

Post Title: Head of Service (HoS)

Directorate: Children's Social Care

Grade: Hay 4

Reporting to: Assistant Director

Main Job Purpose:

- A key role in the Children's Services Senior Leadership Team, responsible for the leadership, oversight and management of the statutory and non-statutory services to children, young people and their families within a designated Service Area
- To contribute and influence the creation of strategic policies across Children's Social Care ensuring compliance of these and other policy/protocol etc within the designated service area
- To be pivotal in leading, influencing, shaping and challenging within the designated Service Area of Children's Social Care always ensuring positive outcomes for children, young people and families and readiness for external assurance and inspection.
- To support the Executive Director and Assistant Director for Children's Social Care to create and embed a culture across Children's Social Care of ownership and accountability that drives improvements to services and better outcomes to children, young people and families.
- To provide strategic leadership to a designated Service area: -
 - to ensure the continuous improvement of service delivery, professional practice and that all necessary governance and quality assurance frameworks are developed and embedded.
 - at a range of boards and forums, including but not limited to, Children and Young Peoples Partnership Board, Corporate Parenting Board etc; providing and presenting reports as needed.
 - to effectively work with senior management and operational staff to ensure practice is consistently audited across the service and that performance improvement and quality assurance develop together, adding value to each other and using data from a range of sources (including Power BI) to drive forward practice improvement where needed.

- To ensure appropriate assurance and governance arrangements are in place, providing assurance to both the Assistant Director and Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education as required.

Performance and line management responsibilities:

- To lead the designated Service Area ensuring that all children and young people supported by the service are positively supported so that they achieve good outcomes because of our intervention(s).
- To lead and manage within the designated Service Area, the development of all aspects of practice, ensuring that children, young people and their families are safeguarded and protected with services provided in the right way and at the right time, commensurate with their need.
- To ensure, where required, a whole system approach to governance, quality improvement and transformation. To own, devise and embed the Services' approach to transformation, working with relevant system partners and Council teams to improve change adoption, develop collaborative working partnerships, and deliver across organisational and local authority boundaries
- To line manage at least four Service Managers, ensuring that they effectively lead and manage their service, allocate work in a timely manner and that practice concerns are acted upon immediately and appropriate action taken when required.
- To lead, motivate and manage staff across the service; ensuring that supervision and appraisal takes place to at least a good standard, and that induction and training supports and enables all staff to undertake their role to, at minimum, a good standard.
- To lead on external assurance and inspection readiness for the designated Service Area
- To ensure that Key Performance Indicator's (KPI's) for the designated Service Area are monitored, setting new ones when necessary.
- Lead and manage the designated Service Area in a way that recognises demand changes, trends and themes; liaising with the AD and steering practice changes as needed.
- Leading on specific targeted areas of work for the designated Service Area e.g. establishing new front door with a range of partners ensuring that the service is responsive, offers a partnership approach and keep children safe, representing the service at a strategic level with a range of partners e.g. at the Key Safeguarding Leads Forum etc.

- To lead on Professional Practice, implementation and discharge of Statutory Duties – including management of Service Managers and others as required.
- To work closely with colleagues in the safeguarding unit to ensure that audit and regulatory requirements are met, and that practice meets the required standards, with action taken where this is not the case.

Other Responsibilities

- To provide cover for other Head of Service colleagues as required.
- To deputise for the Assistant Director as required.

Budget responsibilities

- To manage budget as delegated, taking a creative approach to provide efficiency by making expenditure stretch further, demonstrating value for money along with positive outcomes for children and young people and their families, whilst ensuring compliance with financial rules and regulations that are applicable, including but not limited to Council Financial Procedure Rules and Schemes of Delegation, along with other policies.
- To have and maintain management oversight of any budgets that are delegated to Service Managers ensuring efficient and effective management with positive outputs in line with financial rules and regulations and aims of the service.

