

Job Description and Person Specification

Job details

Job title:	Head of Access and Sufficiency
Grade:	Band 12
Reports to:	Assistant Director - Family Services & Strategic Partnerships
Responsible for:	Admissions, Place Planning, Education Capital
Directorate and Service area:	Children's Services

Purpose of the job

Acting as operational lead for the delivery of Council services that includes, but is not limited to:

Ensuring the Council meet its statutory duties with regard to:

- Education place planning
- Commissioning and delivery of education capital schemes to provide sufficient high-quality places, including SEND
- School Admissions
- To deliver the Council's function in establishing new schools, including running competitions for new free schools

Takes collective and shared responsibility for the effective leadership and management of the Council's services and delivery of improved outcomes and the achievement of value for money.

Principal responsibilities

Leadership

1. Demonstrates compassionate and inclusive leadership through the line management of services for whom the post is accountable and provides strong and motivational leadership to drive continuous improvement, efficiency savings and higher levels of satisfaction for residents. Actively understand the challenges faced by colleagues across the organisation to be able to support the delivery of corporate objectives.
2. Actively promote and role model the council's priorities and ways of working, values and behaviours to ensure they are delivered throughout the service. Develop and implement effective communication and engagement arrangements with all stakeholders to facilitate effective relationships that drive improvements in service delivery

Governance

3. Understand and uphold the Constitution, Scheme of Financial Delegation and Contract Procedure Rules of the Council and ensure that they are followed throughout the directorate. Support the democratic process, providing advice to elected members on the appropriate response to local and regional matters as well as the internal business of the Council.
4. Champion effective management of risk and the active response to audit findings in relation to service delivery. Be jointly accountable with others in the Directorate for the local risk register and any aspects of the corporate risk register and corporate risk framework of the Council relevant to services areas that the postholder is accountable for. Ensure that teams under the postholders sphere of influence fulfil their duties in relation to standards, complaints and scrutiny, maintaining an open culture of transparency, accountability and ownership, taking responsibility for mistakes, putting them right and learning lessons for future improvement.

5. Promote, preserve and protect the health, safety and wellbeing of councillors, employees, service users, contractors and partners in the provision of Council services, ensuring that the provisions of all relevant legislation are achieved, such as the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Innovation

6. Champion innovation by being open minded to new and radical ways to deliver services, actively seeking out good practice from others to learn from to develop our own service design and delivery. Promote a culture of continuous improvement by encouraging colleagues to share ideas, take appropriate risks, and recognising innovation.
7. Champion and embed a performance and quality assurance culture that delivers results through rigorous open challenge, personal accountability and continuous improvement.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion

8. Promote an organisational culture that is positive, safe, respectful and compassionate, as well as open to change and feedback enabling everyone to feel empowered and valued. Act, at all times, in ways that create an inclusive environment where people can thrive and be empowered to do their best. Role model good behaviour and practice and proactively seek ways to ensure staff feel valued and develop a sense of belonging.
9. Demonstrate awareness of the diverse needs of our residents to inform the decisions made about the services we deliver and ensuring a robust approach to equality impact assessments and their application to employment, service delivery and policy development.

Finance

10. The post holder is directly responsible for a gross budget for this directorate of c.£30m capital (includes grants covering schools). The post holder will:
 - continually review and reshape service delivery to achieve financial efficiencies and maximise opportunities for income generation, whilst maintaining the highest standards of service delivery
 - ensure the effective management and deployment of all appropriate budgets in line with agreed financial processes, envelopes, and savings, including contract budgets for people services and pooled budgets where appropriate.

Areas of Accountability

1. To effectively lead and deliver the strategic education place planning function, both mainstream and special - for the populations served by NNC, to secure an appropriate match between places and demand across the geography, including the commissioning of new provision. This should support the delivery of the Directorate's vision that every child should have access to a great school place in their community. Ensure that there is a clear focus on promoting health and safety and safeguarding of children and staff.
2. To ensure that there are effective arrangements for analysis and forecasting demand to inform planning and commissioning of places.
3. To ensure that the Council proactively bids for and secures national funding available including via submitting data returns and specific initiatives such as further Free School opportunities.
4. To ensure that the Councils secure appropriate levels of S106, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Basic Need capital funding to invest in the expansion of existing provision, and the establishment of new provision.
5. To develop and deliver effective and sustainable mechanisms for identifying future need for school and post-16 places (including SEND). This includes working with the Early Years team to identify sufficiency implications for school places and capital schemes. Proactively establish a response to this working proactively and innovatively with internal and external partners, including securing appropriate levels of funding to invest in the expansion of existing provision and the establishment of new provision.

