

Job Description & Person Specification

Assistant Director for Children's Social Care

Why have the
Voices for everyday?

So we can
get to where
we need to be,
together.



Context

Staffordshire is a great county to live, work and invest and is a place where most people enjoy a good quality of life. It is a county with a proud heritage and bright hopes for the future – well positioned at the heart of the thriving West Midlands to create, jobs, growth and prosperity for local people and to make a mark on the world stage.

With the leadership of Staffordshire County Council much has been achieved over the last four years – a better quality of life for local people, major programmes delivered to secure future growth and jobs and substantial changes to how we operate, ensuring we can continue to deliver what local people need at a cost the nation, and we, can afford.

But here in Staffordshire maintaining the status quo is not an option. We have to respond bravely and constructively to the pressures and challenges facing us. We need to provide strong leadership alongside our partners to transform what we do and focus on what matters most to local people.

We need to recognise that technology has transformed how people work, play and connect; employment patterns have fundamentally changed; family structures are more varied and complex; people have much more choice about how they spend their time and money; people are living longer (although in some cases not always healthier) lives.

This has profound implications for all public services. People's expectations have changed; they are no longer happy to receive what the state deems is best. They are more informed about their rights and less inclined to be told they have no choice in how they interact with the public sector.

Staffordshire County Council's response to this new environment has been to provide strong leadership with local partners (from the local district/borough councils to the Health & Wellbeing Board) to transform what we do and how we do it - by focusing on what matters most to local people.

This is about delivering a transformed Staffordshire over the next decade where individuals and families take responsibility for their own lives and support others to do so, where people can flourish in a thriving economy and where people can say "This is a great place to live".

Staffordshire County Council is delivering strong, ambitious and visionary leadership, a focus on people not organisations and a fundamental change in its conversation and 'contract' with residents and communities.

For more information see the Strategic Plan at

<https://www.intra.staffordshire.gov.uk/ppp/planning/stratplan/REFRESH-FINAL-Strategic-Plan-2018-to-2022-FEB2020.pdf>

Staffordshire County Council's Vision, Priorities, Values & Behaviours

Our Vision - A county where big ambitions, great connections and greener living give everyone the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy

Our Outcomes - Everyone in Staffordshire will:

- Have access to more good jobs and share the benefits of economic growth
- Be healthier and independent for longer
- Feel safer, happier and more supported in their community

Our Values - Our People Strategy sets out what we all need to do to make Staffordshire County Council a great place to work, where people are supported to develop, flourish and contribute to our ambitious plans. Our values are at the heart of the Strategy to ensure that the focus is on what is important to the organisation and the people it serves

- **Ambitious** - We are ambitious for our communities and citizens
- **Courageous** - We recognise our challenges and are prepared to make courageous decisions
- **Empowering** - We empower and support our people by giving them the opportunity to do their jobs well.
- We will work to ensure that Staffordshire education and skills system is the passport to opportunity for our children and young people
- We will work to ensure that Staffordshire Looked after children and are cared for in their family or extended family network
- We will recognise that Statutory interventions are a last resort
- We will work towards ensuring that Staffordshire children where possible are cared for within Staffordshire
- We will recognise and build upon the strengths of Staffordshire children and families

About the Service

Our aim is to create an environment where families are supported to stay together safely and live well in their communities by building on their strengths.

This is the right thing to do. Families tell us they do not want to be in services and evidence says that lives are better when needs can be met early within the family or community.

Working in this way is also more sustainable. We can support more families to live better lives if we focus on addressing needs as early as we can. This report details the changes we have already made across the children and families system.

We will continue to build a strengths-based approach which will promote a culture of inclusion and support to enable children to achieve their best outcomes.

Role Purpose

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care is responsible for influencing, leading and managing resources in line with Staffordshire vision and values, to ensure improved outcomes for Staffordshire's communities, families, children and young people.

Directly reporting to the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Families and Communities, and as part of the Wider Leadership Team, the role will work with and support elected members, public, private and third sector partners and communities across the council to ensure Children and Families have a network of support to help manage their own problems and stay safe and well.

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care will lead strategy development and delivery.

The postholder will ensure the effective, efficient and safe delivery of the Local Authority's functions (including statutory) across Early Help, Child in Need, Safeguarding, Child Protection, Looked after Children, Disability, SEND and Youth Offending, whether directly delivered or commissioned.

The postholder will lead and develop strong and effective partnerships with county, city and district councils, statutory and third sector partners, national bodies and government departments (courts, CAFCASS, LSCB, Police, MPs, Ofsted, DfE etc) to ensure Children and Families have a network of support to help manage their own problems and stay safe and well.

