

Job Description

Job Title: **Head of Fostering**

Job number

Grade P6

Overall purpose of the job

The role will be responsible for leading the delivery of a shared (aligned) Fostering Service that supports both Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council. The role has responsibility for managing the shared Supervised Contact and Family Group Conference services.

This will be achieved by adopting a highly collaborative approach that ensures internal and external resources work together to identify and deliver a range of services to appropriately meet the needs of the community.

The role provides expertise to ensure good practice is identified and shared and that there is county wide consistency where appropriate. To provide specialist advice internally and externally and provide authoritative advice and guidance about the specialist area. The role will have significant influence on enabling both authorities to meet the sufficiency needs of providing outstanding family based care for the Authorities children and young people in care.

This role is also responsible for the management and oversight of high quality interventions, ensuring that children and families are at the centre of everything we do whilst also supporting the development of integrated services for young people. The post holder will be an integral Head of Service as part of the wider Children's Services responsible for delivering high quality outstanding services to service users as well as supporting our Fostering communities to be active participants to service delivery.

Manage and ensure that all services are planned and delivered in a cost-effective, integrated way that meets policy and quality requirements.

Main accountabilities

	Main accountabilities
1.	Leadership and Management Providing leadership and advice to the Service Manager using technical expertise and informed judgement to deliver successful outcomes. Lead a service function to fulfil the County's statutory obligations and deliver quality services and be responsible for the quality of the services delivered to the community as appropriate. Identify and deliver service improvements to continuously balance the demand for service delivery with the resources available as well as being adaptable to support the Authorities sufficiency needs as they relate to family based care arrangements. Model the values and principles that underpin high quality practice by leading by example having a clear understanding of a practitioner's perspective.

	<p>To organise work processes to deliver efficient, on time on budget monitoring and control to agreed quality standards working closely with members of the finance team. Responsibility for multi-million pound budgets and ensure monitoring to avoid overspend.</p> <p>Identify potential efficiency savings within the service and recommend action to realise these in order to maintain continuous service improvement.</p> <p>To lead, manage and develop a team that delivers services to children and families through working collaboratively across the whole Council. Ensuring that there is the capacity and capability within the team to deliver the programmed commitments.</p> <p>To plan, manage and monitor the use of available financial, physical and human resources making efficiency savings and/or negotiating and securing additional resources where possible aligning the use of resources with the strategy to meet demand</p> <p>Advise on high level complex and contentious issues which could potentially have profound implications for the Council</p> <p>Ensure their professional development, so that they have the necessary confidence and skills and are committed to the provision of high-quality services. Lead staff to meet service quality and performance targets.</p>
2.	<p>Service Delivery</p> <p>Ensure that Council provides an effective service that meets legislative requirements to ensure effective planning, delivery and performance of the full range of services provided</p> <p>Ensure that children are safeguarded, and that the service provides interventions which combine risk management and a systemic or social learning theory approach.</p> <p>Develop and review policies, processes and practice standards to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach to the running of the service.</p> <p>Drive the development of integrated practice within and across teams and services, for the benefit of children, young people and families.</p> <p>Ensure the effective operation of the service against government national standards.</p> <p>Ensure that advice, support and challenge to partner organisations is timely, high quality, appropriate and evidence based.</p> <p>Ensure that policies and systems are in place to inform and receive feedback from service users, partners, stakeholders and employees and take appropriate action for continuous improvement.</p> <p>Develop and implement improvement plans which effect business transformation and improve outcomes for children, young people and families based on performance data.</p> <p>Ensure effective service integration and work closely with other Heads of Service in the Council to ensure that service planning and delivery is coherent, effective and integrated and represents best possible use of resources.</p> <p>Ensure that national information returns are completed in a timely manner.</p>

3.	<p>Strategic Development</p> <p>To lead on the development of organisational strategies, translating them into a series of clearly defined policies, protocols, plans and processes that are financially and operationally sustainable.</p> <p>Work with colleagues across the Council and externally to contribute to an environment that drives continuous improvement and long term change.</p> <p>To collaborate with internal and external partners and multiple agencies in service development to achieve improved services to children and families and provide specialist advice</p> <p>Oversee the response by a range of services to complex, contentious or controversial cases and alert the Service Director, Executive Director and portfolio holder/s to critical issues and risk so that appropriate advice can be sought and speedy, positive resolutions can be achieved.</p> <p>Present proposals to members at committee level.</p> <p>Provide a led role in strategic board meetings.</p>
4.	<p>Partnership Working</p> <p>Establish and maintain effective partnerships and working relations with external organisations, including school settings and Health to achieve integrated planning, and delivery of services that aim to address the needs of vulnerable children, young people and their families.</p> <p>Establish, implement and monitor agreements with key partners to maximise the potential of the service to improve all outcomes for children and families.</p> <p>Take a strategic lead and represent the County Council, developing effective relationships with key partners and stakeholders including elected Members, police, housing associations, schools, voluntary and community sector, District and Parish Councils.</p> <p>Seek opportunities to develop integrated practice to ensure the best possible use of resources, reduction of demand on other more specialist services and improving outcomes for children and young people.</p>
5.	<p>Risk Management</p> <p>Take responsibility for the management of risk, providing professional judgement and advice to members, senior management and service delivery teams in respect of serious or highly complex cases.</p> <p>Ensure all team members hold safeguarding as a priority and manage risk accordingly.</p> <p>Respond to members and provide information and advice in relation to service delivery, and sensitive cases as appropriate.</p> <p>To ensure appropriate security and confidentiality of all information in relation to children/families and any other business of the service</p>
6.	<p>Commissioning</p>

