Commissioning Officer Applicant Recruitment Pack

Sefton is a really great place to live and work



Sefton Council

Welcome

Hi,

Thank you for your interest in joining Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council as a **Commissioning Officer within Children's Social Care**. This is an exciting opportunity to become part of a dedicated team committed to improving outcomes for Sefton residents through high-quality, person-centred services.

This role offers the opportunity to contribute to meaningful service transformation, from identifying needs and developing commissioning strategies to managing procurement processes, monitoring performance and driving continuous improvement. We are looking for someone who is passionate about making a difference, thrives on collaboration and is committed to delivering high-quality services that support independence, wellbeing and choice.

We hope this recruitment pack provides you with an insight into the role and the impact it can have on the lives of people across Sefton. We look forward to receiving applications from individuals who share our ambition to deliver excellent Children's Social Care services and help shape the future of commissioning within the borough.

Thank you for considering a career with us. We wish you every success with your application and look forward to learning more about what you could bring to our team.

The Job Description and Person Specification for this role are included within the job pack. If you have any questions about the vacancy, please refer to the job pack for the appropriate contact details.

Best of luck!

Adele Tobin – Interim Head of Commissioning

Sefton Council

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About the Borough of Sefton

Sefton is a confident and well-connected Borough, stretching from Bootle in the south to the coastal resort of Southport in the north. Home to more than 275,000 residents, Sefton encompasses a range of vibrant towns and communities, including Bootle, Litherland, Seaforth, Crosby, Formby, Maghull and Southport.

It is a fantastic place to live and work. As the northern-most Borough within the Liverpool City Region, Sefton offers a unique blend of beautiful coastline, countryside, attractive villages, thriving industrial areas and the busy Port of Liverpool.

With 22 miles of stunning coastline, Sefton is a leading coastal destination with a growing visitor economy. It is home to the iconic Antony Gormley *Another Place* installation, expansive beaches and protected sand dunes that support several rare species.

While each town and village has its own distinctive character, it is the people of Sefton who make the Borough truly special, creating diverse, welcoming and energetic communities in which to live, work, invest and visit.

Alongside its miles of golden sands, Sefton offers those who work here access to a world-renowned racecourse, prestigious golf courses, and National Trust nature reserves, ideal places to unwind, explore and enjoy leisure time.

The Borough benefits from excellent transport links, providing easy access to major North West cities including Liverpool and Manchester, and placing the Lake District and North Wales within reach for weekend breaks.

Whether you prefer vibrant town centres, friendly commuter towns, picturesque villages or stunning rural and coastal locations, Sefton offers a place to suit everyone. With house prices and rents typically lower than in neighbouring Liverpool and Manchester, you can enjoy coastal living while still being close to the buzz of city life.

Our Vision and Values

At Sefton Council, our vision is to deliver high-quality services that make a real difference to the lives of our residents, visitors, and communities. Everything we do is guided by a strong set of values that shape how we work and interact:



- **We put people at the heart of what we do** – ensuring our services are responsive, inclusive, and focused on improving lives.
- **We listen, value, and respect each other's views** – fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual respect.
- **We develop a culture of challenge, ownership, innovation, and improvement** – encouraging creativity and continuous development.
- **We are ambassadors for Sefton** – promoting the Borough positively and proudly representing our communities.
- **We are responsive and efficient** – delivering services that are timely, effective, and customer-focused.
- **We are clear about what we can and cannot do** – being transparent and honest in all our communications and actions.

These values underpin our commitment to excellence, inclusivity, and innovation, ensuring that Sefton remains a great place to live, work, and visit.

Our Successes and Key Projects

Sefton Council is proud of its recent achievements and ongoing commitment to delivering high-quality services. Our Children's Social Care Services achieved a Good rating from Ofsted, and our Adult Social Care services were recently graded Good by the

Care Quality Commission (CQC). These successes reflect the dedication and professionalism of our teams and our focus on continuous improvement.

