

## Strategic Director for Children's Services

### Job Description and Person Specification

#### Our People Values

Our main goal is to ensure that Worcestershire is a fantastic place in which to live and work and making that a reality. An essential part of what we do is to listen to our residents – communities, service users and businesses – and act upon what they tell us is important to them.

As a Strategic Director, we will want you to champion Our People Values, namely:

- **Customer Focus** - "putting the customer at the heart of everything we do".
- **'Can do' Culture** – "being proactive to achieve excellence".
- **Freedom within Boundaries** – "courage to make constructive change".

This philosophy and way of working will continue to shape our aspirational and ambitious Corporate Strategic Plan.

#### Role Purpose

This role will be a key member of the Council's Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). Its primary purpose is to work with SLT colleagues to effectively develop strategies and commissioning outcomes in support of those strategies, that make Worcestershire a great place to live, work and do business for all our communities, citizens and businesses.

The post holder will be expected to inspire, influence and challenge key leaders and decision makers across Worcestershire County Council, Partners and other stakeholders. The role will be operating in a challenging financial envelope and will be expected to lead, generate and nurture innovative solutions within a reducing budget.

Reporting to the Chief Executive the post holder will be expected to deliver sustainable and transformational improvements across the Council, developing strong and effective partnerships with other public, private and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations in support of delivery of these strategies and plans and commission effective services that see the desired outcomes being implemented.

**Corporate Accountabilities:** As a member of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) you will be expected to:

1. Contribute to the strategic leadership and management of the Council to ensure that there is coherence and effective prioritisation in delivering the ambition of the Council.
2. Share collective ownership of all outcomes.
3. Lead the development and implementation of corporate policies, procedures, and strategies to support efficiency savings, flexibility, change and continuous improvement.
4. Deliver identified outcomes within available resources executing plans effectively and efficiently. To be underpinned by a strong financial, commercial and risk management culture, with plans in place to maximise income for the organisation in line with statutory, regulatory and constitution requirements.
5. Provide effective, timely and well-judged strategic advice and guidance to Elected Members acting as lead adviser to the Council and Chief Executive on people related issues.



6. Create a culture of accountability and delivery. Challenging the status quo, having a relentless approach to implementing solutions, leading through complexity, and constructively and appropriately challenging peers, staff, members, and partners to deliver agreed results and objectives.
7. Develop medium and long-term strategies that enable Worcestershire to strengthen its position as a great place to live and work for the benefit of all its communities and citizens.
8. Ensure the translation of the Council's Corporate Plan and its Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) into effective delivery to achieve the Council's desired outcomes including effectiveness of all its services through service reviews, plans for continuous monitoring and implementation of efficiency savings.
9. Ensure a commercial and outcome-focused approach to managing providers (internal and external) and developing new markets, which deliver best value for citizens, in terms of achievement of outcomes, financial performance, quality and statutory compliance.
10. Co-create and act as a role model for a Member and officer leadership culture that inspires and recognises innovation, customer-focus, personal responsibility, effective delivery at pace and passionate commitment to citizens and their needs across Worcestershire.
11. To act as an advocate for the residents and communities of Worcestershire, ensuring that their voice is heard and considered when developing strategies and commissioning outcomes.
12. Provide visionary leadership to staff within the service area to create a strong performance culture and ensure the delivery of excellent services.
13. Building and developing a high performing senior team, who gain leadership credibility by modelling the behaviours and performance standards expected of others. Identifying, developing, and exploiting talent and ensuring a strong succession plan is in place for key roles within the Directorate.
14. Demonstrate an active commitment to health and safety and encourage the development of a positive health and safety culture which ensures, as a minimum, that the Council fulfils its legal obligations in relation to health, safety and welfare of employees and those affected by work undertaken by the Council.
15. Act as an ambassador for the Council, on a local, regional and national basis.
16. To undertake other such duties, training and/or hours of work as may be reasonably required and are consistent with the general level of responsibility of this post.

