

Leeds City Council

Role Specification

Job title: Director of Children and Families

Date: May 2023

Job Purpose The postholder will provide strategic leadership, providing advice and expertise to decision makers across the Council. The role is accountable to the Chief Executive for the delivery of agreed outcomes, targets and objectives. Working with key partners at national, regional and local level they will champion initiatives within the organisation and in collaboration with colleagues and partners support the delivery of real change across the city. With an emphasis on strong leadership, this role operates within the context of the Vision for Leeds, and the city's broader strategic objectives.

The role will hold the statutory responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services (DCS) as defined under the Children Act 2004.

Key Requirements

Lead and develop the Children and Families Directorate in a way that seeks to deliver on our ambition for all children in Leeds to be happy, healthy, safe, successful and free from the effects of poverty. Ensuring delivery of Best Value services and meeting the objectives of the Council's Plan and complying with Government Standards.

Relevant degree qualification or substantial experience in working in this field together with substantial senior leadership and management experience.

Lead the development, promotion and delivery of effective partnership arrangements that engage with all of the key partners and agencies in delivering our ambitions for children and young people.

Instigate a city-wide focus on prevention and early intervention across children's services, through building and maintaining progressive delivery partnerships.

Maximise outcomes delivered for all children and young people through developing integrated commissioning arrangements that recognise the demography and diversity of the city and respond to changing need.

Provide the necessary strategic leadership for the development, maintenance and implementation of an integrated Children's and Young People's Plan (CYPP) that is ambitious and provides clear and measurable milestones to achieve improved outcomes for children and young people.

Build a strong relationship with the Lead Executive Member for Adult and Children's Social Care & Health Partnerships that enables them to fulfil their political leadership role.

Build relations regarding the schools and learning agenda with the Lead Executive Member for Economy, Culture & Education.

Support the Council's Executive and Scrutiny by acting as principal advisor on all aspects of strategy and service provision for children and young people.

Provide clear leadership to the children's services workforce that enables their development and provides a framework within which first class performance is the norm and innovation is a fundamental part of the values-driven culture.

Actively support and advocate the voice of children, young people and families at the heart of decision making.

Contribute to the corporate leadership and management of the Local Authority as a whole, leading, planning and delivering the Council's corporate strategic priorities.

Ensure the Council's overall vision and strategy has an appropriate focus on improving outcomes for children and young people and that senior officers understand their corporate role in delivering improved outcomes for the children and young people of Leeds

Demonstrate credibility in a senior leadership position working collaboratively to lead and embed a performance management culture which delivers high quality outcomes.

A proven record of accomplishment of leading colleagues to achieve significant sustainable service improvements and outstanding results in a diverse environment.

Evidence of success in leading on major transformational change, developing a high performance culture which puts customers first, delivers high quality outcomes and values colleagues.

Evidence of being able to exercise good judgement in decision making.

Evidence of leading, shaping and influencing cutting edge thinking and innovative practice.

Evidence of forging and driving successful partnerships arrangements with a wide range of internal and external bodies to successfully deliver cross-sector projects and quality outcomes.

Evidence of success in building and enhancing the reputation of an organisation, locally and nationally with external bodies, the community and the media.

Demonstrate experience and commitment to the engagement of children, young people and families in decision making processes.

Extensive experience of operating successfully at a strategic and corporate management level, with a proven record of accomplishment in the development of corporate objectives, policies and strategies.

Experience of working successfully within a political context and governance framework.

Experience of productive collaborative, working at a senior level and having confidence and perspective to facilitate open and honest relationships with elected Members.

Experience of successful strategic and operational resource management, including the evaluation of competing priorities and the application of rigorous monitoring and control arrangements.

Experience of managing resources to achieve improvements and excellence within financial and budgetary constraints, including the management of pooled budgets.

Experience of developing and managing a transparent framework for compliance with national, regional and local requirements.

Meet agreed objectives ensuring compliance with legislation and, where appropriate, national standards, in pursuit of excellence in service delivery.

Work collaboratively across the council to contribute to the leadership and management of the city.

Promote and deliver positive solutions to achieve diversity and equality of opportunity in all aspects of service delivery, community engagement activity and human resource areas.

Undertake effective consultation and engagement activities and communications with staff, service users, councillors, trade unions, partners and other stakeholders in accordance with Council policy.

Support open, responsive and accountable government, ensuring governance compliance with financial and procurement procedures.

