

## Members' Library Service Request Form

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Document Title	Service Review Report - SDR Review Officer

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Additional information:

Authorised By	Sarah Fortune
Designation	Exec Director for Council Resources
Date	26/04/24

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## **SERVICE REVIEW REPORT**

**REPORT TO: MEMBERS LIBRARY SERVICE**

**BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – Council Resources**

**DATE: 02 April 2024**

**SUBJECT: Disability Team (Children’s Services) Service Review**

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### **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To seek Head of Corporate Support approval under delegated powers for the creation of a Self-Directed Review Officer post within the Disability Team as a permanent change to the staffing structure.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To agree the changes to the staffing structure as outlined in the report.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Disability Team currently consists of 1.0 Team Leader, 2.0 Senior Practitioner, 3.5 Social workers and 1.5 Family Support Workers. The implementation of the Self-Directed Support (Scotland) Act in 2013 saw a change within the way packages of support were delivered in East Lothian. Families were increasingly given budgets to purchase support, and these were reviewed on an annual basis. Initially these reviews were undertaken by a Family Support Worker (0.5 FTE) within the team. This role also facilitated any changes to plans and Direct Payment amounts. The current Family Support Worker does not reflect the roles and responsibilities of this post, and thus a new post of Self-Directed Review Officer has been created.
- 3.2 The proposal is to delete the vacant 0.5 FTE Family Support Worker from the staffing structure and replace with 0.5 FTE SDR officer post. This would be a permanent change and Line management will remain the same.
- 3.3 The job evaluation Team have evaluated this job and awarded and the following grade: Grade 8 - £32,903 - £36,826

### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

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## 5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

## 6 DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND REQUIREMENT

- 6.1 This post will require PVG clearance for regulated work with children and protected adults.

## 7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Financial – The financial costs will be met from the existing Disability Team budget. This post is the same costings at the 0.5 Family support worker which it replaces. The ledger code associated with this post is: 5-51-511-1-13-005-5527.
- 7.2 Personnel - This post has been formally evaluated and will be advertised in accordance with the Council's Recruitment & Selection Policy. HR and relevant Trades Unions will be consulted.

<b>AUTHOR'S NAME</b>	Emma Clater
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	Service Manager
<b>CONTACT INFO</b>	eclater@eastlothian.gov.uk
<b>DATE</b>	15 April 2024

<b>NAME</b>	Lindsey Byrne
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	Head of Children's Services
<b>CONTACT INFO</b>	Lbyrne@eastlothian.gov.uk
<b>DATE</b>	15 April 2024

**JOB DETAILS FORM**

JOB OUTLINE	
<b>JOB TITLE:</b> Self-Directed Support Review Officer	<b>JET CODE:</b> 7933
<b>DIVISION:</b> Education and Children's Services	
<b>SERVICE/BUSINESS UNIT:</b> Disability Team	
<b>REPORTING TO:</b> Team Leader /Senior Practitioner Disability Team	
<b>RESPONSIBLE FOR:</b> N/A	
<p><b>JOB PURPOSE:</b> To work as part of a supervisory group to create and implement the support plans of children and young people who have been assessed and are receiving a direct payment.</p> <p>To work as part of a planned duty system on a rota basis.</p>	
<p><b>MAIN DUTIES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for direct payments on unallocated cases where an assessment has been completed and a support plan is in place.</li> <li>• Responsible for the assessment of the suitability and plan of the Direct Payment.</li> <li>• Working in partnership with the child and family to the create and implement the support plans of children and young people.</li> <li>• Engage with relevant other professionals to inform assessments.</li> <li>• Undertake finance review, including inspection of the pre-payment card report to ensure the personal budget has been used to meet the agreed outcomes. Take appropriate action if this is not the case.</li> <li>• Maintain client records in a timeous manner, accessing systems in accordance with relevant GDPR polices using client information systems and other systems as defined by the team and in accordance with departmental and statutory requirements at all times.</li> <li>• Using knowledge and skills to support children, young people, and their families to be creative in agreeing appropriate outcomes for their support plans.</li> <li>• Working effectively and proactively in partnership with other professionals, departments, agencies e.g., housing, and education and health colleagues to provide practical support, advice and sign posting to children, young people, and their families.</li> </ul>	