Alongside these achievements, Sefton Council is actively delivering a range of major capital projects that will transform the Borough and stimulate economic growth. These include the Marine Lake Events Centre in Southport, the Strand Shopping Centre redevelopment in Bootle, and exciting developments such as the Cove Resort and Enterprise Arcade in Southport. We are also proud to support cultural and community initiatives like Salt and Tar, Bootle's vibrant events space, which hosts live music, comedy, and family-friendly activities, bringing people together and boosting the local economy.

These projects form part of our strategic investment programme to attract private sector-led development and create vibrant spaces for residents and visitors. We work closely with local communities to ensure these projects reflect their needs and foster a sense of ownership and pride.

For more information on these projects and to stay updated on progress, visit the Sefton Council website at www.sefton.gov.uk

An Inclusive Workplace

We are committed to fostering an inclusive Council that reflects the diverse communities we serve. Our workforce brings a wide range of experiences and perspectives, and we value an environment where everyone feels respected, supported, and able to reach their full potential.

Sefton is proud to be the first local authority in the Liverpool City Region to achieve **Navajo** accreditation, recognising our commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion. We are also a Disability Confident employer and continue to build a workforce that represents our communities.

We support several staff networks, including groups for Black and Ethnically Diverse colleagues, LGBTQ+ staff, women, disabled employees, and a Christian Workplace Group.

As an Equal Opportunities Employer, we base recruitment solely on skills, experience, and suitability for the role. All applicants are treated fairly, and we have also recognised 'care experienced' as a protected characteristic within Sefton.



For more information, please refer to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Liverpool City Region Fair Employment Charter

Sefton Council is proud to support the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Fair Employment Charter, an initiative that promotes fair, healthy, inclusive, and just workplaces across the region. The Charter celebrates good employers and encourages the highest standards in employment practice, including fair pay, secure work, opportunities for progression, strong employee voice, and a commitment to staff wellbeing. By aligning with the Charter, we demonstrate our dedication to providing a fair day's pay for a fair day's work and to fostering an equitable and supportive working environment for all colleagues.

What We Can Offer You

- A supportive and collaborative working environment.
- An agile approach to working.
- Opportunities for professional development and career progression.
- A role where your work makes a real difference across the organisation.
- Flexible working arrangements supporting work-life balance.
- A strong commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

You will benefit from a comprehensive local government employment package which includes the following:

- Competitive salary in line with NJC Local Government Pay Scales.
- Membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), providing a secure, defined benefit pension with employer contributions.

Annual Leave and Work-Life Balance

- Generous annual leave entitlement, 28 days annual leave rising to 33 days with 5 years continuous service.
- Additional public (bank) holidays.
- Flexible working options to support a healthy work-life balance, subject to service needs.
- Option to purchase additional annual leave.
- Sefton operate a 'Shut Down' period over the Christmas period which staff contribute four fifths of a week's pay over a 12-month period.

Learning, Development and Career Progression

- A comprehensive induction programme.
- Access to a wide range of training, apprenticeships, learning, and development opportunities.
- Support for professional development and role related qualifications.
- Opportunities to develop your career within a large and diverse local authority.

Health, Wellbeing and Support

- Enhanced sick pay scheme.
- Employee wellbeing initiatives and access to occupational health support.
- Policies that promote physical and mental wellbeing in the workplace.

Family-Friendly and Inclusive Policies

Our family-friendly policies and flexible working arrangements help staff maintain a healthy work-life balance.

- Family friendly policies, including enhanced maternity, paternity, adoption, neonatal care and special leave to support with time off work to deal with issues when life events happen.

- A strong organisational commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

- Reasonable adjustments and support to enable disabled employees to thrive.

Foster Friendly Employer Commitment

Sefton Council is proud to be a *Foster Friendly* organisation as recognised by The Fostering Network. We actively support employees who are foster carers or who are applying to foster by offering flexible working arrangements, paid time off for fostering-related meetings and training, and a workplace culture that recognises the vital role foster carers play in our communities.

