



City of

**Stoke-on-Trent**

## Job Description

**Job Title:** Senior Partnership and Planning Officer  
**Directorate:** Children and Family Services  
**Section:** Safeguarding and Quality Assurance  
**Responsible to:** Strategic Manager – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance  
**Grade:** Level 12

### Job Purpose

- To support the Assistant Directors and the Strategic Manager – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance in leading effective development and co-ordination of partnerships across the Directorate.
- To lead robust strategic planning and commissioning including needs analysis, research and strategic policy review, engagement and develop strategic planning documents in relation designated portfolio.
- To deliver effective and robust governance arrangements across area of focus, including relevant partnerships, and supporting the delivery of effective business plans.
- To ensure the local authority fulfils its legal, regulatory and national minimum standards requirement and the authorities own objectives in relation to designated portfolio.
- To provide effective project support to the Children and Family Services Directorate and partnership including leading and facilitating strategic policy implementation as required.
- To assist the Strategic Manager – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance in leading preparation for external inspection/peer review and, when the Children's and Family Services are subject to Ofsted inspections, to step in as additional resource to enable these to be successfully supported.

### Key Duties / Responsibilities

- To have operational management responsibility for designated strategic partnerships and portfolio including maintaining partner relationships, planning (needs analysis, engagement, policy), performance management, governance, communications, facilitating partnership meetings and events.
- To have operational leadership and oversight of designated portfolio facilitating and contributing to effective matrix management across the immediate team and wider council/partnership team.
- To support the Assistant Directors and Strategic Manager – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance by leading the development of high profile strategic planning documents for area of focus, including partnership and directorate plans.
- To lead the development of and undertake complex needs analysis using a range of analytics and insight and contributing to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- To maintain effective policy horizon scanning systems, research and benchmarking for the Children and Families Directorate ensuring that the team keeps abreast of changes to national policy and senior leaders and politicians are briefed as appropriate.

- Ensure effective interpretation of Government policy and evaluation on implications for the Council, leading policy development and implementation in a Directorate, Council wide, Partnership environment as required.
- To provide support to strategic inspections and peer reviews including facilitating Self-Assessment, service improvement, interpretation and implementation of related policy, communications and practical preparations ensuring strategic implications for the Council and partner organisations are understood and acted upon, and senior leadership commitment secured.
- To ensure that effective and accurate web content associated with portfolio is in place and reviewed as appropriate.
- To support the Strategic Manager – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance and Assistant Directors in coordinating key strategic Directorate organisation activity including Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity Audit, Business Continuity and Risk Management.
- To ensure effective project support and facilitation is in place in relation to agreed strategic Directorate/partnership priorities and is proportionate to the size and scale of the project.
- To prepare complex reports for the Directorate and strategic partnerships as required.
- To respond to the needs of the service working across themes as required.

### **Strategic Management**

- To maintain a detailed knowledge and understanding of all the Children and Family Services Directorate divisions and services provided/commissioned.
- To maintain a thorough understanding of children related strategic partnerships and of the representative organisations that belong to key partnerships and Boards for example understanding inter-relationships between organisations, organisation structures, roles and responsibilities of organisations and by nurturing positive relationships with key managers within these organisations.
- To ensure that the Directorate and strategic partnerships maintain a good understanding of the strategic priorities and context that partner organisations and sectors are working with.
- To contribute to and, when required, lead service delivery and developments within portfolio and in Directorate/Council/multi-agency partnership setting.
- To work closely with the Strategic Manager – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance to agree priorities of development and change.
- To lead strategic partnership working across the designated portfolio area including developing and maintaining positive relationships with partners in a context of challenge and potential conflict.
- To ensure synergy between local, regional and national policy and plans.

### **Performance**

- To ensure an effective customer focus and involvement of staff and service users in strategic planning, service design and policy development.
- To develop and maintain effective systems for performance management.

- To ensure that activities within the authority's specified services are carried out to agreed service standards and identify ways in which these standards can be raised.
- To ensure that the partnership receives debate and analyse all performance data relevant to their terms of reference and develop/monitor appropriate action plans to address any performance issues that arise.
- To monitor the external environment and anticipate required changes to policy, practice or service delivery in services to Children and its related partnerships.

