

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title: Commissioning and Relationship Development Officer	Group: Wellbeing and Community Health		Office Use
Grade: Band 8	Workplace: County Hall Based		JE ref: HRMS ref:
Responsible to: Commissioning Manager	Date: 30 th October 2020	Manager Level: N/a	
Job Purpose: To support the Senior Manager – Commissioning in the development of commissioning arrangements across the Wellbeing and Community Health Group. This will include playing a key role in the data analysis, monitoring and planning for commissioned services. A pivotal part of this role is to develop relationships with providers within the children’s social care arena, with the purpose of working with them to achieve positive outcomes for looked after children in Northumberland. This will include understanding the market, in order to manage the market and build productive and positive relationships to achieve the outcomes that is required. To provide an effective commissioning approach to brokerage within and between Children’s Commissioning, Social Care and Market Providers. To gather and collate information on client needs and to use existing referral processes and contracts to seek and identify a suitable service package within required timescales and which is compliant with statutory requirements and promotes value for money. To inform the placing lead professional of any suitable service package offers for each referral, and to advise on the benefits and costs of each. To include in this information: how well the service matches needs; an assessment of the quality of the services being offered (including references from other organisations); and other documentation to meet contractual requirements. To negotiate directly with providers the costs of support for children and young people requiring residential care, and/or education within the range of contractual arrangements available. To ensure good monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance processes are in place to benefit service users, with a particular focus on value for money. To be responsible for the development and implementation of specific projects working with partners to ensure the effective monitoring of joint/integrated services and the delivery of key Council efficiency programmes.			
Resources:	Staff	No direct line management responsibility is attached to this post, however, provides advice and direction to others who are not under the postholder’s direct control to deliver against service priorities as required.	
	Finance	To advise and support in delivering value for money improvements.	

	Mitigate financial pressures of children's social care, by cost avoidance and negotiation of residential children's home placements. These placements are long term and therefore any cost avoidance makes a significant cost benefit.
Physical	To operate key corporate systems particularly finance systems to ensure that service needs are met. Careful use of allocated tools and equipment including a PC. Input and maintain key corporate sensitive and confidential financial data and information.
Clients	Children and young people whose need fall within statutory and/or universal frameworks, parents, schools and partner agencies involved with children and young people. Internal clients including officers at all levels including Service Area and Senior Managers. Ensure compliance with relevant legislation, council policies and procedures.

Duties and key result areas:

1. To support the process of developing commissioning solutions to meet identified need within the Wellbeing and Community Health Group. (It follows that need will relate to the physical, mental, social and economic wellbeing of people with an emphasis on children as a client group.) Activity will include collecting and analysing data; writing service specifications; involvement in service reshaping and/or tendering and other procurement processes and managing and monitoring contracts, SLA's etc. It will involve working with internal and external service providers on a standalone or collaborative basis. The range of services to be included will have an emphasis on children's services but will also fall under the broader remit of the Wellbeing and Community Health Group.
2. To support the business planning process, including assisting in the development and implementation of business cases either on a stand-alone or a joint commissioning basis. This will include the need to support in the identification of capacity constraints in existing and new services/processes and the development of strategies to address service gaps whilst paying due regard to both national and organisational policies.
3. To develop, build and preserve trusting relationships with providers (private, voluntary, independent) so the needs of the children and young people are met, along with being a cost-effective service for the Council. With the objective of maximising the best outcomes for the young people, whilst achieving value for money.
4. To manage searches for children and young people who are looked after by Local Authorities and who need a placement in residential social care. This involves screening referrals about the young person, liaising with social care and providers to secure safe placements and confirming contractual arrangements once the placement has been agreed. Present the findings from searches to the care team, ensuring they give consideration from a business perspective when the care team makes recommendations to senior management. The post holder will be managing several searches at any one time and will need to be able to prioritise and respond flexibly in the case of emergency placements.
5. To work with providers to resolve issues that arise from placements with the aim of preventing placement breakdown. The placements have a high direct impact on the children and young people, it is therefore important that matches meet the needs of the children and young people.
6. To review budgets and resources with commissioned services across the Group with a view to supporting the Senior Manager – Commissioning with commissioning process. This will include de-commissioning services and the redirection of resources to deliver key targets and outcomes as well as identifying areas for efficiency and improvement and making effective use of resources. This may involve the adaptation of established policies and processes to better meet the changing demands placed upon the service e.g. in the development of the processes that support Education and Health care Plans.
7. Where appropriate, to negotiate legally binding contracts with external providers ensuring risk transfer, value for money and protection of the Council's interests. This will include the need to be proactive in identifying "value for money" improvements. To work closely with social workers to maximise value for money and care outcomes.