This commitment helps ensure carers can balance fostering responsibilities alongside career, and reflects our dedication to supporting children, families, and those who care for them.

Additional Benefits

- Access to salary sacrifice and employee benefit schemes (where applicable).
- Opportunities to contribute to meaningful work that supports local communities.
- A supportive, values led organisational culture.
- Free parking at office bases (dependent upon the work location).

About the Role

The Commissioning Officer plays a key role in shaping, developing and improving Adult Social Care services across Sefton. Working within the Commissioning Team, the postholder is responsible for supporting the strategic commissioning, procurement, contract management and market development of services that enable residents to live independent, healthy and fulfilling lives.

This is a varied and influential role that combines strategic thinking, project management and partnership working. The successful candidate will lead and support commissioning projects from initial needs analysis through to procurement, implementation, performance monitoring and service review. They will work closely with service users, carers, providers, health partners, community organisations and council colleagues to ensure services are high quality, value for money and focused on delivering positive outcomes.

The role requires strong analytical, communication and relationship management skills, with responsibility for developing service specifications, evaluating provider performance, managing quality and risk, and supporting innovation and continuous improvement across commissioned services. The Commissioning Officer will also contribute to market development activities, ensuring that local services remain responsive, sustainable and capable of meeting the changing needs of Sefton residents.

We are looking for a motivated and collaborative professional with experience in commissioning, contract management, procurement or service development within health, social care or a related sector. The successful candidate will be passionate about improving outcomes for people, confident in managing projects and stakeholder relationships, and committed to delivering high-quality, person-centred services that support the Council's strategic priorities.

Please see **Appendix A (page 10)** for a full copy of the Job Description and Person Specification.

Top Tips on How to Apply

Submitting a strong application gives you the best chance of progressing to the next stage of the recruitment process. The following guidance applies to all roles and will help you prepare a clear, compelling application:

1. Read the Job Description and Person Specification Thoroughly

- Make sure you understand the key duties, expectations, and essential criteria.
- Use the person specification as your guide when writing your application.

2. Provide Clear Evidence of Your Skills and Experience

- Show *how* you meet the criteria using specific, real examples.
- Consider using the **STAR method** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to structure your responses.

3. Tailor Your Application

- Avoid generic statements. Focus on experience that directly relates to the role you are applying for.
- Demonstrate how your strengths align with the organisation's values and priorities.

4. Highlight Your Achievements

- Include examples of work you are proud of or significant contributions you have made in previous roles.
- Emphasise impact – improvements, efficiencies, positive outcomes, or innovations.

5. Be Clear About Qualifications and Training

- List all relevant qualifications and professional training, including dates and awarding bodies.
- If you are working towards a qualification, include expected completion dates.

6. Showcase Transferable Skills

- Skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, digital literacy, and organisation are valuable across all roles.

- Provide examples that demonstrate these effectively.

7. Check Your Application Carefully

- Review your responses for clarity, spelling, and completeness.
- Ensure all sections of the application form have been filled in fully.

8. Submit Your Application Before the Deadline

- Note the closing date and allow plenty of time to prepare your application.
- Late submissions usually cannot be considered.

9. Prepare for Potential Next Steps

- If shortlisted, you may be invited to an interview, assessment task, or presentation.
- Be ready to discuss your experience, approach to work, and examples of how you meet the role's requirements.

Application and Selection Information

The closing date for this vacancy is **06 November 2026** (or earlier in the event of high volume of applications being received).

Provisional interview date is **20 November 2026**

We are an Equal Opportunities Employer; all candidates will receive equal treatment. Our decision to appoint will be based upon whether an individual's skills, experience, qualifications, and abilities make them the most suitable candidate for the role.

All disabled and care experienced applicants will be offered an interview where they meet all essential criteria on the person specification.

Please ensure that you meet all the essential criteria outlined in the person specification before submitting your application. Only applicants who demonstrate that they meet all essential criteria will be considered and invited to interview.