- Using knowledge and skills to understand the range of needs and complexities of children and young people and what would be a fair and appropriate personal budget.
- Working on complex cases alongside, and under the supervision of, social work qualified team members to carry out clearly identified tasks including assessments.
- With supervision as required, utilise complex legislative, departmental, and financial processes to individual client situations to support their understanding and encourage engagement.
- Work autonomously for periods of time with access to advice and guidance, as necessary. To use initiative to support children, young people, and their families to consider and achieve their outcomes.
- An awareness of Child and Adult protection procedures including the identification and reporting of child and adult protection concerns to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, young people, and their families.
- Consistently demonstrate excellent communication skills and the use of a strength-based approach when supporting children, young people, and their families.
- Maintaining an awareness of financial pressures, limited resources, and best value.
- Undertake relevant training to maintain and improve knowledge and skills and to contribute to the learning and development of others.
- Maintain personal development, keeping up to date with legislation, best practice and completing training as required.
- Be aware of relevant health & safety responsibilities and duties and comply with Council policy.
- Any other appropriate duties, as requested by Management, commensurate with the grade for the post.

## **ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS ROLE**

### **Qualifications/Experience:**

HNC or SVQ Level 3 in either Social Care, Promoting Independence or Working with Young People and Children and able to demonstrate equivalent knowledge, skills, and competencies, gained through relevant experience.

### **Disclosure Scotland:**

This role requires PVG clearance for regulated work with children and protected adults. ELC will submit a PVG application on behalf of the preferred candidate and receipt of the subsequent PVG certificate will be required prior to commencement.

**Scottish Social Services Council:**

None

**TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The council's Children's Disability Team supports children and young people with disabilities, and their families. Our dedicated team offers targeted support in cases where a child or young person's disability is significantly impacting on their and their family's daily life, through support plans, funding advice and services such as Share the Care short breaks. This includes:

- Take the lead within Children's Services for service delivery and development of services for children and young people with complex disabilities.
- Provide statutory social work service as required to children and young people with complex disabilities.
- Manage and develop family-based respite service, Share the Care; recruit, assess and review carers.
- Duty to assess - Section 23 of CSA; provide resources, support planning and reviewing for children and young people who meet the eligibility criteria.
- Ensure fair and equitable distribution of resources (via Resource Allocation Panel) and management of the various budgets.
- Workload allocation and management of allocated and unallocated cases (currently 158 cases).
- Provide a planned Enquiry and Response Service to support new referrals and work required on unallocated cases.
- Work in partnership with Adult Services in relation to transition.
- Representation on various multi agency groups and panels, for example LENS, ERG, LD Strategy Group, ASD Information Sessions, ASD Family Follow up Sessions.
- Work in partnership with third sector colleagues, monitor services which are being provided to children and young people, for example residential respite and care at home.

**ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:**

<b>PERSON SPECIFICATION</b>		
<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Education, Registration & Training	HNC or SVQ Level 3 in either Social Care, Promoting Independence or Working with Young People and Children and able to demonstrate equivalent knowledge, skills, and competencies, gained through relevant experience.	HND / Degree in relevant field.  A current driving license and/or use of a vehicle to travel between locations.
Previous Experience (Paid & Voluntary Work)	Experience of working with vulnerable children and families  Experience of direct work with children  Experience of promoting parenting skills and techniques  Experience of early years programmes and early learning development tools	Experience of working with a range of agencies  Experience of group work
Knowledge/ Skills /Competencies	Effective verbal and written communication skills  A skilled user of Microsoft Office  An excellent understanding of child development and the needs of children  Effective time management and organisational skills	
Personal Qualities	Positive attitude and approach to working with young people and families, with the desire and ability to help children reach their full potential.  A willingness to undertake personal and professional training and development as required.	

