**INNOVATIONS JOB DESCRIPTION INSERT**

**OUR VISION AND THE PLANNED PROCESS OF CHANGE IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS**

***All partners will work together to empower families and communities using the minimum necessary statutory intervention.***

***We will work to minimise need by offering effective preventative services, identifying need early and offering practical support. Where a child's wellbeing or safety is compromised, we will act swiftly to ensure safeguards are in place, including use of legal powers where necessary.***

**Planned Changes to Frontline Practice**

* Implement work force development plan including coaching and mentoring and with a focus on front line managers.
* Use of restorative, solution focused mediation processes and family group conferencing.
* Improved information sharing. 3rd sector services integrated with our service offer.
* Whole family assessment
* Practical hands on work from Social Workers.
* Improved relationships with families.
* Agreements with each family with goal orientated plans
* Greater opportunities for reflective practice with Social Work consultants and mentoring.
* More manageable caseloads for social workers.

**Planned Changes to Local System**

* Implement 10 multi skilled, integrated social work led teams.
* Identify one local area for first stage of implementation. Develop and amend procedures to fit the new model of service delivery.
* Amend IT systems to ensure they are fit for purpose.
* Marketing and publicity campaign for families and professionals.
* Build on systems of service user feedback.
* Development of evidence based practice tools and outcome framework for countywide implementation.
* Develop a multi-agency outcomes framework to measure change for children.

**Where are we now?**

* Too many children in receipt of high cost statutory services.
* Services remain reactive and are often offered too late
* Too high a prevalence of children experiencing chronic neglect (63% of children subject to a child protection plan in Durham in 2013/14) which should be identified and supported earlier.
* Too many families receive specialist support without a sustainable long term plan to help to maintain improvements leading to high numbers of re-referrals.
* Families experience a number of changes of worker/lead professional.
* Cases are escalated unnecessarily into social care due to the lack of social work expertise within early help services.

**Changes Needed to Local Practice**

* Every team will work to a Think Family model of service delivery and will deliver evidence & meaningful support based interventions.
* Every team will have a mix of social workers, think family practitioners, staff with remit around ‘economic wellbeing’, housing, social work consultative model and expertise to support high quality case work.
* Every team will have clear referral pathways into local voluntary and community sector services who can deliver long term sustainable support to families when they are no longer in need of specialist or targeted interventions.

**How will we know we are having an Impact?**

* Fewer LAC.
* There will be a reduction in re-referrals.
* Improved outcomes including, for example, school attendance, parenting skills.
* Greater proportion of families will have an identified worker who will remain constant regardless of level of need.
* Service user feedback will indicate that families are fully involved in their plans.
* A greater proportion of families will be engaged with the voluntary and community sector when they exit specialist social work services.
* Stakeholder feedback will indicate multi agency ownership of packages of support for families with clarity regarding roles and responsibilities.

**The Overall Impact of the Changes Will Be**

* More children receiving early help before reaching a safeguarding threshold and therefore not experiencing significant harm leading to lower numbers of referrals into social work teams and improved long term outcomes for children.
* A smaller number of children subject to a child protection plan for neglect (reduction of 20%) i.e. to 48% neglect.
* Less children becoming Looked After due to the provision of different social work interventions for families to enable them to keep children safely at home (a reduction on 20%).
* Improved rates of families receiving long term sustainable community based support through voluntary and community sector which will support the reduction in re referral rates and reduce numbers of re registrations. Broader outcomes for families will improve as well as those related to parenting capacity including educational attendance; financial literacy; employment and training.

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| 1.
 | **POST TITLE:** | **Social Worker Consultant**  |
| 1. **2.**
 | **POST NUMBER:**  |  |
| 1. **3.**
 | **GRADE:**  | **Grade 13****Job Evaluation Ref: N9112** |
|  | **LOCATION:** | An approved team location  |

1. **RELEVANT TO THIS POST:**

**Flexible Working:** Subject to service needs the council’s flexible working policy is applicable to this post

 **Disclosure & Barring Service** Not applicable

1. **ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:**

The post holder will be accountable to the Team Manager of the Innovations Team. In the absence of the Team Manager the, the post holder will be accountable to the Locality Operations Manager

1. **DESCRIPTION OF ROLE:**

The Social Worker Consultant will work with the Team Manager to manage and supervise an integrated, multi skilled social work led team to ensure high quality and effective services are delivered to children and their families within their team in line with procedures, legislation and national guidance.

The Social Worker Consultant will play a key role in developing and monitoring the competency of front line social care practitioners through developing, maintaining and championing expertise in specific areas of work with children and families; driving excellent practice based on research evidence and professional experience and supporting achievement of improved outcomes for vulnerable children and their families.