**Specific role accountabilities:** as Strategic Director for Children's Services you will be responsible for:

1. Discharging and being accountable for the statutory obligations of the Director of Children's Services (DCS)
2. Ensuring the Council's compliance with the relevant statutory obligations and statutory guidance relating to children and young people. Ensure that these obligations and responsibilities, including appropriate training, are complied with by the directorate as well as internal and external commissioned providers.
3. Leading and inspiring the workforce, developing and instilling a culture of high performance and child-centred practice.
4. Provide Members with appropriate, timely and relevant reports, information, and advice to enable them to exercise their responsibilities and ensure decisions are well informed, clear and implemented effectively.
5. Develop policy proposals which deliver improvements and creative solutions to meet the challenges facing Children's services.
6. Financial budget and resource management ensuring that they are allocated effectively for the intended outcomes in a manner which demonstrates value for money and compliance with relevant policies and guidelines.
7. Ensuring a commercial and outcome-focused approach to managing providers (internal and external) and developing new markets, which deliver best value for children, young people and families in terms of achievement of outcomes, financial performance, quality and statutory compliance.
8. Acting as an advocate for the children, young people and families in Worcestershire, ensuring that their voice is heard and taken into account when developing strategies and commissioning outcomes.

9. Continuously reviewing and creating opportunities for joint and partnership working regarding vulnerable children and families.

## Reporting Relationships

**Accountable to:** Chief Executive  
**Accountable for:** Safeguarding, Early Help, Education and All Age Disability

## Annual Budget Accountability

**Annual Budget:** £378,261,000  
**FTE:** 857

**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.

### Key Relationships:

**Internal:** Cabinet, Strategic Leadership Team, Wider Leadership Team, County Councillors and elected members, Management Teams, Managers & Staff across all directorates.

**External:** Clinical Commissioning Groups, other NHS organisations, health and social care professionals, District/Boroughs, Government Agencies & Departments, Police, Fire, Probation Service, Educational Settings, Suppliers, Contractors, Service providers, Statutory and Voluntary Organisations, customers, members of the public, volunteers.

### Other/general Duties:

- Promote equality of opportunity and diversity for all employees and customers in line with the Council’s policies and practices.
- Undertake the role of ‘gold commander’ in the County Council’s emergency planning arrangements.

### Notes:

- The Council reserves the right to alter the content of this job description, after consultation, to reflect changes to the job or services provided, without altering the general character or level of responsibility.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered as required by the Equalities Act.

## Strategic Director for Children's Services

### PERSON SPECIFICATION

This is a high profile and demanding strategic leadership and management role. The organisational scale is substantial, and the job is highly visible. While clearly rewarding, the work can be challenging and pressurised at times, with conflicting priorities. It therefore requires candidates of the very highest quality who can clearly demonstrate how their experience, knowledge, skills and personal qualities match the following requirements.

#### Experience, knowledge, skills:

1. Extensive knowledge and understanding of the complexities involved in delivering high quality children's services.
2. Able to demonstrate substantial successful leadership experience at a senior strategic level within an organisation of appreciable scale and complexity and as part of a high performing Strategic Leadership Team preferably within Children's services.
3. Significant experience and familiarity of the health sector and public health challenges and opportunities
4. Strong and varied record of achievement at a senior executive level in the area(s) of responsibility working in complex political environments, preferably in local government.
5. Substantial experience at an executive level (i.e. at Chief Executive, Director or equivalent level within a main function or division).
6. Significant demonstrable experience gained in public (including voluntary sector) or private sector roles, but candidates must be able to demonstrate both that their experience is relevant and that they have a good understanding of the challenges of operating as a Strategic Director of a large democratically led organisation.
7. Able to demonstrate the high level of 'know how' and management skills required to.
  - a) deliver the Council's aspiration to be an excellent commissioning organisation.
  - b) effectively manage the significant strategic challenges of the role
  - c) support the devolution of decision-making and services delivery to a more local level, where appropriate
  - d) achieve continuous improvement in performance, encouraging innovation and appropriate challenges to the status-quo.
  - e) ensure a strong customer focus and value for money ethos throughout the Council.
8. Must be a very effective communicator, able to extend and improve the Council's regional and national profile, influence and build positive and productive relationships that gain the respect, trust and confidence of members, staff, partners, customers and other stakeholders.
9. Must have the knowledge and personal confidence to provide authoritative advice to staff and elected members.
10. Significant senior level experience of:
  - a) Building and maintaining strategic relationships and partnerships.
  - b) creating strategies, interventions and innovative solutions to complex issues
  - c) leading teams, providing direction and managing performance
11. Able to demonstrate evidence of commercial and sound financial management skills.