	<p>Able to participate in activities with families and children.</p> <p>A flexible and creative approach</p> <p>Ability to communicate sensitively and effectively with children and adults.</p> <p>Ability to build good relationships with families that may be unfriendly at first.</p> <p>Ability to help parents develop the skills that they need to run their homes.</p> <p>A non-judgemental approach with a commitment to supporting people in difficult situations.</p> <p>Understanding, patience and good listening skills</p> <p>Ability to stay calm under pressure.</p> <p>Ability to use own initiative.</p> <p>Ability to work flexibly as part of a team.</p> <p>Ability to maintain confidentiality relating to sensitive or personal matter.</p>	
<p>Council Behaviours</p>	<p>We are Customer Focused</p> <p>We Initiate and Embrace Change</p> <p>We Strive to be the Best we can be.</p> <p>We make things Happen.</p> <p>We work Together.</p>	



## FACTOR LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

### WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

The job predominantly involves working indoors and includes travelling between different locations or premises in the course of normal duties.

The jobholder will undertake house visits around 2-3 days per week the week, with visits lasting last between 1-2 hours. Client's homes can be overcrowded and perhaps in a poor state of decoration and upkeep.

### PHYSICAL CO-ORDINATION:

Finger dexterity is required for keyboarding while working with Microsoft office and MOSIAC.

The jobholder is required to access mosaic on a daily basis, both before and after visiting children and their families. This will include both reviewing case files and updating records after visits/ phone calls etc.

The job holder travels to different locations to undertake work, however driving is not an essential requirement for this role.

### PHYSICAL EFFORT:

The job will be mainly undertaken in a sedentary position.

The jobholder attends service users' homes around 2-3 times per week with each visit lasting around 1-2 hours.

The job holder is required to transport/ lift and carry specialist equipment such as hoists, special chairs, safe space beds etc once every fortnight.

There is a requirement to walk to and from the car when attending home visits, as well as walking around the house when observing the family.

### MENTAL SKILLS:

The jobholder works in partnership with a team of professionals (Social work, Education, Healthcare etc) to provide self-directed support to the families of children who have a disability and are likely to require additional help with family life.

The aim of self-directed support is to allow anyone affected with a disability and ill-health, including children, to live a full life by making their own choices rather than having to fit into the services that happen to be provided.

The jobholder supports families/children by explaining the process of self-directed support and attending their home (sometimes schools) to undertake the child's Section 23 assessment,

which forms part of legislation and regulations relating to the relevant section of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995).

The assessment has 'eligibility criteria' for deciding which children will receive services/direct payments and how much support of will be provided depending on the level of need. The assessment is based on a range of factors such as the child's health and behaviour, but also the family circumstances and the home environment.

The jobholder will schedule home visits up to a month in advance, but sometimes families will be in touch when they are in crisis. They will hold a calendar with the reviews due each month.

The job holder is responsible for writing a detailed assessment and care plan. Initial assessments are discussed at Resource Allocation Panel, which is made up of managers from ELC, NHS and third sector agencies. This panel decides the need/eligibility and direct payment amount, which the jobholder manages and discusses with the families how the monies will be spent.

The job holder is responsible for creation of support plans which are authorised by the Team Leader through mosaic. They oversee implementation of this plan, once approved. The plans consider the child's whole circumstances, based around SHANARRI indicators (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included). The Plans last for 12 months and are reviewed at that point and plans updated.

Sometimes these plans will be complex with lots of different options/ services/ costings. Complex can involve the complexity of needs – children with very complicated situations – lots of professionals involved changing health conditions, carers that may not agree with the plans or level of support, parents that are separated acrimoniously, parents that can't care for their children anymore.

