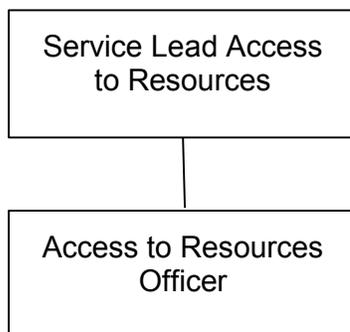


Job Description

Department:	People and Communities
Division/Section:	Children's Commissioning
Job Title:	Access to Resources Officer
Post No:	
Grade:	9
Reports to:	Service Lead Access to Resources
Line Management responsibility for:	None
Size of Budget:	None
DBS Check:	Enhanced

Organisation Chart:



Job Purpose:

1. To match resources to need where children and young people need care [fostering or residential placements for children and young people looked after] or independent school placements [because of special educational needs], family support services and/or a variety of other specialist services across the health, social care and education domains, securing value for money while securing positive outcomes for the child or young person and their

family. Taking a lead role in setting measurable outcomes for the services provided and ensuring that providers achieve these outcomes.

2. Working proactively with partners to ensure that high cost resource packages are reviewed to ensure that they remain appropriate.

Description prepared by: Lou Williams **Date:** August 2013

Description agreed by postholder: Date:

Authorised by Director: Wendi-Ogle-Welbourn **Date:** August 2013

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To broker resource requests from across Children's Services, working with stakeholders to agree the most resource efficient solution that will promote effective outcomes for the child, young person or family concerned. This involves thinking creatively to best meet the needs of children and young people and not simply responding to the request. For example:
 - Exploring whether there are alternatives such as child care, family support, positive activities, shared care or extended family resources that might better meet the needs of children on the edge of care or coming into care;
 - Exploring with schools including contracted alternative education providers whether young people with educational needs may be better met without recourse to independent special schools;
 - Brokering services for children with disabilities that enable them to remain within family settings wherever possible including short breaks, specialist adaptations, occupational therapy input etc.
2. To match information about the needs of the individual child or young person with the resources available, taking into account:
 - What is known about the types of interventions that are associated with the most positive long term outcomes for children and young people;
 - The need to ensure that as far as possible, children and young people are supported to live within their own families whenever it is safe for them to do so;
 - That wherever possible, children and young people remain educated close to their homes;
 - That where children and young people do need to become looked after, that they are placed in foster placements close to home wherever possible, that plans for them do not drift and that they are supported to return home or into permanent alternative care arrangements as quickly as possible;

- That all local authorities are accountable for the use of public funds and must therefore balance meeting the needs of individual children and young people with the availability of resources for the wider community served.
3. To seek to maximise the use of in-house and community based services that are free at the point of delivery and carry no additional cost to the Council.
 4. To maintain a close relationship with the in-house fostering service, maximising our ability to use in-house foster placements whenever possible.
 5. Contributing to the recruitment activities in relation to foster carers.
 6. To negotiate with providers of services [i.e. privately operated children's homes, residential and day schools and providers of family support services] to secure services for the best possible cost.
 7. To take a lead responsibility in relationship management with a prescribed number of independent providers [typically Independent Fostering Agencies, providers of residential care placements and in some circumstances, providers of independent schools for children and young people with Special Educational Needs] ensuring that dialogue is maintained in relation to the changing needs of children and young people within the City, ensuring that all opportunities for negotiating reduced fees are fully explored, and any issues relating to practice by the agency concerned are addressed.
 8. To organise placements for children in care and in need of special educational provision in accordance with policies and procedures particularly as these relate to safeguarding/child protection requirements.
 9. To draft individual placement agreements and contracts for children in care and Special Educational Needs placements that specify the measurable outcomes that the provider is expected to achieve and the applicable timescales based on the assessment of the child or young person's needs, in partnership with the Social Worker/SEN Team.
 10. To ensure that all individual placement agreements are signed and are in place prior to placements taking place [or within 5 working days in emergency situations].
 11. To undertake visits to providers of care and in some circumstances special educational needs provision to help assess the quality of the provision and the extent to which this is meeting the outcomes specified in agreements made with them in [9] above.
 12. To take a leading proactive role in identifying groups of and individual children and young people for whom resources might be more efficiently used and secure the necessary changes in provision in partnership with stakeholders, for example:

- Identifying cohorts of children and young people for whom planned placement moves are appropriate i.e. where young people are within 12 months of ceasing statutory education and need to move on to FE and/or leaving care provision;
- Tracking progress of young children in placement and ensuring that they are being progressed to permanency through adoption and other legal orders;
- Monitoring cohorts of children placed with Independent Fostering Agencies and negotiating permanent placements where in children and young people's best interests, generating financial savings to the Council.

13.To support the development of commissioning arrangements which ensure quality and value for money when the local authority commissions externally [for example, supporting the development of framework agreements for 'experts' undertaking specialist assessments in respect of children who are subject to care proceedings or pre-proceedings].

14.To monitor patterns of need and resources commissioned and provide reports for use in supporting targeted recruitment of foster carers as well as in helping to develop the market to ensure that the needs of Peterborough children and young people can be met within the City as far as is possible.

15.To contribute to the updating of and monitoring of the Placement Strategy, which is concerned with the mix of placements for children in care and ensuring that as a service, we are offering placements to children and young people at the right time, for the right length of time, and at the right cost.

16.To maintain up to date information on local placement providers and be able to prioritise competing pressures.

17.To maintain a caseload of secondary allocated cases of children, young people and families for whom you are responsible for identifying the most appropriate resources to meet assessed needs, and ensuring that work associated with this case load is prioritised appropriately.

18.To complete appropriate paperwork detailing the contractual amendments between Peterborough City Council and external agencies and service providers.

19.Contribute to systems that monitor, record and evaluate the movements of children in care.

20.Raise all necessary paperwork to ensure financial commitments are met in respect of both in house and external service providers.

21.To research and secure the provision of a wide range of support services from external providers in response to the request of social work teams.

General

1. To carry out all responsibilities with regard to the Council's Equalities Policy and Procedures

and Customer Care Policy.

2. To promote High Standards of health, safety and welfare ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.
3. To contribute to team work within the department

Flexibility Clause

Other duties and responsibilities expressed 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 Peterborough City Council reserves the right to make changes to your job description following consultation.



Person Specification

Job Title: Access to Resources Officer

Grade: 9

Hours: 37

Attributes	Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key Skill Level 3/4: Bachelor's degree; HNC; HND NVQ level 4 or equivalent; including professional qualification in Social Work or 3 years' experience in a social care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professional qualifications in Social Work ● Up to date continuous professional development record that details learning relevant to the post.
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding of issues facing the Council when making placements for children, young people and adults with a learning disability including research into resilience and stability ● Understanding of issues around SEND provision. ● Detailed knowledge and experience of applying Care Planning Regulations, National Minimum Standards, Children Act 89/04, Children and Families Bill 2014, Adult and Child Safeguarding policies and procedures, No Secrets, Mental Capacity Act, Deprivation of Liberties, Care Act, Working Together, ● Working knowledge of the regulatory framework of CQC and/or Ofsted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An understanding of databases and IT systems, including an understanding of using IT to improve productivity and capacity. ● Working knowledge of the Council's Contract Regulations and EU Procurement.
Skills and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to communicate effectively with all stakeholders (including service users and parent/carers) specifically in contentious situations ● Ability to manage pressure effectively and manage the anxiety of others ● Capable of swiftly meeting timescales and ensuring effective responses to issues and situations are delivered ● Excellent methods of prioritising an ever changing workload ● Ability to demonstrate skills, to keep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to understand and develop processes for Officers and Business support

	<p>track of caseload and issues, focussing on timely responses and consistency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to find compromise but also to maintain Council's position • Ability to meet the needs of the service within the constraints of the budget available 	
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive experience of working understanding of Childrens/Adults social care services and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working within a placement team
Equality	<p>Candidates must demonstrate an understanding of, acceptance and commitment to the principles underlying equal opportunities</p>	