Manage all aspects of risk and be accountable for the safety of staff, service users and contractors in accordance with all statutory obligations and relevant health and safety policies.

Monitor and review the achievement of targets in the Directorate and take action to ensure targets are met and improvements achieved.

Secure the achievement of the Directorate's Equalities plans and targets

Actively drive and deliver continuous improvement initiatives taking the strategic lead in developing the Directorate in the context of city, regional and national priorities.

Accountable for and provide appropriate strategic advice relating to the work of the Directorate to Members and council officers and other stakeholders so as to manage risk and support them in their respective roles.

Responsible for maintaining effective communications and engagement with staff, service users, councillors, trade unions, partners and other stakeholders and which supports open, inclusive, responsive and accountable government.

Lead and contribute to cross Council projects and collaborative working with partners.

Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the current local, regional and national issues and the legislative and political context relating to children, young people and families.

Excellent communication skills with the ability to influence, negotiate and establish credibility across sectors to enhance reputation and form positive relationships.

Actively support Corporate Leadership Team in achieving continuous improvement across the Council and develop and implement initiatives to support continuous improvement in the Directorate.

Demonstrate knowledge of legislation, regulations, policies, inspections and performance information applicable to the relevant strategic functions e.g. child protection, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection. Promoting compliance with Leeds City Council policies and procedures.

In line with the Budget Management Accountability Framework Ensure that effective budget management and control takes place across the directorate, the planned level and quality of service provided for within the revenue and capital budgets are delivered and that budget pressures are resolved.

Detailed knowledge and understanding of economic strategy and policy, understanding of local government political systems and experience of working on politically sensitive issues including significant experience of developing productive working relationships with Council Members, trade unions and members of the Corporate Leadership Team which commands respect trust and confidence.

Work with elected members, service users and community representatives in ways which support open, responsive and accountable government providing appropriate advice relating to the work of the Directorate to Members and council officers so as to manage risk and support them in their respective roles.

Working Context - Post holders will work flexibly both at home and at various locations across the City and region. All colleagues should work in line with our hybrid working principles and spend regular time in the workplace to support service delivery, meeting the needs of the team and the requirements of their individual role. The hours are worked mainly Monday to Friday. However, the post holder will be expected to work outside normal working hours, including attendance at evening/weekend meetings or events if required to meet the needs of the service.

Role profile

With an emphasis on strong leadership this role operates within the context of the Best Council Plan and the City's broader strategic objectives. People in roles at this level support the Chief Executive in setting the purpose and strategic direction of the directorate and for the delivery of statutory obligations, functions and services, as appropriate.

The post holder is responsible and accountable for the full leadership and management of the Directorate, and for creating a culture of excellence in service delivery and continuous improvement that focusses on maximising resources and delivers agreed outcomes and objectives in accordance with the values, vision and service priorities. You will negotiate and resolve issues that impact on the council by working with the public, Members, partners and other key stakeholders. As part of the directorate leadership team, you will live and model values and behaviours to help the council to achieve the ambition to become the best city council.

For roles at this level, you must be able to show

Knowledge – Professionally accredited or with the equivalent extensive in depth and relevant expertise and significant knowledge gained through substantial managerial/practical experience. You use your knowledge and significant experience to provide credible and trusted professional advice to the Leadership team, members, customers and partner organisations.

Extensive in depth knowledge of local, regional and national issues and a thorough understanding of the economic, business, cultural and political environment within the city and region that influence and impact upon council strategy, statutory provision, policy and practice. Your knowledge of existing and emerging legislation means that you anticipate issues and financial challenges and create an environment of constructive challenge.

Leadership & strategic planning – lead the strategic and corporate planning of the service(s), setting and delivering change and transformational goals, ensuring there are agreed strategies and policies in place for the delivery and performance monitoring of service objectives, targets and outcomes. You demonstrate highly visible and supportive leadership and create open, honest and trusted relationships that empower, enable, motivate and promote a high performing workforce. Directorate plans are developed, communicated and cascaded and there is evidence of excellent performance where targets and objectives are met.