Principal responsibilities

- Within the designated Service Area Provide effective strategic leadership, vision, commitment and management direction to deliver high quality services which effectively safeguard young people, ensuring the successful discharge of statutory duties.
- To support care and permanence arrangements for all children and young people, ensuring services are provided seamlessly and can adapt and respond to changing demands.
- To support colleagues and partners in ensuring that providers of care and living arrangements for children and young people offer value for money and meet all required standards.

- To lead the strategic development of the vision, values, culture and strategic objectives of Sefton and its partners and ensuring these are reflected in all work undertaken across the service.
- To promote the needs of vulnerable children and young people within Sefton and partner agencies and ensure that all aspects of work are focused on improving outcomes for children and young people and protecting them from abuse and harm.
- To undertake key statutory devolved decision-making responsibilities on behalf of the Assistant Director including but not limited to decisions regarding legal proceedings and placements.
- To undertake key management responsibilities in relation to staff investigations, grievances and complaints as required.
- To work with other HoS to ensure that all services work together as part of an effective whole and that outcomes for and the wellbeing of young people is at the heart of all aspects of decision making and service development.
- To lead key partnership arrangements as required, including complex case reviews, management reviews etc.
- To role model the promotion of diversity, equality and inclusion to all staff, young people and families within the designated service area and across the whole service
- To provide strategic leadership for identified areas of social care reform as and when required
- To design and implement clear reporting and performance management frameworks, focused on areas of greatest need and where performance is not to the required standard, and provide clarity and reports as needed on progress made against objectives.
- To oversee the management of all strategic risks in relation to safeguarding, professional practice and care governance ensuing appropriate assessments and mitigation(s) are in place.
- To ensure effective line of sight and delivery of operational safeguarding services
- To support the Assistant Director by having ownership for horizon scanning for regulatory and statutory changes in relation to social care and workforce development across the Service but specifically to the designated Service Area to ensure a swift response to policies, processes and practises to address these changes and ensure that the authority is always compliant with such changes.

- To represent the Council and Children's Service's at senior Regional and National meetings as and when required.
- To ensure appropriate assurance and governance arrangements are in place aligned to the requirements of the Children and Young Peoples Partnership Board. Providing assurance to both the Assistant Director and Executive Director of Children's Social Care.
- To ensure that the voice of lived experience informs improvement priorities across all areas of service delivery.
- To ensure that there are robust arrangements for rapid reviews and Local Safeguarding Practice reviews and that they meet statutory requirements set out in national guidance and that they are embedded across all services.
- To support the Assistant Director in providing strategic leadership that influences the continuous development of the organisation's data performance function and ensure widespread effective analysis and use of data in the designated Service Area's delivery and benchmarking performance against local, regional and national targets.
- To support all improvements with a strategic oversight in your designated Service Area for improvements, action, service and delivery plans with a detailed understanding of interdependencies, risks and correlations to ensure that delivery of plans is not impeded and that performance against these plans can be measured
- To work collaboratively with Corporate Human Resources/Learning and Development in the development of a Children's Services Workforce Strategy, (including recruitment, retention, development and succession planning)
- To work with system partners and all key stakeholders to enact change and transformation to improve outcomes for local people, utilising resources accordingly
- To line manage several senior staff, and take responsibility as a senior leader for wider responsibilities across the whole of Children's Services as required
- To deliver effective and accurate self and peer assessment of service quality within the designated Service Area to inform strategic leadership across Children's Social Care, and the safeguarding partners
- Develop, foster and widen effective relationships and partnerships with external stakeholders, partners and agencies, representing and promoting joint interests to focus resources on improving services and outcomes for children and young people and their families/carers.
- To influence and, as directed lead on the formulation of strategies and policies which drive improvement and lead to better outcomes for children and young people and

their families.