## **Resource Management**

- To deliver effective matrix management leading activity both through direct team and virtual team approach.
- To support the Strategic Manager – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance to effectively plan, monitor and control expenditure of team budgets including holding budget responsibility for strategic projects.
- To contribute to the recruitment and selection of staff within the team.
- To provide effective line management and personal development of nominated staff ensuring that all staff are qualified, trained and competent in order to provide high quality services.
- To pro-actively support own continued professional development and contribute towards team development as part of the City Council's HR / PLAN process and policies.
- To be responsible for carrying out duties with due regard to the council's Equal Opportunities and Health & Safety policies and ensuring that these are adhered to by staff.

## **Communications**

- To work with the Strategic Manager – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance to ensure effective communications with the team, across the directorate and with partners at local, regional and national level to ensure that key interests both inside and outside the directorate are appropriately informed and involved.
- To represent the directorate and the City Council as required in any of the above matters.
- To represent the Strategic Manager – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance at internal and external meetings / events as required.
- To advise as appropriate and when required senior officers on any issue, operational and strategic associated with the designated service areas or any issue which might give rise to media attention and / or external security.
- To work within the political environment and to provide reports as and when required by politicians, senior officers and the Director.
- To promote the work of partnership bodies across all Children services and ensure that key deliverables reflect best practice.

## **Culture**

- To uphold and adhere to the City Council's corporate values and support corporate objectives such as those outlined in the Mandate for Change.

- To actively promote and support a 'one team' culture demonstrating flexibility and a willingness to collaborate with colleagues.
- To support, and lead by example, the development of an organisational culture which is positive, forward looking, solution focused, results orientated and customer focused.
- To ensure that diversity is valued and managed within the service and that all policies relating to equality of opportunity in the recruitment, selection, supervision and management of staff and service delivery are observed.
- Any other duties commensurate with the grade of the post and as requested by the line manager and the flexibility to deal with emergencies as they arise.

### **Finance and Staffing Dimensions**

- **Gross Revenue Budget** : Budget holder for strategic projects
- **Capital Budget**: Nil
- **Staff**: 2



City of  
**Stoke-on-Trent**

# Person Specification

**Job Title:** Senior Partnership and Planning Officer

**Directorate:** Children and Family Services

**Section:** Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

**Minimum Essential Requirements** - Evidenced by: **a:** application form **b:** test **c:** interview

	a	b	c
<b>Knowledge and Qualifications</b>			
Possess relevant degree or equivalent professional qualification or equivalent experience	✓		
Sound knowledge of governance frameworks and the statutory and regulatory framework of the Directorate and its partnerships	✓		✓
To possess a sound understanding of the national Government policy agendas relating to the services and strategic partnerships of the Directorate	✓		✓
Understanding of the political environment in which the Directorate and its partnerships operates in			✓
Demonstrate good understanding of the complex nature of addressing a wide range of inter-related issues	✓		✓
Thorough understanding of strategic planning and commissioning cycles and component parts e.g. needs analysis, policy, engagement	✓		✓
Evidence of consistent achievement leading/facilitating and successfully delivering projects collaboratively	✓		✓
Knowledge of project management principles to help support strategic commissioning and assist in the management of change	✓		✓
Sound knowledge of 'people management' (including motivation, performance and capability)	✓		✓

<b>Experience</b>			
Extensive experience in partnership, policy, planning in an Children related service	✓		✓
Extensive experience of developing effective working relationships with diverse stakeholders and partnering with external agencies in a complex partnership environment	✓		✓
Demonstrable experience of gaining clear commitment of others (senior leaders, politicians, wider stakeholders) through providing a robust and compelling vision	✓		✓
In depth knowledge and experience of analysing and presenting complex data in an accessible format	✓	✓	✓
Significant experience of interpreting and implementing national statutory and regulatory policy	✓	✓	✓
Significant experience of writing strategic plans and strategies within a complex partnership / organisation environment	✓		
Enhanced knowledge and experience of project management tools and techniques	✓		
Demonstrable and extensive experience of working within a challenging environment	✓		✓

