

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Service Manager		
Directorate	Children and Families		
Reporting to			
Grade	8		
Evaluation ref:	NOM0258	Job ref:	Family
Role purpose			
<p>The primary purpose of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) role is to support and challenge agencies to work together effectively to safeguard children and young people from neglect and abuse by professionals, volunteers and those in public office who have direct contact or responsibility for children. This is achieved through monitoring and auditing standards of safeguarding practice across the multi-agency workforce and facilitating strategy meetings and allegations management meetings in response to professional allegations in individual cases.</p>			
Responsibilities			
<p>Determine or support the determination of the strategic direction of SC and partners agencies in relation to their specialist expertise.</p> <p>Undertake representational and communication duties on behalf of the Council and partners both to promote and protect the Council's interests in matters concerning their specialist areas.</p> <p>Advise SC on their obligations and duties arising from the statutory/regulatory framework covering their specialist subject.</p> <p>Shape and/or recommend Council policy concerning their specialist areas of activity.</p> <p>Create, monitor and review frameworks of performance measures and quality standards to be applied in the delivery of services in their area of expertise.</p> <p>Commission and/or act as the Council's Lead Client in relation to services in their specialist areas.</p> <p>Drive and operate partnership and co-operative working with other agencies/bodies to ensure the effective commissioning and/or delivery of services in their specialist areas.</p> <p>Manage major programmes within their area of expertise or where their specialism is predominant.</p> <p>Deliver major projects and resolve complex casework where required by the Director.</p>			

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Specify and mentor the Continuous Professional Development of other professionals in their field.

As part of the Management Team be responsible for the leadership of the delivery of a high quality service, to the children we assess, protect and look after, within our Corporate Parent role, with the aim of ensuring the best outcomes for children and young people. Where the postholder is also acting as the LADO this would extend to all organisations who come into contact with children. Where the postholder is an Independent Safeguarding and Reviewing Officer (ISRO) provide effective challenge to staff and managers to ensure plans for children are both safe and effective.

Manage a small caseload of the most complex issues identifying and providing opportunities within these cases for other staff to gain experience. Deliver positive outcomes in these cases and use them to drive improved practice across the service. Independent Safeguarding and Reviewing Officers (ISRO's) will hold responsibility for the statutory reviewing of children looked after (IRO Handbook 2012), and chairing of child protection conferences (Working Together 2013).

Ensure that the relevant Operations Manager/Strategic Manager/Service Manager is kept fully informed of critical case work issues in which you are engaged and gain commitment to the potential/preferred resolutions.

Engage with parents/carers and children and young people to ensure they 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.

Provide reflective formal supervision, appraisal, informal casework consultation and full management oversight for a number Social work staff, as agreed by the Operations or Strategic Manager, to ensure high quality assessment, planning and placement outcomes for children with specialist/complex needs. As an Independent Safeguarding and Reviewing Officer provide challenge and scrutiny of planning through reflective casework consultation to operational teams to support effective decision making.

Identify, promote and drive good practice by taking a lead role in case file and specific issue audits and engage with the Operations/Strategic Manager to ensure children are safeguarded and planning and assessment is clear, in pertinent, well-evidenced and timely records

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

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Chair meetings with parents/carers, children/young people and professionals (eg Public Law Outline, Care Diversion, Complex Safety meetings, and for ISRO's Children Looked After reviews and Child Protection conferences) and ensure that an accurate record of the outcomes and decisions are child focussed and distributed promptly. Track their decisions and ensure they are acted on.

Engage with other Principal Social workers and allied professionals to identify examples of good practice and areas for development, reporting issues and proposed resolutions/improvements to Operations and Strategic Managers on a quarterly basis. Be responsible for driving and delivering these improvements, identifying and challenging/addressing blocks and negotiating and agreeing options to proceed. Undertake a tracking process for children with a plan for adoption and taking action to ensure there is no delay in progressing plans. For ISRO's to engage with others at both a regional and national level for the reasons stated above.

Represent the Team/Operations Manager as agreed and whenever necessary.

Ensure that every child allocated to you and those you supervise has an up to date, and outcome focussed plan that clearly states the necessary actions, the responsible professional(s) and agreed timescales for completion. As an ISRO ensure that every child allocated to you has an up to date and outcome focussed care or protection plan which states clearly the actions, responsible professionals and timescales for completion.

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. As an ISRO this is in a quality assurance capacity.

Ensure that every child allocated to you and those you supervise, is visited and monitored in accordance with best practice standards and statutory and procedural requirements.

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. As an ISRO review and audit assessments plan and reports as part of the quality assurance role ensuring that they are high quality, reflect the views of children and their parents/carers and provide clear and evidenced analysis and planning.

Escalate concerns about quality of practice within the service/other organisations directly to the corporate Strategic Manager/Principal Social Worker office holder/Operations Director and DCS where issues related to quality of service have failed to be addressed locally. As an ISRO escalate concerns using informal and formal dispute resolution process.

If undertaking the LADO role to full-fill the statutory duties of the Local Authority Designated Officer. Identify the need for and commission/deliver appropriate training and support to external and internal services/agencies.

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Provide high quality training on relevant legislation, practice and policy to staff and to other agencies on behalf of the department as required. Design and deliver Best Practice learning materials and events.

Impact

Direct line management will vary between areas, dependent on experience of Social Worker within area based Teams. It would normally be expected that a CSW would directly manage up to 4 staff, and they will mentor and support to varying degrees other members of the team. The principle purpose is to identify and drive best practice. The principle purpose is to identify and drive best practice in a specialised area of social work across the County of Somerset.

The dual purpose of the role is to develop, drive and maintain service wide best practice in a specific aspect of Social Work expertise while ensuring that a consistently good standard of service is delivered to children and families in a particular geographical area of Somerset, or in the case of the LADO and ISRO's across the whole of the County, meeting or exceeding Statutory, Council or Service standards. This will involve directly supervising less experienced social work staff as well as mentoring, supporting and challenging other staff (including internal and external managers) with regards to proposed services for children. In addition the post holder will support Strategic Managers in identifying service improvements and implementing those improvements across the Service. On complex and/or sensitive matters a CSW may work directly with the Operations Director/Strategic Manager Safeguarding Care and QA. ISRO's have a wide ranging responsibility to challenge both staff and managers about the quality timeliness and effectiveness of children's care and protection plans.

The postholder will need to develop and maintain a network of colleagues including SC 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 is developed and driven forward using best practice models from across the Social Care profession.

The postholder requires good communication skills to ensure effective feedback arrangements from clients and customers and to enable influence of local teams during changes to achieve new ways of working. The postholder has the specific responsibility to raise concerns around service standards to the County Council's PSW office holder.

	Essential	Desirable	
Knowledge			
Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of the statutory, policy and strategic commissioning	X		

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framework within which specialist services operate and their context within local government as a whole.			
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		
An understanding and commitment to effective customer and community engagement leading to service redesign and change management.	X		
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	X		

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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		

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

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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.

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