There is a lot of options as a Self-Directed Support (SDS) model used underpins values of choice and understanding what families want. This takes skill to work with the family to understand their needs and what would make a difference, as all children working with this team have complex and enduring disabilities. Often, families who are struggling can be unsure of what solutions may help. The job holder interprets their situation and uses judgement, creativity, knowledge, and experience to create and agree appropriate outcomes and solutions for families.

Families can choose whether to purchase services and/or items themselves using a budget (a direct payment) allocated by the service or services can be provided directly by the service. Examples include options such overnight rest bite, help around the home, a holiday, playscheme, membership for family park, hot tubs for physical disability or specialist equipment.

**CONCENTRATION:**

The jobholder is required to concentrate during home visits and undertaking assessments. They attend homes around 2-3 times per week, with each visit lasting 1-2 hours.

Excellent listening skills are required to focus on what is implied and not necessarily said, due to the complexities around the issues in relation to each individual to ensure they are given the correct level of support/care. They must also concentrate when taking handwritten notes/recording information. The jobholder is unable to deal with interruptions during home visits unless it is a phone call relating to an emergency intervention, in which case, the job holder would take the call and pass to another person in the team.

They are required to concentrate while updating client records in mosaic after home visits. Typically, this is 2-3 times per week for around 10-30 minutes. They are able to deal with interruptions during this time.

Furthermore, concentration is required when creating/writing detailed plans. Typically, they are required to concentrate for 2 hours when writing plans, around twice per week. The job holder is able to deal with interruptions when writing plans.

The jobholder will be required to regularly attend meetings with a range of other professionals in which to discuss the assessments and plans and to agree on the appropriate services/payments/outcomes for the families. These meetings can last up to 1 hour. The information presented is often complex (medical conditions etc), however the presenter is required to simplify the message/information. The jobholder must concentrate and retain a large amount of information while at the same time formulating an appropriate plan of action for that young person. Meetings are held twice per week.

The jobholder is required to balance service work with an active caseload which will include children and families receiving support from the jobholder who have been identified through the self-referral or intervention process.

Work is deadline driven. The jobholder is required to create and implement plans to ensure the direct payment cards don't expire. Cards are valid for 12 months. They are also required to meet internal deadlines when updating client information in mosaic. All information must be on the system within one week. They must also meet deadlines for the assessment panel and weekly banking run.

**COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS:**

Excellent communication skills both verbally and written are key to this role as the jobholder is responsible for developing constructive relationships with children and their families to support their wellbeing.

The job holder must explain legislation to families and why they are intervening, which may include child protection concerns. The aim is to communicate/work effectively with families and help them see solutions for their problems. This takes good communication skills and often a staged approach.

The children / families the jobholder supports will display distressed behaviours which manifest in reluctance to accept support/intervention as they may not agree with plans and actions. The jobholder is required to use negotiation and persuasion skills to support families and encourage engagement.

They provide practical support and advice to families and children. Examples of support and advice include:

- Helping carers to complete referrals/ forms.
- Helping carers who are employing Personal Assistants to set that up with external agencies.
- Completing paperwork, helping with phone calls etc.
- Parenting advice may be provided around how manage challenging behaviour and also how to access services, supports in the community etc.
- Explaining processes etc

The jobholder regularly communicates and engages with a team of professionals (Social work, Education, Healthcare etc) to inform assessments and to gather and collate information on the child/family's situation – checking with professionals to ensure they information they have on the child is correct or advising that the situation is worse than the parents are letting on.

The jobholder makes recommendations and advocate for the families based on their assessment, observations, and operational knowledge. The team may push back, and the jobholder must try and encourage, persuade, and negotiate to ensure families have access to the appropriate support based on their individual circumstances. This will be done through phone calls and emails. They may negotiate the need for specialist equipment, financial support (when care needs exceed the value of money being offered) or access to certain services. They may advocate when families feel that Education, for example, are not providing the necessary support.