6. To lead Admissions services to ensure that every child living in NNC whose parents wish for them to be educated at a maintained or Academy school is provided with a school place.
7. To act as client in the determination of how new school provision should be delivered and work in partnership with the corporate property function to deliver projects on time and within budget scope.
8. To act as service lead for Private Finance Initiatives (PFIs) relating to schools, working with corporate services to effectively manage the contract and budget.
9. To represent the Council at national and regional network and best practice meetings, bringing in approaches that improve NNC policies and service delivery.

General responsibilities applicable to all jobs

1. Demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs.
2. Comply with the Council's policies and procedures including (but not limited to) safeguarding, financial regulations, promotion of equalities, customer care, agreed audit actions and health and safety (ensuring that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons).
3. Understand the council's commitment to Corporate Parenting and take responsibility to support this commitment. Enable the council to be the best corporate parents possible to children and young people in our current and previous care.
4. Carry out any other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of this job description and which are commensurate with the grade of the post.

This job description reflects the major tasks to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the major tasks may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

Person Specification

Attributes	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
Education, Qualifications and Training	• A relevant graduate Level qualification or equivalent and/or relevant compensating experience at a senior leadership level. • Evidence of continuous professional and leadership skill development	
Experience and Knowledge	Significant and successful experience of: • Working at a senior level within a large and complex organisation with comparable scope, responsibilities, budget, and resources. • Providing balanced strategic advice and guidance in a political setting. • Leading the delivery of public services with competing priorities and demands often outside of the Council's direct control. • Leading transformational change and creating innovative service models, particularly in response to the demands of an organisation that is undergoing a radical transformation and modernisation. • Delivering complex projects on time and within budget and outcomes. • Leading and contributing to strategic decision making, resource allocation and to policy formulation and delivery, adopting a problem-solving culture. • Delivering creative and innovative solutions to improve the use of resources and achieve value for money across an organisation. Establishing a strong performance culture including effective performance measures, evaluation of service quality and the improvement of service delivery to achieve the Council's objectives. • Leading, managing and developing employees to sustain high levels of service delivery, recognising and developing talent. • Developing and nurturing positive and constructive working relationships with a wide range of customers, stakeholders and partners, maintaining a positive personal and organisational profile • Knowledge and understanding of current developments and best practice in early years and childcare and school place planning; gained through looking beyond a single organisation and into the wider system • Understanding of District Council Local Plan processes and policies, including developer obligations (traditional section 106 payments and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)) • Demonstrable up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the legislative framework governing education and the provision of early years and childcare and school places, and its application to delivery. (Particularly, knowledge of the Education Act 2011 and the Childcare Act 2006.)	

Attributes	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
Ability and Skills	Ability to demonstrate: • A comprehensive understanding of the current issues and challenges facing local government as well as the statutory framework governing the sector. • Skills in understanding and responding to different perspectives and taking a cross-organisational approach, gained by working in a political or similarly challenging environment. • Business acumen and an entrepreneurial mindset to lead the strategic delivery of services and maintain a focus on obtaining best value for money at all times balanced, against the difficult and sensitive challenges faced. • Ability to lead, develop and sustain effective team, partnership and multi-agency working through strong effective advocacy, influencing and negotiating skills. • Skills to provide creative solutions to complex problems together with high level analytical, presentational and communication skills. • Ability to establish and sustain positive relationships that generate confidence, ability and trust. • Highly developed influencing and negotiation skills to operate at a strategic professional and political level, locally and nationally. • Understanding of the barriers to organisational and cultural change and the commitment to being a catalyst for change Ability to demonstrate: • A clear and strong personal commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and a track record of developing inclusive services and leading by example. • Evidence of leading people and services to recognise, respect and value individual needs to achieve a culture of inclusivity. • Evidence of operating effectively and openly within the democratic process with the political acumen and skills to develop productive working relationships with Councillors that command respect, trust and confidence.	
Equal Opportunities	Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs.	