

Context statement

To accompany job description and person specification when required

Job title:

Specialist Manager – Learning Disability

Directorate/Service/Team:

Adults and Housing Directorate / Specialist Services / Learning Disability

Organisation structure

Reporting to:

Head of Specialist Services

The Dorset Council Adults and Housing Directorate delivers adult social care, housing, and a range of community services to people of all ages living in Dorset within the context of the Dorset Council Plan.

The Council Plan is focused on 'Working together to create a fairer, more prosperous and more sustainable Dorset for current and future generations. Guiding this vision are the underlying principles of Partnership and Prevention.

The Council Plan will be delivered through 4 priority outcome areas: Provide Affordable and High Quality Housing, Grow our economy, Communities for All and Respond to the Climate and Nature Crisis. The Directorate contributes to these corporate outcomes.

Dorset Council is undergoing an ambitious transformation through Our Future Council programme, alongside integrated initiatives with the NHS such as Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and Communities for All. These efforts, combined with the Birth to Settled Adulthood programme are creating a dynamic environment for change.

Our ambition is to achieve better outcomes for residents by adopting strength-based approaches informed by lived experience. We aim to connect people with their local communities and enhance their care through the use of technology, equipment, and, where appropriate, skilled support from commissioned services. Working collaboratively with colleagues in Commissioning and Housing, this approach also enables us to meet assessed needs in creative and personalised ways—helping to deliver savings and avoid additional costs.

Context of work

The Specialist Manager for the Learning Disability Service will work collaboratively with the other Specialist Manager for Learning Disabilities. Together they will be responsible for the leadership and management of the service including ensuring it is meeting its statutory responsibilities under social care legislative frameworks. This includes The Care Act, Mental Capacity Act, and Mental Health Act.

The post holder will be leading developments in quality of social work and Occupational Therapy practice with the Principal Social Worker and Principal Occupational Therapist with specific oversight and management of the Area Practice Managers who will be a critical point for ensuring the quality of practice. They will ensure that practice is compliant with the aims of the legislation and delivers the local authority responsibilities. As part of this they will support the development of learning and development opportunities which should be aligned with professional development requirements.



The post-holder will have specific responsibilities to support the professional development of the staff working in the Learning Disability Service, ensuring they are legally literate, have strengths based, person centred approaches embedded in their practice.

The post holder will be a champion for equality, diversity, inclusion and social justice. They will be able to recognise and challenge the barriers and disadvantages that people with a learning disability may face and work collaboratively to seek ways to address these.

The learning disability teams are co-located with health colleagues and work closely with them to offer a more joined up approach to delivering health and social care interventions. The post holder must be able to build positive working relationships with colleagues across the system to drive forward changes to positively improve outcomes for people with a learning disability.

The Learning Disabilities Service plays a vital role in delivering high-quality social care that promotes choice, dignity, and wellbeing. The post holder will provide sound leadership in managing complex situations, including supporting individuals at risk of hospital admission or those requiring coordinated discharge planning. The role also includes oversight of people who may pose particular risks—such as those on the Dynamic Support Register or subject to social supervision—ensuring robust risk management and multi-agency collaboration.

The postholder will be expected to contribute to the implementation of the Birth to Settled Adulthood programme. Their role will be to ensure a more seamless transition into adulthood for young people with care and support needs and support them to achieve their outcomes in a more creative and person centred way.

The post-holder will be accountable for ensuring that their adult social care team operational budgets are well managed, that national and local performance targets are achieved and where required mitigating actions are put in place to manage risks to delivery.

The post holder will be involved in audit work, quality assurance and budget meetings and will provide regular performance reports as required.

The post-holder will be expected to participate in Directorate meetings and contribute to Whole council working groups. They will be required to liaise effectively with local elected members.