#### Personal qualities and outlook:

1. An effective and 'visible' leader, with the personal vision and presence to inspire and empower the County Council to improve and achieve its key objectives.
2. A 'moderniser' – committed to improvement, clear customer focus and understands the Council's approach to delivery.
3. A modern approach to people management, demonstrating an effective balance between direction, empowerment and assertiveness.
4. Able to work effectively in a political environment, building productive relationships with elected members and demonstrating political sensitivity and diplomacy.
5. Decisive and assertive when required, but always courteous. Able to challenge constructively and to deal with conflict. Never acts aggressively.
6. Resilient and calm when under pressure, able to balance conflicting priorities and manage their time well.
7. Comfortable with the pressures and high level of accountability and associated responsibilities of the Strategic Director role.
8. Demonstrates the highest standards of personal integrity at all times, leading by example.
9. Demonstrates respect for others at all times and is a supporter of the equalities agenda.

## **Management Leadership Competences**

As a Strategic Director you will actively shape future strategy and the market. Shaping, owning and driving strategy and resources across WCC, not just within your own directorate. You will play a key role in managing and developing Level 2 and Level 3 Managers. They are responsible for dealing with Council wide relationships and reputation.

## **Generic Competences**

### **Communicating with Impact**

- Communicate using natural presence and authentic charisma
- Utilise feedback on how your communication influences others
- Identify how and when to apply different methods of communication
- Build rapport and gain trust
- Apply the most effective approach to inspiring and motivating in different contexts
- Successfully influence and negotiate with a wide range of stakeholders, peers and staff

### **Facilitating Development**

- Use goal orientated coaching with your staff that is focused on the achievement of measurable results
- Empower staff to solve WCC challenges through seizing responsibility and engaging their own innovation
- Enhance your own personal performance by seeking out constructive feedback, gaining insight and awareness of your own strengths and challenges
- Create a climate of continuous learning and self-development
- Utilise effective questioning and listening skills to enhance others' personal and professional development
- Act as an inspiring role model and mentor for others

### **Leading from Within**

- Act with authenticity and courage
- Be aware of the impact that your behaviours have on yourself and others
- Ensure that your actions are congruent with who you are and what you stand for
- Reflect on your core identity and purpose as a leader
- Promote leadership development and self-awareness, creating an environment of openness and trust where opinions are expressed and heard
- Develop and execute strategies to gain personal resilience by re-energising yourself and others
- Take a stand in the face of adversity
- Take risks and let go of fears that hold you back

- Be willing to remain open and tuned in to feedback from both internal and external sources

### **Fostering Teamwork**

- Develop and implement strategies to enhance the performance of your teams
- Maximise the performance of individuals for the benefit of the team
- Understand team dynamics and know how to intervene to improve them
- Collaborate with and appreciate others, adapting to different work styles and preferences
- Build cohesive teams around a common purpose and inspire allegiance
- Build mutually beneficial relationships, seek opportunities to promote a culture of collaboration and partnership
- Ensure accountability through defining clear roles and responsibilities

## **Specific Competences for this level of Management**

### **Agile Thinking**

- Think strategically (up to 3 years and beyond) and with business acumen
- Consciously choose different thinking and processing styles to heighten your effectiveness
- Use a suitable balance of rational analysis, personal intuition and consultation with others in your decision-making
- Facilitate member and officer thinking, helping them to look at issues from different perspectives
- Suspend judgements and engage in dialogue before coming to conclusions
- Help teams to share their thinking and facilitate team learning

### **Creating a Compelling Vision**

- Establish direction by thinking strategically and making discriminating choices
- Expand current boundaries of thinking and present possibilities that can take you and your directorate beyond perceived limitations
- Translate the vision into clear quantifiable goals
- Determine and convey the underlying purpose and intent behind the vision
- Be pro-active in creating and communicating inspiring personal and collective visions
- Engage and inspire the directorate in building commitment to growth
- Be in tune with, read and predict social, political, economic and cultural trends

### **Delivering Results**

- Set clear and meaningful targets in alignment with WCC's vision and values
- Ensure a delivery mind-set is embedded within WCC
- Create results through a disciplined approach to business planning, goal setting and setting meaningful targets, aligned with WCC's strategic aims
- Take personal responsibility for WCC performance and results
- Be confident in your ability to consistently deliver high performance
- Use clear targets and metrics to provide feedback on performance

### **Leading Change**

- Be adaptable in dealing with change, personally and professionally
- Deal effectively with ambiguity and uncertainty
- Forecast changes in the market or environment
- Provide the necessary direction and impetus in leading others to change; being sensitive to the impact of change on others
- Understand, deal with and overcome resistance to change
- Agree and design change initiatives
- Apply creativity in the change process

- Seek to evolve WCC to meet future trends by challenging the status quo