Appendix A – Job Description and Person Specification

Post:

Directorate: Children's Social Care

Location: Magdalen House, Bootle, L20 3NJ

Division: Commissioning & Transformation Team

Post: Commissioning Officer

Grade: I £43,149 to £47,665

Reporting to: Strategic Commissioning Manager

Purpose of the Role

- Develop and implement a strategic approach to commissioning Children's Social Care services.
- Support the development and commissioning of flexible, person-centred services.
- Manage the end-to-end commissioning and de-commissioning processes for specific services and service areas.
- Manage and develop the market to deliver priorities.
- To co-ordinate the monitoring and evaluation of providers, service quality and performance data.
- Support senior management within the Commissioning Team, including deputising in their absence, where appropriate.
- Act as an interface with key stakeholders in developing commissioning plans and activities including, service users, carers, community and voluntary sector, providers, Health and other local and central government departments.

MAIN DUTIES

1. To support the commissioning function so as to ensure that a strategic approach is taken, in line with Council priorities and with local and national policy objectives.

2. To understand the needs of Sefton residents and develop the local market to meet those needs in the most cost-effective way, promoting and providing choice to service users.

3. To develop specialist understanding of the commissioning environment within specific areas of need, activity and service types, including: outcomes required; national and local strategies and policies; the nature of the local and national supply market; and the potential for future developments and innovations.

4. To develop and implement evidence-based commissioning policies and strategies to achieve positive outcomes.

5. To promote effective arrangements for governance of commissioning, contracting and procurement activity and compliance with legal, ethical, social and regulatory responsibilities.

6. To support the development, maintenance and implementation of systems and practices for the effective management of risk, quality and quality assurance in relation to commissioning and contracting processes.

7. To encourage innovative approaches to commissioning and commissioned activity, initiating, implementing and supporting change and improvement in services, provision and systems.

8. To ensure that service users and carers are appropriately engaged in all commissioning activities, including the development of commissioning strategies and the planning, development and evaluation of services.

9. Advise Council staff and Providers in relation to the Council's commissioning and contracting processes, tendering procedures, government and European Commission directives, and contract documentation.

10. Support operational staff/service area leads to specify service requirements, including service objectives, inputs, outputs, outcomes and monitoring arrangements.

11. Oversee the evaluation of potential service providers to ensure that they are viable, reliable and able to deliver required services and share a commitment to the Councils aims and values.

12. Prepare and present written and verbal reports, as necessary, to Council Committees, Senior Managers, service area teams, partners and providers.

13. To encourage innovative approaches to commissioning and commissioned activity, initiating, implementing and supporting change and improvement in services, provision and systems.

14. To assist with the analysis of expenditure and financial risk, and to account for (e.g. monitoring, auditing, quality assuring, authorising etc.) expenditure relating to commissioned services and departmental budgets.

15. To ensure effective communication and information sharing within the commissioning teams, relevant service areas, Senior Management and with colleagues and partners within and outside the Council.

16. To ensure that service areas are advised of problems which exist in relation to service provision and service providers, offering guidance as to possible solutions and alternative courses of action.

17. Respond, in an appropriate manner, to concerns expressed about existing services and/or their providers.

18. Support service users and/or carers where appropriate in resolving provider issues regarding commissioning activities and assisting in the development of service specifications.

19. Participate in Safeguarding strategies and allocate, where necessary, any ongoing actions defined from strategies.

20. Support the maintenance of the Council's List(s) of Approved (Contracted) Providers.

21. Facilitate, attend, lead and chair meetings, including, project groups, service user forums and provider forums, as necessary and appropriate to the role.

22. Participate in staff development initiatives as a facilitator and participant.

23. Use own initiative in proactively developing the role.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

- The post attracts Casual Car user Allowance.
- Due to the nature of the work involved, this post is "exempt" from the provision of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by virtue of the ROA 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 1986.
- Occasional work outside normal hours may be required.
- A flexitime scheme is currently in operation.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

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.