You will provide constructive challenge to enhance practice, procedures and policies, promote innovation and introduce new ways of working from recognised areas of excellence. You will contribute to the development of knowledge and promotion of excellence within the team making use of sophisticated, critical reasoning as well as modelling and facilitating reflective and evidence based decision making.

They will have the responsibility for:

* + - Promoting the safety and welfare of children and young people within their families and communities through the delivery of intensive support and interventions and ensuring that care plans are rooted in clear analysis of risk and resilience
		- the quality of day to day work ensuring purposeful and focused interventions are being provided with explicit aims and objectives to achieve desired outcomes
		- supporting the management of risk within the work of the team
		- ensuring excellent performance within the team against a range of performance measures, in conjunction with the team manager
		- the provision of expert social work advice and support to their team colleagues and within the locality One Point Service
* Ensuring that working practice maintains a focus on Thinking Family; empowering families to safely care for their children and children to flourish in achieving positive outcomes.
* Ensuring a reflective, learning culture is developed within the team & for each practitioner.
1. **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES *SPECIFIC* TO THIS POST:**

**Listed below are the responsibilities this role will be primarily responsible for:**

**Supporting Front line Practice**

**•** Supporting the team manager to ensure that effective systems are in place for managing workload, compliance with policies and procedures and good performance

• Reflective case discussions with members of the team around the family on a daily/weekly basis to review progress, which consider the effectiveness of plans and contingencies.

• Ensure that decision making and practice within the team and service is if the highest quality, recorded, evidence based and outcome focused

• To support the Team Manager in providing timely and robust responses to complaints

• Chair multi-agency meetings, including child protection strategy meetings and support high quality care planning processes

• Facilitate family mediation meetings to support families to find solutions to their own problems;

• Escalate complex and contentious care management issues so that positive and timely action can be taken to address risk and meet need.

• To ensure that all staff work within relevant legal, regulatory, procedural and policy frameworks

• To develop systems for effective engagement with children, young people and their families to ascertain their feedback and ensure they are central to future service developments

• Support the effective and consistent delivery of the work in the team in the absence of the team manager

Leadership

* Supervision and line management of Specialist Lead Professionals and Family Workers who are working in the team.
* Represent the Local Authority in a range of formal and informal settings
* Lead the teams to engage effectively with the Voluntary and Community Sector to support identified Family Need
* Facilitate team meetings and team development plans in conjunction with the team manager
* To demonstrate through personal and professional example a commitment to equality of opportunity for all groups of staff and service users and to challenge discrimination, racism, sexism and other forms of unjust behaviour.

Performance management

* To be responsible, together with the team manager for the provision of management information and its analysis to inform service provisions and meet performance indicators.
* Ensure that all assessments are produced within national and local timescales and are of sufficient quality to ensure high standards are met and outcomes for children improve
* To complete case file audits and themed audits within the team to ensure practice is of a high quality and ensure a cycle of continuous improvement

Practice Development

* Provision of mentoring, coaching, and support to a multi-agency staff group. This

 includes practice learning for Student Social Workers and NQSW’s on the ASYE programme and induction of new staff

* Assist with the professional development of all practitioners within the team, identifying suitable learning opportunities and their implementation into practice
* To lead on areas of developing practice within their team and wider services, extending knowledge, skills and expertise throughout the service.
* Facilitating peer group supervision and reflective supervision
* Deliver good practice sessions and training and ensure that there is good dissemination of current research, evidence based practice, policy, guidance, legislation and case law relating to children and families.
* Undertake direct observations of practice, supporting reflective thinking, giving feedback and mentoring/coaching others using a variety of adult learning styles
* To contribute to the development and implementation of policies and procedures and changes to the approach to social work and family work practice as and when required
* Motivate and inspire practitioners within the team through the direct delivery of training/good practice sessions
* The Post Holder will be required to demonstrate a commitment towards structuring their own training and development.

The post holder will also be required to

* To maintain their current HCPC registration and adhere to the HCPC codes of practice
* To work flexibly to meet the needs of children and their families which may include the need for some weekend working

The above outlines an overview of the duties required, however this is not comprehensive or an exclusive list and duties may be varied from time to time. This does not change the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed.

**9. COMMON DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

9.1 **Quality Assurance**

To set, monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team performance and service quality so that the user and the Service’s requirements are met and that the highest standards are maintained.

 To establish and monitor appropriate procedures to ensure that quality data are reported and used in decision making processes and to demonstrate through behaviour and actions a firm commitment to data security and confidentiality as appropriate.

9.2 **Communication**

To establish and manage the team communications systems ensuring that the Service’s procedures, policies, strategies and objectives are effectively communicated to all team members.

9.3 **Professional Practice**

 To ensure that professional practice in the team is carried out to the highest standards and developed in line with the Service’s stated objectives of continual improvement in quality of its service to internal and external customers.