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care is accountable for:

- The leadership and management of the Children's social care system, supporting and leading elected members in shaping and gaining ongoing commitment and understanding to a shared and integrated children's, young people and families vision and strategy which delivers priority outcomes for Staffordshire in an ever changing landscape.
- Ensuring that there is a strategic and outcome focused approach to the leadership, management and delivery of services for children, young people and their families, which enables our children families and communities to achieve their outcomes and in doing so ensures statutory compliance
- Strategically deploying the resource available to ensure that the workforce and budgets are utilized effectively with an emphasis on reducing demand and focusing upon areas of greatest need.
- Leading the discharge of statutory functions, (including the Agency Decision Maker for Adoption) ensuring effective arrangements and processes are in place across Staffordshire to protect children and young people from harm and to ensure that professional leadership and practice is robust and can be appropriately challenged

- Creating and sustaining influential relationships with partners and communities which result in a shared sense of purpose and responsibility which increases community capacity and generates a shared sense of accountability for children, young people and their families' outcomes.
- Leading and modelling effective behaviours which promote and encourage creativity, innovation and a community focus whilst passionately championing and advocating for Staffordshire's children, young people and their families
- Leading and embedding an appropriate theoretical framework which encourages practice excellence through the Childrens' social care system and its workforce.
- Analyzing and interpreting insight, intelligence and data to ensure that the system and the processes are intelligence led and evidence based and that this informs the future shape, design and activity of Childrens social care services.
- Building effective relationships (DfE, OFSTED) which create a culture of accountability and innovation ensuring that our partnership approach and commissioned activity is able to respond quickly and appropriately to legislative change and statutory guidance and is always informed by the voice of the child and their families.
- Leading and developing a culture of corporate parenting to ensure it is embedded across the council, with key stakeholders and our partners.
- As part of Families and Communities Senior Leadership Team advocating for Staffordshire locally, regionally and nationally, seeking to prioritize the issues that matter most to our communities.
- As part of the council's Wider Leadership Team, leading the development and implementation of corporate policies, procedures and strategies to support delivery of efficiency savings, flexibility and change within the service offer, workforce and continuous improvement, and deputising for the Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of Families and Communities when appropriate and necessary.
- Contributing to the council's corporate strategy through robust delivery, prioritization, risk management, governance and oversight of all resources (finance and people) in line with statutory, financial planning, regulatory, constitution requirements and best practice frameworks.
- Leading the senior leadership response and participate in the out of hours on call duty rota.

Dimensions of the Role

Accountable to: Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

Directly Accountable for: Children's Social Care

Total number of employees reporting to role: 6

Annual Budget Accountability: xx

Income generation: circa XX

Statutory Responsibilities: For the relevant statutory duties including Agency decision maker.

Accountability for any other organisation/body: NA

Key Relationships:

Internal

Cabinet, Senior Leadership Team, Wider Leadership Team, County Councillors and Elected Members, management teams, managers and staff across all directorates

External

MPs, District/boroughs and Stoke-on-Trent City Council, government agencies and departments, educational settings, suppliers, contractors, service providers, statutory and voluntary organisations, customers, members of the public, volunteers.

Political Restriction

This post falls within the definitions set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (LGHA), as amended from time to time, of a "politically restricted" post. Therefore, the post holder is constrained from engaging in political activities specified by the LGHA and any regulations made thereunder.

Person Specification

-  Qualified and practicing Social Worker with **5 years senior experience**
-  **Degree or equivalent level qualification or experience.**
-  **MBA or recognised management qualification / experience.**
- Proven track record of **managing children's services.**
-  Experience of working in a **complex political environment** and providing sound advice & support to Elected Members with the ability to exercise good political judgement.
- Substantial experience of creating and maintaining effective and **influential partnerships and networks** that work collaboratively to shape and deliver better outcomes for Staffordshire residents.
- Ability to take account for a significant **direct and indirect budget/spend** demonstrating understanding of key drivers of financial management.
- **Intellectually curious** & a proven track record of **innovation and continuous improvement** in communications, bringing in new thinking from outside the organisation.
- Evidence of moving from **thinking to action quickly**, demonstrating appropriate balance between risk and opportunity.
- Has a **relentless focus on prioritising along with embedding and evaluating performance** routinely and regularly.
- Demonstrable evidence of maintaining **continuing professional development** and awareness of best practice and the leading edge solutions being applied in finance functions more widely.

Leadership Attributes

- **Engenders and harnesses the hearts and minds of others**, at all levels to the vision and outcomes of the organisation – creates 'followership'.
- **Flexible, passionate and adaptive leadership approach that is genuinely interested and curious about** others and what motivates/drives people.
- **Intellectual rigour**, which is used to 'cut through the noise' to **identify what the 'real' priorities** are and harnesses key talent and capacity to deliver this.

- **Invigorates and refreshes people** through demanding and continuous transformation maintains momentum and passion over the long term.
- **Visible presence and influence in the places that matter most**, to secure outcomes.
- **Creates collaboration and commitment, through a diplomatic and engaging style balancing consequence appropriately.**
- **Believes in the art of possible**, not the actions of the past.
-  Secures **the trust and confidence** of others by translating ambiguity and uncertainty into **deliverable plans and priorities**, actively challenging others to be their best all of the time, **accepting failures and success as learning.**



If a disabled person meets the criteria indicated by the Disability Confident scheme symbol and provides evidence of this on their application form, they will be guaranteed an interview.

We are proud to display the **Disability Confident Symbol**, which is a recognition given by Jobcentre plus to employers who agree to meet specific requirements regarding the recruitment, employment, retention and career development of disabled people.

If you need a copy of this information in large print, Braille, another language, on cassette or disc, please ask us by contacting the **Recruitment Team on 01905 947446.**