All staff are responsible for the implementation of the Health & Safety Policy as far as it affects them, colleagues and others who may be affected by their work. The postholder is also expected to monitor the effectiveness of the health and safety arrangements and systems to ensure appropriate improvements are made where necessary.

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.

Note: Where the postholder 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.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Post: Commissioning Officer

Department: Children's Social Care

Personal Attributes Required	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	Method of Assessment
Qualifications		
1. Commissioning/Procurement or other relevant business management qualification	D	AF/C
Experience		
1. Experience of performance management, Contract management, evaluating/monitoring services and/or systems.	E	AF/I
2. Experience of commissioning, contracting and procurement of social care, health, public health or related services.	E	AF/I
3. Experience of developing contracts and service specifications.	E	AF/I
4. Experience of commissioning, contracting and procurement processes and market development.	E	AF/I
5. Experience of developing and operating quality assurance, risk management, audit and governance processes.	D	AF/I

6. Experience of involving providers and service users in commissioning processes and service monitoring to drive up standards and performance.	D	AF/I
7. Experience of working effectively and in co-operation and partnership with a range of communities, partner agencies, private sector providers, public agencies, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities.	D	AF/I
8. Evidence of working in a team setting and leading, managing and motivating individuals or groups.	E	AF/I
9. Experience of developing and implementing commissioning strategies and policies	D	AF/I
10. Evidence of leading and managing projects.	E	AF/I
11. Experience of using a range of ICT systems, including email, internet, office software (e.g. word processing and spreadsheets) and information, record keeping and data collection systems.	E	AF/I
Ability, Skills & Knowledge		
1. Good knowledge and understanding of commissioning, contracting and procurement principles, processes and practices.	E	AF/I
2. Knowledge of service standards relating to social care, health, public health or related services.	E	AF/I
3. Ability to set objectives and targets to achieve desired outcomes.	E	AF/I
4. Ability to work on own initiative, within an agreed framework, and to effectively prioritise, manage and organise work in the context of competing priorities.	E	AF/I

5. Well-developed time management skills and ability to work to deadlines.	E	AF/I
6. Ability to understand and develop strategies and policies and to translate them into tangible actions to deliver the desired outcomes.	E	AF/I
7. Ability to negotiate and influence people, manage complex relationships and work in a team setting	E	AF/I
8. Ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing with a variety of audiences.	E	AF/I
9. Ability to chair and facilitate meetings and events.	E	AF/I
10. Ability to analyse complex situations and documentation, problem solve and devise plans for action	E	AF/I
11. Good understanding and knowledge of social care, health, public health or related service areas.	E	AF/|
12. Ability to work in partnership, including negotiating, communicating and joint working internally and externally to achieve outcomes.	E	AF/I
13. Ability to prepare and present written reports.	E	AF/I
14. Ability to work in a flexible way and adapt to change.	E	AF/I
15. Knowledge and understanding of Safeguarding processes for Vulnerable people.	E	AF/I
Personal Style and Behaviour		
1. Commitment to ensure services are equally accessible and appropriate to the diverse needs of service users.	E	AF

2. Motivated, optimistic and enthusiastic with the ability to respond to constructive challenge and not be discouraged.	E	AF
3. A team worker who fosters partnerships, works collaboratively across boundaries and achieves results with and through others.	E	AF
4. High degree of probity and integrity.	E	AF
5. A commitment to continuous improvement and promoting positive challenge.	E	AF
6. Commitment to continually develop and update knowledge.	E	AF
Other 1. Driving Licence.	D	AF/C
SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS 1. The post is registered as exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 therefore; the successful candidate must be able to obtain satisfactory enhanced Criminal Record disclosure in order to be appointed to the post. In this respect a criminal record check will be undertaken prior to confirmation of appointment.	E	C

Assessment Methods Key:

AF – Application Form

C – Certificates

I – Interview

Prepared by: Joanne Christensen
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Sefton Council