- To ensure that areas of operation within the designated Service area are fit for purpose, appropriately structured (with safe staffing levels) and integrated with other teams and services to maximise impact and outcomes to meet local and national policies and priorities

To ensure the provision of effective policies and procedures are in place across the service to ensure strong governance and appropriate management

- Inform, shape and support the implementation of supervision policy embedding across the designated Service area, ensuring compliance and measuring impact and to deliver high quality and impactful supervision to direct reports and others as require.
- To undertake additional duties as required commensurate with the level of the role

Overarching essential criteria

Role Based Criteria

- Work closely with elected councillors especially Cabinet Members as required and support them in undertaking their community leadership, policy and decision-making roles.
- Direct personal accountability for delivery of a range of services across the designated Service Area and outcomes to agreed performance standards and within budget.
- Constantly seek and propose efficiency and value for money and support the development of new delivery and support models.
- Empower and devolve decision making to the most appropriate level, as close as possible to the frontline, to maximise performance.
- Actively manage demand and risk whilst encouraging creative thinking and innovative practice.
- Develop staff with flexible skills and competencies that are valued and supported.
- Set clear expectations and provide development and support to enable the Council to deliver the required outcomes.

- Promote cross-organisational team working within the Council and with partner organisations to deliver more cost-effective and valued services and enable coherent and integrated problem solving.
- Fulfil the role of Project Sponsor for specified key corporate projects.
- Empower all staff to deliver effectively and efficiently.

Skill and Attitude and Value Based Criteria

- Sefton's Vision and promise sets out how we as a Council want to work with each other, and with our communities and our partners, to make Sefton a great place to be.
- Personal responsibility to support the delivery of the vision and consistently demonstrate the behaviours and values expressed in the Promise and Leadership requirements.
- Have the necessary political knowledge, skills and abilities needed to operate effectively in a political environment.
- Develop, lead, participate and collaborate in effective partnership across organisations and sectors.
- Focus on outcomes, break down service/professional barriers and facilitate One Council delivery.
- Demonstrate and encourage exceptional personal resilience and strength.
- Create and sustain enabling and open relationships.
- Create the most effective environment for innovation, learning and performance.
- Lead change and empower the whole Council to effectively manage complexity, ambiguity and risk.

Leadership

Must demonstrate the following leadership competencies across the designated area:

- Provide clear vision and direction.
- Lead and manage change.
- Plan strategically considering operational influences.
- Lead and actively manage people and performance.
- Work corporately as well as collaboratively with partners.

- Communicate effectively.
- Focus on and encourage a focus on excellence.
- Continually develop self and others.

Behaviours

Must demonstrate the following behaviours across the designated Service area:

- Provide support with a view to improving quality.
- Provide appropriate and constructive challenge.
- Create a culture that looks for understanding and solutions.
- Visibly and positively respect and value staff.
- Communicate a consistent and clear message throughout the Council and with partners.
- Respect, listen to and value others' views.
- Maintain a customer focus with a relentless pursuit of excellent outcomes.
- Have collective integrity and responsibility.
- Endeavour to improve outcomes for the communities of Sefton.
- Provide feedback professionally and constructively

Strategic service

- Provide strategic direction and decision making. Understand the impact of change driven by national agendas and adapt services to meet these changes as required.

Managing change

- Develop and promote initiatives to improve the quality and efficiency of children's social care
- Contribute to the delivery of the Sefton 2030 vision Framework for change.

Partnerships

- Manage relationships with partners to deliver the highest standards of service.
- Actively promote Regional and National networks to foster relationships.

General:

The post you are applying for is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore you are required to declare any convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings that are not 'protected' (i.e. filtered out) as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act

1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013. For further information, please refer to [DBS filtering guidance at www.gov.uk/dbs](https://www.gov.uk/dbs).

This job description is a representative document. Other reasonably similar duties may be allocated from time to time commensurate with the general character of the post and its grading. The person appointed will be expected to work flexibly and the exact nature of the duties described above is subject to periodic review and is liable to change.

In addition to his/her principal duties the post holder will be expected to contribute more widely to the overall development of the Service and the Council and will be required to contribute to the Out of Hours Service.

All staff have a duty to take care of their own health & safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions at work. Staff must co-operate with employers and co-workers to help everyone meet their legal requirements.

The Authority has an approved equality policy in employment and copies are freely available to all employees. The post holder will be expected to comply, observe and promote the equality policies of the Council.