8. To support the development of robust mechanisms for establishing financial control. This will include developing technical, information and budgetary support systems in order to meet specific requirements.
9. To support the development of robust mechanisms for establishing and then performance monitoring the standard and effectiveness of strategic commissioning issues.
10. Assist the Wellbeing and Community Health management staff to model, interpret and link commissioning information and financial data ensuring that patterns and anomalies are identified and value for money is achieved.
11. To produce detailed and articulate commissioning reports which enable senior managers to make strategic decision and manage resources effectively
12. To support the development of relationships across independent, voluntary and public sector partners which promotes participation, involvement and the coproduction of service re-design and review.
13. To lead on the development and delivery of key long term projects which provide for real efficiency savings and/or continuous service improvements in quality, performance and efficiency. This will include leading on aspects of commissioning associated with the implementation of Education Health Care Plans. It will also include sub regional commissioning activity which has a current focus on the mechanism to support the purchase of places with Residential Care Homes, and Residential Special Schools. Assist in supporting the development and delivery of projects.
14. To be a Regulation 44 Visitor to the Council's internal homes to provide a rigorous, thorough an impartial independent visit to the homes and act as a critical friend to provide reports and action plans to the registered managers.
15. To ensure key business linkages are in place between the commissioning, finance, procurement and operational functions across the Group.
16. Any other duties consistent with the nature, level and grade of the post as may be assigned by the Senior Manager – Commissioning and other senior colleagues.

The duties and responsibilities highlighted in this Job Description are indicative and may vary over time. Post holders are expected to undertake other duties and responsibilities relevant to the nature, level and extent of the post and the grade has been established on this basis.

Work Arrangements

Transport requirements:	Involves travel to work sites, area offices or training venues throughout the County and further afield on occasion.
Working patterns:	Normal office hours, however due to the nature of the service flexibility of start and finish times and occasional weekend working may be required.
Working conditions:	Mainly office based but some travel required.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Post Title: Commissioning and Relationship Development Officer	Group: Wellbeing and Community Health	Ref:
Essential	Desirable	Assess by
Knowledge and Qualifications		

<p>Degree in relevant subject or an appropriate professional qualification relevant to the position.</p> <p>Additional qualifications or evidence of continuing professional development or equivalent experience in commissioning.</p> <p>An understanding of the diverse functions of a large, complex public sector organisation and its cross-cutting issues and challenges.</p> <p>Knowledge of current relevant laws, regulations, policies, procedures, trends and developments relevant to the role.</p> <p>Commercially aware and ability to understand the relationship between costs, quality, customer care and corporate performance assessments.</p> <p>Excellent understanding of children's home legislation, national minimum standards, guidance and regulations</p>	<p>Formal qualifications in project management such as Prince 2.</p>	<p>Application Form/ Interview/ References</p>
Experience		
<p>Recent and significant experience in children's social care commissioning including all aspects of the commissioning cycle, which includes assessing needs, planning and prioritising, purchasing and monitoring services, to get the best outcomes for service users.</p> <p>Experience of working across health and social care sectors to support delivery of services.</p> <p>Experience of joint commissioning to deliver improved outcomes.</p> <p>Track record of developing positive business relationships whilst retaining ability to challenge constructively.</p> <p>A demonstrable track record of delivering outcomes that require a collaborative approach both within the organisation and with external partners.</p> <p>Recent significant experience of managing, monitoring or influencing budgets.</p> <p>Significant experience with supplier and contract management.</p> <p>Significant experience of strategic working and operational management.</p>	<p>Knowledge of local government corporate management systems.</p>	<p>Application Form/ Interview/ References</p>
Skills and competencies		
<p>Substantial knowledge and understanding of Local Government and the range of services involved in supporting children, young people and their families.</p> <p>A sound understanding of financial and budget monitoring systems and experience of monitoring budgets.</p> <p>Financial and commercial awareness and an excellent aptitude for developing innovative solutions to complex problems.</p> <p>Able to build effective relationships, influencing, persuading and negotiating in a tactful and diplomatic manner with people at all levels.</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding of the wider services delivered by the Wellbeing and Health Group.</p>	<p>Application Form/ Interview/ References</p>