	<p>To commission work where required with external suppliers, building positive relationships; negotiating costs and control expenditure to ensure appropriate and cost effective solutions are introduced.</p> <p>To be responsible for effectively managing commissioning arrangements and budgets alongside colleagues within the County's Commissioning Service.</p>
7.	<p>Sole Decision Maker – Out of Hours</p> <p>Work across any function area in the management of risk and advise out of hours with regard to children at risk of significant harm or in need of protection where appropriate</p> <p>Manage thresholds and where appropriate agree accommodation, including on call out of hours working for adults and children</p>

Service Specific

The role is specifically focused on the delivery and improvement of sustaining a fit for purpose Fostering Service, that is able to meet the increasing demands of ensuring that high quality family based care is provided for the Children, young people and families of both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

To lead in the specific areas of transformation programme that includes the developing of marketing and commercial aspects of the service that ensures that the LA stands out in a highly competitive market place.

To lead with sufficient business acumen and entrepreneurial insight that shapes the Fostering Service that takes into account the DfE's mission of collaborative and regional approaches to the delivery of Fostering Services and to prepare Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for those new approaches as regional and national leaders in the field.

To be the subject matter expert in relation to Fostering Services that places children, young people and families at the heart of everything we do, recognising that Foster Carers are equal professionals to the team around the child. Through the transformation programme to lead on the work of developing and embedding a practice model that supports Foster Carer Hubs and building on family based networks that provides better stability and support for Foster Carers, utilising the Clinical Services of the Council as required.

To work alongside a Marketing Company to support recruitment and retention activity, through a commissioned contract that reviews the commercial viability of the Service and to deliver efficiencies and savings as required.

To lead with colleagues across the wider Children's Services, Extended Leadership and wider Council the profile of Foster Care and to be the champion for Foster Carers, through careful delivery of partnership working with key stakeholders.

To lead and take strategic responsibility for the Contact (Family Time) Services and Family Group Conference Service as it continues to provide a county wide resource to operational colleagues in improving outcomes for Children, Young People and Families.

Support strategy development and implementation across Directorates where the focus is to improve outcomes and life chances for care experienced young people and care leavers.

Person Specification

Qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience

Minimum level of qualifications required for this job

Qualifications Required	Subject	Essential/ Desirable
Key Skill Level 4: Bachelor's degree; HNC; HND NVQ level 4 or equivalent; including professional qualification,	Social Work Qualified	Essential
Evidence of recent and relevant professional development	Management, Leadership and Coaching.	Essential
Higher Degree; Masters degree; Bachelor's degree + qualification; NVQ level 5 or equivalent; including all chartered professions and post-graduate qualification in management	Post graduate management qualification such as MBA or equivalent.	Desirable

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills and experience required for this job

Identify	Describe	Essential/ Desirable
Knowledge	A strong knowledge basis in the delivery of direct services to children, young people and families in either a statutory or private/voluntary sector organisation that includes Fostering and Adoption Services.	Essential
	Significant experience at a senior level in a health/social care background. With proven experience of developing and delivering services strategically	Essential
	In depth knowledge and understanding about current policy and awareness of imminent policy changes within Children's Services.	Essential
	Detailed understanding and awareness of current legislation in relation to children's social work.	Essential
	In depth and current knowledge of best practice in safeguarding and social work with the ability to lead service to provide timely advice and signposting as required.	Essential
	Detailed technical knowledge about how to monitor and demonstrate impact and outcomes through quantitative and qualitative means and how to analyse and evaluate information critically	Essential

	A robust and practical knowledge base about how to achieve effective multi agency and multi-disciplinary practice in a way that improves outcomes for early years age children and families	Essential
	Good understanding of the commissioning process and how it can be used to improve outcomes for children and families	Essential
Skills		
Leadership skills	Strong leadership skills including the ability to set a vision and direction that all can understand and relate to and turn that vision into practice. A proven track record of having achieved that successfully	Essential
Numeracy and literacy skills	ability to understand and interpret data and write clear, concise reports for all audiences including senior management/members to enable you to make recommendations to influence decisions	Essential
Strategic thinking	The ability to look beyond the detail and to identify wider strategic solutions and make the connection with other service and strategic developments.	Essential
Change management	A proven track record of effective change management which has delivered improved outcomes for children and families and an ability to manage change and uncertainty	Essential
Influencing skills	<p>The ability to inspire confidence and credibility with a wide range of individuals at different levels in an organisation/ partnership.</p> <p>The ability to develop effective and collaborative relationships with colleagues and partners that result in effective shared use and deployment of resources.</p>	Essential
Communication skills	<p>Excellent communication skills including strong report writing and presentation skills.</p> <p>Ability to persuade and negotiate at all levels and across different agencies, services and groups.</p> <p>Strong and effective interpersonal skills in groups, teams and one-to-one situations.</p> <p>Visible communication of positive messages about Cambridgeshire, the County Council and the service.</p>	Essential

Project, time management and prioritisation	High level skills in setting priorities, identifying milestones and managing time for self and team to ensure that targets are achieved	Essential
People management	Excellent people management skills and track record of effective people management including performance management Ability to motivate a team and make decisions for the service	Essential
Resilience	Ability to manage own Personal Resilience Taking personal responsibility for making things happen and achieving desired results.	Essential
Presentation and Training delivery skills	Experience and skills in delivering professional development and training to a multi-agency audience	Desirable
Participation	A practical knowledge and understanding about how to increase participation by children and families in developing and designing services	Desirable
Experience		
Partnership working	Experience of partnership working	Essential

Disclosure level

What disclosure level is required for this post?	Enhanced with barred list checks
--	---

Work type

What work type does this role fit into?	Flexible
---	-----------------