Since confidential information is involved with the duties of this post, the postholder will be required to always exercise discretion and to observe relevant codes of practice and legislation in relation to data protection and personal information.

Note: Where the post-holder is disabled, every effort will be made to support all necessary aids, adaptations or equipment to allow them to carry out all the duties of the job.

Prepared by:	Risthardh Hare
Designation	Executive Director for Children's Social Care & Education
Date	June 2025

Person Specification

Head of Service (HoS) – Children’s Social Care

Assessment indicator Key

A – Application Form I - Interview
C - Certificate P – Presentation/Assessment

Essential

Qualifications

- ✓ Professional Qualification in Social Work with current registration (AF/C/I)
- ✓ Education to master’s degree level or equivalent (or be prepared to undertake this) (AF/C/I)

Experience

- ✓ A proven track record of extensive successful strategic leadership within a complex and constantly changing environment across health or social care (AF/I)
- ✓ Proven track record of delivering statutory duties and working with regulators, assurance frameworks and professional bodies (AF/I)
- ✓ A proven track record of leading, motivating and managing multi-disciplinary teams, including the establishment of a positive performance culture that has delivered effective performance and continuous service improvement (AF/I)
- ✓ A proven record of success in leading and championing organisational and cultural change, creating organisational development programmes and effective working with staff, trade unions, elected members and other stakeholders (AF/I)
- ✓ Evidence of successful resource and financial management, including the resolution of conflicting priorities, formulating budgets and applying rigorous monitoring and control procedures (AF/I)
- ✓ Extensive experience developing and implementing quality assurance frameworks, risk management and the oversight of professional practice (AF/I)
- ✓ A proven track record of success in communication, engaging and developing relationships with a range of internal and external stakeholders, building whole system partnerships and productive relationships and positively promoting organisational reputation and interests (AF/I)
- ✓ Extensive experience of working within operational services to develop shared approaches to governance, risk and incident oversight (AF/I)
- ✓ Extensive experience of managing and successfully delivering large scale transformation projects and work programmes across a wide range of fields (AF/I)

Ability, Skills & Knowledge

- ✓ Validated and detailed knowledge of safeguarding, professional practice and care governance within Children’s Social Care (AF/I)
- ✓ A thorough knowledge of the legislative requirements, the key national and regional policy drivers and the broader influences relating to the role (AF/I)
- ✓ Ability to manage a wider scale portfolio of services with significant resources (AF/I)

- ✓ Ability to innovate and resolve whole system conflicts, issues and challenges: ability to work with key stakeholders to realise opportunities to strengthen quality, governance and practice (AF/I)
- ✓ Excellent persuading, negotiation and influencing skills to bring about change and achieved desired results and outcomes (AF/I)
- ✓ Ability to analyse complex problems, data and intelligence to inform the development of business models, evaluating risk against a changing background of social, political and financial factors (AF/I)
- ✓ Ability to engage and understand the needs and aspirations of the children, young people and families the service supports. (AF/I)
- ✓ Effective presentation, communication and interpersonal skills (AF/I)
- ✓ Experience of managing high risk situations and providing appropriate support to front line practitioners and advice to senior colleagues (AF/I)
- ✓ A clear understanding and knowledge of the working of local government, including its legal, financial, social and political context and its interface and integration agenda with health (AF/I)

Personal Style and Behaviour

- ✓ An innovative and resilient leader who can work effectively and creatively across traditional organisational boundaries (AF/I)
- ✓ Delivering strategic programmes of work of a high standard, set ambitious and attainable goals and to act upon lessons learnt (AF/I)
- ✓ An inclusive leader who can work in partnership to co-design excellent value for money outcomes (AF/I)
- ✓ Demonstrate a resilient work style and passionate approach to ensure achievement of strategic objectives and outcomes within constantly changing and complex situations (AF/I)
- ✓ Ability to be able to commute (or drive) to various locations throughout the Borough (AF/I)

Desirable

Qualifications

- ❖ Leadership or Management Qualification- evidence of continued professional, management and personal development (AF/C/I)