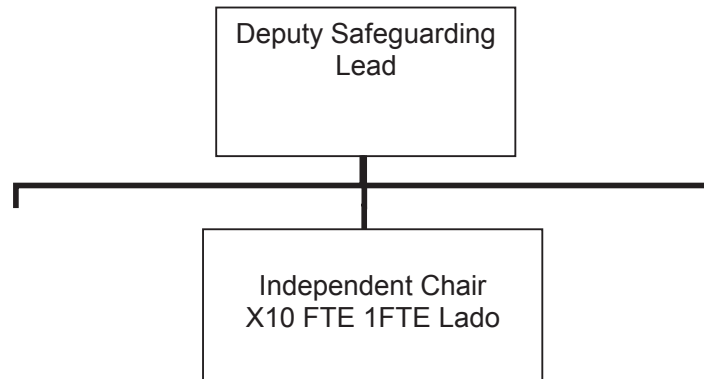


Job Description

Department: People and Communities
Division/Section: Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
Job Title: **Independent Chair**
Post No:
Grade: 14
Reports to: Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Organisation Chart:

Show immediate manager and any jobs reporting to this post.



Does the post involve working in regulated or controlled activity with children or vulnerable adults?

Regulated Controlled Neither

CRB Check applicable?

Standard Enhanced None

Is post exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 in respect of declaration of spent convictions Yes

Line Managements responsibility for: No. of direct reports: 0

The statutory guidance to local authorities in establishing an effective IRO service states that: “The role of the IRO is a specialist one which stands alone in the local authority. It is a role that may involve challenging senior managers and may require the IRO to seek legal remedies if the local authority fails in its

duties.”

Furthermore that: “The IRO should be an authoritative professional with at least equivalent status to an experienced children’s social work team manager.”

Size of budget: None

The role includes accountability for business areas that are of very high financial and reputational risk to the Council. This can be broken down into two principal areas:

Placement costs and cost avoidance: Children and Young People in Care and Children on Child Protection Plans; These officers have a role in ensuring that plans for children in care or at risk of significant harm are robust, evidence based and are progressed in a timely manner in order to maximise impact, safety and improved outcomes. Thereby making best use of resources and avoiding unnecessary placement and service costs. These officers therefore hold significant responsibility for monitoring and impacting whether or not Local Authority budgets are used effectively.

Liabilities: These officers are accountable for ensuring safeguarding risks are identified, assessed and managed within a complex legal and ethical framework. Whilst the chair will seek to facilitate multi-agency decision making in Child Protection Conferences, ultimately the chair can veto the view of professionals and make the decision it deems to be safe for the child/ren. Therefore, any mishandling of Child Protection Conferences or Child Care Reviews for children in care and / or children with disabilities receiving short breaks, risks serious harm to vulnerable children, young people and care leavers exposing the Council to severe reputational damage and potential law suits and costs should vulnerable children and young people be harmed as a result.

Job Purpose:

To undertake all of the statutory responsibilities of the role of Child Protection Conference Chair for children at risk of significant harm, and the Independent Review Officer (IRO) for looked after children, in accordance with the Children Act 1989, The statutory guidance governing Independent Reviewing Officers 2010, requirements of the Children and Adoption Act 2002, Care Planning, Placement and Review Regulations 2010, Children Leaving Care Act 2000, Children Act 2004, and all subsequent updates; Working Together 2018 , the Equalities Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998. To develop SMART outcome focused plans.

To provide ongoing monitoring and review of progress, bringing challenge to the local authority as required to ensure timeliness and optimum safety and outcomes for children.

To provide consultation to the wider service and partner agencies on practice issues within the service’s areas of expertise including child protection procedures children looked after, care leavers, children with disabilities and / or complex health needs receiving short breaks, deprivation of liberty for children under 18 years.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To assist in the implementation of Peterborough's Quality Assurance Framework using performance indicators and management targets to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for adults and children.
2. To manage the child protection conference decision making process and when necessary take the final decision regarding the need for children and young people to be made the subject of child protection plans. Where a higher level of safeguarding is indicated escalate to senior managers for review and action.
3. To undertake the responsibilities of the IRO as set out in IRO Handbook Statutory Guidance for IROs and local authorities in relation to case management and review for looked after children and those in specific circumstances including those remanded; children detained in secure settings; and children with disabilities / complex health needs receiving short breaks.
4. To chair Secure Panel Review meetings and Permanent Placement Disruption Meetings in accordance with local practice standards.
5. To undertake a quality assurance role in relation to children in need, children in need of protection, and looked after children, by actively monitoring thresholds; adherence to practice standards, systems and processes and identifying any practice deficits in order to promote a learning culture and drive continuous improvements in service delivery for children, young people and their families.
6. To ensure that the quality of casework presented to the service is monitored and that managers at all levels within Children's Social Care and Adults Social Care 0-25 service for children and young people with disabilities / complex health needs, are made aware of any cases that do not meet professional standards and where risks do not appear to be sufficiently managed or mitigated
7. To use management information, data, quantitative and qualitative quality assurance evidence to actively engage in discussion with Senior and Operational Managers identifying areas of good practice and challenging poor practice where necessary.
8. To ensure that practise is person centred, and to ensure that children's lived experiences and voice understood and appropriately represented within all assessments, care planning and decision- making meetings.
9. To manage a case load with high levels of autonomy and maintain effective administrative systems to ensure all statutory meetings and related plans and reports are completed and distributed within the required timescales and to ensure that the records of meetings are of a high standard and accurately reflect the discussion and decision making at those meetings.
10. To ensure accurate and timely data input to all relevant electronic systems
11. To robustly monitor the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to implement safeguarding arrangements and use multi-agency escalation procedures where required to drive effective multi agency safeguarding and collaborative working
12. To be an active member of the Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Service promoting a learning culture for continuous service improvement, including contributing to strategic policy and procedural developments.
13. To contribute as required to the work of the Local Safeguarding Board.

14. To audit cases on themes identified locally to ensure safety of practice.
15. To deliver presentations of the outcomes of audits or Individual Management Reviews to a variety of audiences.
16. To lead / be actively involved in working groups and panels where required.
17. To deputise for the Deputy Safeguarding Lead as and when required.
18. To carry out peer supervision.
19. To represent the local authority at Multi Agency Public Protection (MAPPA) meetings as required and any other meetings identified.

Generic Responsibilities: To carry out all responsibilities with regard to the Council's Equalities Policy and Procedures and Customer Care Policy and ensure all duties are carried out in a manner that values and promotes diversity and equality.

To comply with all Health and Safety at work requirements as laid down by the employer.

The council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Flexibility Clause: Other duties and responsibilities express and implied which arise from the nature and character of the post within the department (or section) mentioned above or in a comparable post in any of the Organisation's other sections or departments.

Variation Clause: This is a description of the job as it is constituted at the date shown. It is the practice of this Authority to periodically examine job descriptions, update them and ensure that they relate to the job performed, or to incorporate any proposed changes. This procedure will be conducted by the appropriate manager in consultation with the postholder.

In these circumstances it will be the aim to reach agreement on reasonable changes, but if agreement is not possible the Head of Service reserves the right to make changes to your job description following consultation.

DATE: 25.10.18 **COMPLETED BY:** Alison Bennett