<b>Skills and Abilities</b>			
Proven ability to manage complex projects and activity and deliver results within agreed deadlines	✓		✓
Excellent analytical skills with proven ability to assess, analyse, interpret and present complex results including statistical data and contentious data and ability to communicate key points clearly	✓	✓	✓
Exceptional interpersonal and networking skills with a proven ability to develop and sustain partnerships	✓		✓
Exceptional skills and confidence to constructively challenge and scrutinise whilst maintaining effective relationships in complex environments e.g. cross organisation	✓		✓
Highly developed oral and written communication skills	✓	✓	✓
Proven ability to develop constructive relationships with other agencies and stakeholders	✓		✓
Proven budget/resource management skills	✓		
Excellent IT skills, confidently able to use word, excel, and powerpoint to a proficient level and the ability learn specific IT software where relevant	✓		✓
Highly developed negotiation and diplomacy skills with proven ability to liaise, negotiate and influence a wide range of partners on critical decisions and actions	✓		✓
Capacity for strategic thought, creativity with the ability to maximize opportunities for innovation whilst also demonstrating skills to access evidence based and best practice examples			✓
Highly developed problem solving skills	✓		✓
Exceptional project planning, process management and organizational skills	✓		✓

<b>Personal Style</b>			
An officer with energy and flair and a passion for improving the lives of the people of Stoke-on-Trent	✓		✓
A strong aptitude to work effectively and inclusively as a member of a team and work collaboratively across boundaries	✓		✓
Flexible, pragmatic approach to work	✓		✓
Positive approach to handling conflict	✓		✓
Commitment to principles of equal opportunities, non-discriminatory practice and to user involvement	✓		
Self-aware and motivated, confident and positive	✓		✓
Highly professional with integrity and the ability to quickly establish credibility			✓



City of  
**Stoke-on-Trent**

## Conditions of Service

**Job Title:** Senior Partnership and Planning Officer  
**Directorate:** Children and Family Services  
**Section:** Safeguarding and Quality Assurance  
**Grade:** Level 12  
**Salary:** £37,890 - £40,876

**Duration:** This is a permanent post.

**Working Hours:** The normal standard working arrangements will be based on a 37 hour week, working over five days between normal office hours. However, there may be flexibility in these arrangements. For more information please refer to the Flexible Working Policy.

**Annual Leave Entitlement:** You will be entitled to 27 days annual leave rising to 32 days after five years continuous service and eight public / bank holidays. The above entitlement will be calculated pro rata depending upon hours of work

**Sickness Absence:** This will be paid at basic levels. This means that any enhancements normally received for shift work, weekend working and so on will not be paid on days when you are absent from work due to sickness

**Pension Provisions:** For occupational pension purposes you will have the choice of:-  
a. Joining or continuing in the Local Government Pension Scheme.  
b. Arranging your own personal pension provision approved by the Inland Revenue.

**Business Mileage:** If you have to use your own vehicle on council business please ensure that you are insured to do so then the appropriate allowance is payable as per the national scheme.

**Notice Period:** Your notice period will be dependent upon the grade of the post and your continuous service.

**Probation Period:** New entrants to local Government service are subject to a probationary period of six months during which you are expected to establish your suitability to the post.

**Equal Opportunities Monitoring:** New entrants must provide details of ethnicity and disability for the starter forms to enable the city council to monitor its progress towards being an equal opportunities employer.

**Medical Examination:** Your employment is subject to the council's medical adviser giving medical clearance. Initially, this will take the form of a medical questionnaire.

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check:** This post is exempted under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 therefore appointment to this post is conditional upon the receipt of a satisfactory response to a check of police records. You should note that the existence of an unsatisfactory police check may result in the withdrawal of the offer of employment.

If during your continued employment you receive any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings that are not "protected" as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1974 (as amended on 2013) you are required to disclose to your manager immediately that you have been convicted or cautioned during the period of your employment. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of "unprotected" cautions and convictions can be found on the Disclosure and Barring Service website.

**Asylum and Immigration:** According to the Immigration, Asylum, Nationality Act 2006 you must (if appointed) provide proof of current and valid permission to be in the United Kingdom, and valid permission to do the type of work offered.

Your continuing employment is subject to you having leave to remain and work in the United Kingdom by having a valid work permit. Should your work permit fail to be renewed at a future date, the authority would have to terminate your contract with immediate effect.

**Trade Unions:** As your employer, we support the system of collective bargaining in every way and believe in the principal of solving industrial relations problems by discussion and agreement. For practical purposes, this can only be conducted by representatives of the employers and of the employees. If collective bargaining of this kind is to continue and improve for the benefit of both, it is essential that the employee's organisations should be fully representative. Therefore, it is recommended that employees become a member of a trade union represented on the relevant national joint council.

A full list of the trade unions appropriate to the type and nature of employment is available from HR.

**Other Conditions of Service:** Any other conditions of service are as per the Scheme of Conditions of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services as amended by decisions, rules and regulations of the City Council.