

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

POSITION: SENIOR PRACTITIONER  
DIVISION: CHILDRENS SERVICES  
SERVICE: CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER  
REPORTS TO: TEAM MANAGER  
RESPONSIBLE FOR: SOCIAL WORKERS  
GRADE: 11

### **PURPOSE OF THE JOB**

1. Responsible for the provision of a comprehensive and effective integrated social work service in accordance with current legislation, Council policy and best practice. The post holder operates at the level of a senior professional in assessment, case planning, review and case management service functions.

### **PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES**

1. Operates as part of the management team, providing professional guidance and support in complex assessment and case management functions. Responsible for the delivery of high quality, responsive and customer focused services.
2. Undertake the role of Duty Manager for the team, responding to cases and allocating tasks. Ensures the best use of available resources and establishes long term delivery plans.
3. Initiate research, recommend best practice and implement changes in legislation and policy within a specialist area of service. The role of recognised expert requires the post holder to lead service developments and brief colleagues in new procedures and different methods / approaches.
4. Operate team workload management systems to ensure that resources address priority cases and respond to changing needs and circumstances.
5. Manage the most complex cases, which may be strongly contested and high profile. To develop appropriate packages of care to meet the needs of vulnerable service users, and control cases which are not permanently allocated but subject to regular monitor and review.
6. Contribute to the management and development of specific areas of service, including improvements in delivery, determination of priorities, service team plans and implementation of new practice initiatives.

7. Undertake a quality assurance role for the service, identifying problem areas and recommending solutions. Ensures that care packages provide value for money and meet the complex needs of service users.
8. Establish practice standards for auditing purposes, including the monitor and review of contracts, care programmes, file notes, risk assessments, and delegated budgets.
9. Negotiates service contracts within prescribed parameters which ensure value for money in terms of placements and meet the complex needs of service users.
10. Responsible for the professional supervision of a staff group, which may include workers from different services (i.e. health), and student placements. Provides guidance, support and direction in workload management, undertakes performance appraisal and co-ordinates induction programmes for new staff.
11. Contribute to the provision and review of staff training and development plans, which may involve staff from outside the area of profession / specialism.
12. Represent the service at Court, conferences, and planning and review meetings.
13. Chair multi-disciplinary meetings such as case conferences, statutory reviews and network meetings.
14. Establish effective links and working relationships with other stake holders, and key professionals from different services, ensuring a professional approach to team working and appropriate services for users.
15. Responsible for the management of information systems, ensuring that all information is used intelligently.
16. To monitor and review contracts to ensure that users changing needs are met, and that providers achieve the agreed standards.
17. Manage a caseload with a high element of risk such as highly contested Court issues and politically high profile cases.
18. To support staff with the delivery of electronic case recording functions.
19. Any other duties appropriate to the post and grade.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION - Post: Senior Practitioner

### QUALIFICATIONS / EXPERIENCE:

- |   |  |          |
|---|--|----------|
| 1 | To hold a recognised Social Work qualification and be registered with the General Social Care Council.   | E<br>A   |
| 2 | To have significant experience of utilising a range of social work skills at post-qualifying level in a statutory children & families social work setting. | E<br>A/I |
| 3 | Experience of holding a caseload which has included court work where issues are complex or in dispute.   | E<br>A/I |
| 4 | Experience of preparing reports and presenting these in a formal setting e.g contested family court proceedings.   | E<br>A/I |
| 5 | Experience of financial management in a social work setting.   | E<br>A/I |
| 6 | Experience of generating and applying management information.  | E<br>A/I |
| 7 | Experience of determining priorities in the implementation of a social work service.   | E<br>A/I |
| 8 | Experience of applying the principles of equal opportunities in social work practice   | E<br>A/I |

### KNOWLEDGE:

- |    |   |          |
|----|---|----------|
| 9  | Knowledge of the key legislation central to the implementation of a professional social work service.         | E<br>A/I |
| 10 | Knowledge of the functions of a Social Services Department and related agencies.                              | E<br>A/I |
| 11 | Knowledge of methods to assess performance and the achievement of targets in social work practice.            | E<br>A/I |
| 12 | Knowledge of linking staff training and development to service planning and priorities.                       | E<br>A/I |
| 13 | Knowledge and understanding of the current issues in social work practice including importance of direct work | E<br>A/I |

### 14. PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Motivating  | T |
| Influencing & negotiating                         | T |
| Interpersonal sensitivity – respond appropriately | T |
| Oral Communication                                | T |
| Written Communication – written reports           | T |
| Analysis/Information handling - judgement         | T |
| Decision making                                   | T |
| Planning & Organising – management of caseload    | T |
| Customer Orientation                              | T |

Change Orientation	T
Commitment & Resilience	T
Professional Leadership	T
Influencing Change	T
Research Orientation	T
Development focus	T
Accountability	T
Project Management	T
Computer Literacy	T
Self management & development	T
Accountability	T

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF SERVICE:**

15 Because of the nature of the post candidates are not entitled to withhold information regarding convictions by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exceptions) Order 1975, as amended, pursuant to Section 4 (4) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are required to give details of any convictions on their application form and are expected to disclose such information at the appointment interview. **E**

16 The nature of the service will require involvement in activities in the evening and occasionally at weekends. The postholder will be required to work outside of normal office hours. **E**

17 This post is opened to job share.

**KEY:** D Desirable I Evaluated at interview  
E Essential A Application T Subject to test

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

The following details the criteria which will be used to select the candidate(s) for the post. Candidates are advised that those criteria marked with an ( A )will be used at shortlisting to select applicants for interview, it is therefore necessary that these are addressed in your application.

Some elements of personal competencies of short-listed candidates will be assessed by participation in assessment centre exercises, where appropriate.