Provide leadership and direction; cultivating strong relationships and effective joint working within the Council, politicians, partners and stakeholders across the city, region and nationally to support the delivery of transformational change that results in high quality/high value effective services. You give strategic direction to changing programmes and priorities where the Chief Officers work together to challenge existing ways of working to deliver better outcomes for citizens, customers and communities

Collaboration & innovation – Understanding, sensitivity and experience of working successfully within a political context and governance framework having confidence and perspective to facilitate open and honest relationships with elected members. Your extensive experience of productive collaborative working at senior leadership level, ensures that organisational developments remain focused on delivering improved outcomes for customers and citizens within the city and region

Create opportunities for partnership working both within and outside the council and lead a culture of innovation and enterprise across the directorate. Working with multi agency teams to build services and deliver outcomes that are sustainable, flexible and adaptable and that ensure all legal, professional and statutory functions are met. You demonstrate clear passion in promoting Leeds as a major centre, on the national and international stage, and develop trust with an engaging, collaborative and inclusive way of working

Problem solving & decision making – identify opportunities, initiate and develop strategic plans and projects and deliver solution focused outcomes across a diverse range of highly complex related and unrelated issues. You anticipate emerging issues and changing context and use high levels of creativity both in problem solving, idea generation and in seeking out and disseminating successful practice. Strategies and policies that effectively deal with diverse, highly complex and highly sensitive situations are developed.

Influence a high performance culture across the directorate and be accountable for the achievement of performance, outcomes, targets and objectives that provide continuous improvement and challenge within approved budgets for the services. Using a coaching style you create a culture of high performance where strategic outcomes and plans are translated into clear objectives. You provide strategic advice, critical challenge and moderation in relation to all aspects of the work of the directorate.

Lead consultation, engagement and communication of wide ranging and complex issues and influence, negotiate and establish credibility for the directorate in order to deliver the corporate strategic direction of the council and city priorities. There is evidence of your success in delivering directorate improvements and that you manage and transform performance to achieve outcomes and objectives within boundaries agreed with the most senior managers and/or elected members

Deliver – Plan and direct/sponsor highly significant strategic programmes, projects and initiatives and commission services for and on behalf of the council and across the region; working in partnership with customers, citizens and communities to deliver better outcomes and , make a difference to local people Through major change/complex multi-disciplinary programmes you provide directional control ensuring the resources to deliver are secured and that projects and programmes have clear and assigned accountabilities to meet objectives.

Ensure that there is capacity to respond positively to change, traditional thinking is challenged and innovative solutions are pursued within the directorate responsibility. Provide leadership and direction that ensures the delivery of timely and appropriate services to customers. You demonstrate high levels of creativity in highly complex problem solving, idea generation and seeking out and disseminating successful practice, in order to effectively deal with diverse, very complex and highly sensitive situations.

Resource management – Support a culture of excellence in delivery of strategic plans and, continuous improvement and a focus on transformational goals and outcomes which maximise the use of resources and actively promotes the council's values, supports adaptable ways of working and creates strong flexible

teams. There is an environment of constructive challenge where the Chief Officers work together to challenge existing ways of working to deliver better or equivalent outcomes for reduced costs

Responsibility for the direction and control of a significant budget, the financial integrity of the service and accountable for directing and implementing comprehensive risk management programmes and resources across the Directorate. Strategic plans are delivered within budget; value for money is maximised, and operational, regulatory, statutory and financial risk is managed and monitored in compliance with council requirements and with Local Government and national working practices.

The role profile and specification are an outline only and may vary from time to time without changing the character of the job or level of responsibility

Council Values and Behaviours

Leeds City Council values are at the heart of everything we do. They inform the way we design and deliver our services and the way we all work and behave. Our shared values help everyone be their best:

Being open, honest and trusted I can be my best. bring out the best in everyone, and provide opportunity for all, have quality appraisal conversations, keep everyone informed and up to date, give people a voice, and listen and act on what they say, look out for my own wellbeing and that of others

Treating people fairly I feel valued for who I am, respect all, give everyone a fair chance, and root out inequality and discrimination, encourage everyone to be themselves at work, be kind and compassionate, support others well through change, appreciate others, celebrate success and say thank you for a job well done

Spending money wisely I make every pound go further, make the most of what we have, stick within budget, manage money and resources well, deliver more efficient ways of working, work with partners to get best value

Working as a team for Leeds I'm part of a 'can do' team, set high standards and get the best from the team, get the basics right, do things well, on time and consistently, encourage learning, innovation and improvement, make work fun and productive, empower people and give real accountability, actively monitor and manage workloads

Working with all communities I make a difference, do things with people, not to them, deliver on outcomes, provide great customer service, build strong working relationships with councillors, make the most of partnership working, bring people together in the city.