9.4 **Health and Safety**

To ensure that the Health and Safety policy, organisation arrangements and procedures as they relate to areas, activities and personnel under your control are understood, implemented and monitored.

9.5 **General Management (where applicable)**

To provide vision and leadership to staff within a specialist team, ensuring that effective systems are in place for workload allocation and management, the application of the Authority’s and the Service’s policies and procedures, including those relating to equality, supervision and appraisal and all aspects of their performance, personal development, health and welfare.

9.6 **Financial Management (where applicable)**

To manage a designated budget (as required) ensuring that the Service achieves value for money in all circumstances through the monitoring and control of expenditure and the early identification of any financial irregularity.

9.7 **Appraisal**

 All members of staff will receive appraisals and it is the responsibility of each member of staff to follow guidance on the appraisal process.

9.8 **Equality and Diversity**

As an organisation we are committed to promoting a just society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination and prejudice.  To ensure our commitment is put into practice we have an equality policy which includes responsibility for all staff to eliminate unfair and unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity for all and foster good relations.

 These policies apply to all employees of Durham County Council.

9.9 **Confidentiality**

 All members of staff are required to undertake that they will not divulge to anyone personal and/or confidential information to which they may have access during the course of their work.

All members of staff must be aware that they have explicit responsibility for the confidentiality and security of information received and imported in the course of work and using Council information assets. The Council has a Personal Information Security Policy in place.

9.10 **Induction**

The Council has in place an induction programme designed to help new employees to become effective in their roles and to find their way in the organisation.

 **Person Specification Social Worker Consultant**

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|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Method of Assessment** |
| **Qualification** | Degree in social work **OR**  equivalent social work qualification, i.e. CQSW, CSS or Dip SW**AND** HCPC RegistrationAchievement of Post Qualification AwardCommitment to achieving NVQ level 4 in management or equivalent within 3 years of appointment | NVQ level 4 in management or equivalentStaff development qualification e.g. NVQ assessor, Practice teaching, coaching mentoring, Cert Ed etc | Application formSelection ProcessPre-employment checks |
| **Experience** | Substantial and recent post qualifying experience in statutory social work with children and families Experience of developing others by using a range of different techniques such as practice teaching, training, mentoring and observations of practiceExperience of interagency work Working with staff from a diverse range of organisationsSignificant experience of identifying and responding to need and risk Significant experience of the social work role across the children’s social care remit including assessment and planningSignificant experience of identifying and responding to need and risk Significant experience of the social work role across the children’s social care remit including assessment and planningExperience of involving children and ensuring their views are heardExperience of co-ordinating and chairing meetingsSubstantial experience in the application and use of a range of social work intervention and assessment tools | Experience of supervising staff and /or studentsService Project Development and implementing innovative practiceExperience of working in integrated teams/servicesExperience of work with third sector organisations and commissioned services.Coaching and mentoring staffExperience of influencing change, undertaking research and/or implementing recommendations from audits and serious case reviews.  | Application formSelection ProcessPre-employment checks |
| **Skills / Knowledge** | Ability to place the child at the centre of all practice, decision making and recording processesAbility to guide others, understand and manage need and risk across the threshold continuumKnowledge of a range of social work interventions and methods and a commitment to use of solution focused, strength based approaches with families Up to date knowledge of Social Work theory and practice and knowledge of current child care legislation, statutory guidance and child protection proceduresKnowledge of Think Family practice and interventions Highly developed skills in the ability to summarise, analyse and evaluate complex information and manage riskAbility to deal with emotional distress and challenging behaviour, including aggressionAbility to work on own initiative, organise workload, prioritise, achieve deadlines and work under pressureAbility to write concise, analytical reportsExcellent communication skills with children, families and professionalsAbility to lead social care professionals to deliver high quality servicesAbility to manage and support the process of change and an understanding of how to support people to changeAbility to quality assure work to a high standard and give constructive feedbackA high level of consultative, interpersonal and negotiation skills including the ability to deal with complex issues in a sensitive and appropriate wayAbility to establish and maintain effective working relationships across the council and with external partnersAbility to promote young people’s participation |  | Application formSelection ProcessPre-employment checks |
| **Personal Qualities** | Ability to reflect on own practice and the practice of others to provide effective outcome based feedbackCalm, considered, reflective and decisiveCommitment to high quality service delivery and improving outcomes for children and familiesFlexible to meet the needs of the servicePositive and Innovative approach to work Non confrontational approach to problem solvingOpen, honest and assertive mannerSupportive and challengingReliableStrong sense of selfCoaching /mentoring approachCommitment to creating an environment that promotes equality and diversityResilientEnthusiasticWillingness and ability to challenge discriminationMotivationalCapable of independent travel to meet the requirements of the post; |  | Application formSelection ProcessPre-employment checks |