<p>Able to analyse and interpret numeric data, trends in service usage, performance and information in order to plan and prioritise the commissioning function.</p> <p>Ability to apply robust review procedures and decommission services that do not meet identified need.</p> <p>Ability to constructively challenge established practice and engage with people effectively in redesigning services that focus on outcomes thereby demonstrating change management skills.</p> <p>Ability to demonstrate personal effectiveness and judgement, initiative, and awareness of risk.</p> <p>Ability to demonstrate a high level of initiative whilst operating independently and with minimal supervision.</p> <p>This will include the confidence and ability to make reasoned judgements and frequent decisions that stand up to scrutiny, consulting with managers only when appropriate to do so.</p> <p>Substantial evidence and successful track record in effective forward planning and performance management.</p> <p>Ability to manage own time and schedule activities to meet deadlines.</p> <p>Strong IT skills.</p> <p>Demonstrate ability to propose, develop and implement effective plans in pursuit of agreed goals and to make clear, informed, appropriate and timely decisions and recommendations.</p> <p>Ability to command the trust, respect and confidence of colleagues working flexibly and creatively.</p> <p>A proactive, committed and enthusiastic approach to work.</p>		
Physical, mental and emotional demands		
<p>To be able to meet the physical requirements of the post</p> <p>To be able to work under high work-related pressure caused by significant workloads, deadlines, interruptions, creating change of work activity or unpredictable deadlines and conflicting demands, which are of regular occurrence.</p> <p>Use of keyboard, which is integral to the job along with speed and accuracy.</p> <p>Ability to maintain enhanced concentration for frequent lengthy periods of time.</p> <p>High personal standards of integrity and probity.</p> <p>Ability to demonstrate resilience and emotional intelligence.</p> <p>Some exposure to working outside normal office hours as necessary.</p> <p>Be able to manage the emotional demands of the post that are caused by regularly hearing or reading about distressing cases involving vulnerable</p>		<p>Application Form/ Interview/ References</p>

children and young people who are or have suffered emotional, physical or sexual abuse.		
Other		
The ability to drive meet the transport requirements of the post.		Application Form/ Interview/ References

Key to assessment methods; (a) application form, (i) interview, (r) references, (t) ability tests (q) personality questionnaire (g) assessed group work, (p) presentation, (o) others e.g. case studies/visits

National Qualification Framework

The three regulatory authorities have updated the National Qualifications Framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland as part of a review of regulatory arrangements. (The three regulatory authorities are QCA, ACCAC and CCEA).

The NQF is designed to help with career progression and act as a guide to learners to make informed decisions about their training needs.

It aims to:

- promote access, motivation and achievement in education and training, strengthening international competitiveness
- promote lifelong learning by helping people to understand clear progression routes
- avoid duplication and overlap of qualifications while making sure all learning needs are covered
- promote public and professional confidence in the integrity and relevance of national awards.

The following table provides an indication of the new frameworks.

National Qualifications Framework	Framework for Higher Education Qualification levels (FHEQ)
8 Specialist awards	D (doctoral) doctorates
7 Level 7 Diploma Professional qualifications	M (masters)masters degrees, postgraduate certificates and diplomas
6 Level 6 Diploma Professional qualifications	H (honours)bachelors degrees, graduate certificates and diplomas
5 Level 5 BTEC HND	I (intermediate)diplomas of higher education and further education, foundation degrees, higher national diplomas
4 Level 4 Certificate	C (certificate)certificates of higher education
3 Level 3 Certificate (OND)Level 3 NVQ A levels	
2 Level 2 Diploma Level 2 NVQ GCSEs Grades A*-C	
1 Level 1 Certificate Level 1 NVQ GCSEs Grades D-G	
Entry Level Certificate in Adult Literacy	