivery of services.

Function as an ambassador for the Council promoting, both internally and externally, the Council's vision, strategic aims, and values.

Value the diversity of Somerset's communities ensuring equality of access and treatment in service delivery and employment.

Function as a role model for Somerset's vision and values. Promotes a culture of continuous improvement that encourages creativity and innovation to ensure services are efficient and develop the potential and flexibility across the Council and its workforce including the motivation and development of employees within the Children and Families service teams.

Ensure that Children and Families services place a high value on customer responsiveness by demonstrating a commitment to meeting and involving the broadest range of direct and indirect service users, citizens, customers, communities, and businesses.

Support the delivery of the Councils' key strategic aims and objectives ensuring understanding and commitment from staff from across the Children and Families service.

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Support Corporate and Directorate and service specific transformational change programmes with the aim of maximising efficiency, modernising services, and achieving better outcomes and opportunities for service users and customers.

Ensure flexibility in reacting to the needs of the Council, its' customers and partners supporting a culture of continuous improvement.

Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, the Council's standards of conduct, organisational policy, and professional codes of conduct to uphold standards of best practise.

Accountable for compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation and Somerset Council H&S policies.

Date: June 2025