They meet with families at school or attend school meetings - these meeting involve the jobholder getting the views of children and young people. This may involve children who do not communicate verbally, but use PECS or sign along, or communicate through their behaviour. There is a skill in using these tools and interpreting the views.

#### **DEALING WITH RELATIONSHIPS:**

The jobholder deals with families who are hostile to support or unwelcoming. All children have complex and enduring disabilities. Families can be tearful about their situation, distressed, angry and upset, as they are living in very stressful situations caring for children with 24-hour needs.

The SDR Review Officer can often get the brunt of anger/emotions from parents about their situation during home visits and sometimes over the phone.

Some children will be in crisis, both in terms of health and support. This may result in home visits that can be quite emotive for the jobholder. Parents may be frustrated and could be challenging in their approach. This can involve a second person being asked to accompany the jobholder or seeking advice from their line manager.

They need to be aware of the emotions of others and how to effectively manage upset and distressed behaviour. The jobholder will have experience and training managing/deescalating hostile situations.

The jobholder spends around 6 hours per week dealing directly with children and families. Typically, they come into contact with families who are angry around twice per month.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR EMPLOYEES:**

In the course of normal working the jobholder has no responsibility for the work of employees.

The jobholder will work as part of a team, which may mean being part of a duty system and sharing knowledge within team meetings etc.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR SERVICES TO OTHERS:**

The jobholder undertakes tasks or processes which contribute to a service provided by the Council for children with complex and enduring disabilities and their families. This is through the assessment of the child/family's needs, self-directed support, and the creation and implementation of bespoke plans to improve wellbeing and quality of family life.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL RESOURCES:**

The jobholder has an indirect responsibility for financial resources. This involves oversight of how Direct Payments are spent up to the value of 165k, as well as examining spending on pre-payment cards etc. The job holder is responsible for flagging any misspend on the payment cards to their manager.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR PHYSICAL AND INFORMATION RESOURCES:**

The jobholder is responsible for creating and maintaining personal and sensitive information/records on Mosaic relating children and their families, while adhering General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) around how personal information is managed.

The information/data relating to the children/families can be accessed and viewed by Children's Services and other key professionals such as housing, education, early years etc,

The jobholder is responsible for the use and safe keeping of a laptop.

### **INITIATIVE & INDEPENDENCE:**

The jobholder works within established social work procedures, regulations, and legislation when supporting children and families. However, their approach must be flexible as this type of work is not always predictable. They are expected to work autonomously with access to advice and guidance, as required.

They are required to use initiative to support children and families, as well as to resolve predictable problems, such as helping carers who cannot find anyone to provide care for their child and are desperately seeking support. The jobholder would need to try, and problem solve that with carers and perhaps see if care can be provided in another way.

The following are examples of problems that would be referred upwards:

- Anything relating to misspend/how to claim money back.
- Managing a situation where someone wants to relinquish their child.
- Child protection concerns.

The jobholder does not contribute to policy or strategy.

### **KNOWLEDGE:**

The Jobholder must be educated to HNC or SVQ Level 3 in either Social Care, Promoting Independence or Working with Young People and Children and able to demonstrate equivalent knowledge, skills, and competencies, gained through relevant experience.

The must have the following experience and knowledge:

- Experience of working with vulnerable children and families
- Experience of direct work with children
- Experience of promoting parenting skills and techniques
- Experience of early years programmes and early learning development tools
- Effective verbal and written communication skills
- A skilled user of Microsoft Office
- An excellent understanding of child development and the needs of children
- Effective time management and organisational skills

They are required to have a willingness to commit to professional training and development.

**AUTHORISATION:**

I have read the information contained in this document and confirm that it is an accurate reflection of the duties and responsibilities for this post.

**Jobholder\***

Signed ..... Date .....

**Line Manager**

Signed ..... Date .....

**Service Manager**

Signed .....Emma Clater..... Date 12/03/2024