Senior Commissioning Officer

£33,106 - £40,619

Lancaster Circus, Birmingham

Working 36.5 hours, SENAR provides the Local Authority’s statutory duty to assess children and young people with severe and/or complex educational needs. As a result of the SEND Reforms, which took effect from 1st September 2014, SENAR has restructured and expanded its team.

This is an opportunity to join the service at an exciting time when we will be building on existing good practice as well as developing new initiatives to meet the requirements of the 2014 SEN Code of Practice, including the provision of Education, Health and Care Plans and commissioning of SEN placements.

You will take a lead role in commissioning, contract, budget management, policy and planning activity across the service with responsibility for specific agendas. This role will focus on supporting the delivery of a set of agreed commissioning intentions, undertaking the operational activities outlined under the ‘Analyse’ ‘Plan’ and ‘Do’ and ‘Review’ functions outlined in the job description.

The post holder’s will play a key operational or strategic role in ensuring that the services commissioned deliver improved outcomes for children, young people and their families/carers, are of an appropriate standard and comply with regulation.

You must have a thorough awareness and understanding of statutory processes and legislation relevant to special educational needs and can demonstrate a commitment to the inclusion agenda.

We are recruiting to 1 x Operational and 2 x Strategic Senior Commissioning Officers

Ref: CN2852016J

Closing Date: 26 August 2016

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be undertaken

“Right to work in the UK documentation will be fully checked for all applicants. All non UK and non EU applicants are required to apply for a Certificate of Sponsorship from Birmingham City Council and must be approved by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) before any employment offer can be confirmed.”

“The City Council is currently consulting on potential changes to its terms and conditions (in line with its s.188 notice) which may have an impact on any contract of employment that is offered should the candidate be successful”
Directorate for People

Job Description

Post: Senior Commissioning Officer
Salary/Grade: GR5
Division: Complex Needs - SENAR
Reporting to: SENAR Commissioning Manager

Our Vision

Birmingham City Council and Directorate for People aim to improve the quality of life for the children and young people of Birmingham today, tomorrow and always. “Every child and young person with additional and special educational needs or disability will have a great life in their local community, with the same life opportunities as those available for the wider population. We want them to fulfil their potential and to move successfully into adulthood.”

SENAR Commissioning Vision

- Outcome-focused and evidence based commissioning
- Enabling and preventative-focused commissioning
- Commissioning for personalisation, putting children and young people first
- Market intelligence and understanding of future need/market development
- SENAR commissioning cycle and annual activity plan aligned with social care and health partners
- Robust contract management and supplier relationship management
- Providing value for money and affordability into the future
- Quality assured provision
- Sustainable local provision providing greater choice and control for parents, children and young people
- Collaboration with partners with a focus on social care and health
- Opportunities for learning and innovation within Birmingham SEND market (allowing proportionate risk, managed safely)
- Being provider neutral

Role Context

The vision, approach and values of SENAR Commissioning are reflected throughout this job description. It describes the collective responsibilities and activities required by Grade 5 (GR5) officers to meet business need. These are outlined below under the commissioning cycle headings of “Analyse”, “Plan”, “Do” and “Review”.

Individual officers will not undertake all of the responsibilities and activities outlined under each of the four headings. Senior Officer’s will be required to deliver on a selection of the key responsibilities listed. Responsibilities will change and evolve based on emerging priorities and business needs.

Post Context

This role will focus on supporting the delivery of a set of agreed commissioning intentions, undertaking the operational activities outlined under the ‘Analyse’, ‘Plan’ and ‘Do’ and ‘Review’ functions outlined below. The post holder will play a key operational role in ensuring that the services commissioned deliver improved outcomes for children, young people and their families/carers, are of an appropriate standard and comply with regulation. Post
holder’s, as senior team members, will operate as a Senior Officers through supporting large projects or by taking the role of team leader on smaller pieces of work. One post will lead on the day to day finance and contract operations for SENAR, ensuring financial and contractual regulations and policies are adhered to.

**Role Purpose**

- To take a lead role in commissioning, contract and budget management, policy and planning activity across Birmingham with responsibility for specific agendas.
- To provide high-level support in the delivery of a sufficiency of effective, high quality and evidence based services of a reasonable cost, accessible and appropriate to service users, through the application of commissioning techniques, e.g. market management.
- To take delegated responsibility for the effective utilisation of supply across a range of service variants in order to match the needs of individuals and populations and provide value to the Council and partners.
- To make a key contribution to ensuring that the service delivers against key Directorate priorities and targets, as well as operating within cash limit / activity budgets set out in the Council’s financial plans.
- To apply intelligence and expertise in order to assist and inform decisions in relation to SEN placements.
- To support and manage change within the Directorate.
- To make a key contribution to the delivery of the strategic commissioning intentions of SENAR and its partners.
- To support the continual development of SENAR so that is makes best use of resources and delivers value for money.
- To support senior managers in effective budget monitoring of the High Needs budget for SEN. Developing and maintaining effective monitoring systems and improving business practices to support this.
- To ensure the provision of effective, consistent and delivery-focused activity that enables improved outcomes for service users to be achieved.
- To make a key contribution to the development of relationships with internal stakeholders, suppliers and organisations to deliver services and support that result in improved outcomes for citizens.
- To develop an evidence base that supports the delivery of improved outcomes through innovative practice.
- To provide comprehensive intelligence, analysis and research as required by various stakeholders that drives continuous improvement and a performance management culture within the Directorate and partners.
- To ensure that service users, carers and parents are demonstrably and successfully involved in developing services.
- To take a lead operational role in the Directorate’s research governance process; providing advice and support to staff to undertake research and evaluation that assists in service improvement.
Key Responsibilities

The collective activities required by Grade 5 (GR5) officers working flexibly across SENAR commissioning to meet business needs are outlined below under the headings of “Analyse”, “Plan”, “Do” and “Review”.

Analyse

- To manage staff and resources to develop, implement and support an integrated intelligence approach for SENAR.
- To make a key contribution to the analysis, interpretation and reporting of performance across a range of the Directorate’s activities and, where relevant, activity with partners.
- To take delegated responsibility for the implementation and delivery of performance and governance strategies.
- To actively support the development and implementation of processes to collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative views from current and potential service users, their carers, family and community to improve the quality of service provision and to contribute to the co-production of effective solutions.
- To manage the capture and analysis of a wide range of business information and intelligence that will inform the formulation and review of commissioning intentions and strategic priorities.
- To make a key contribution to the provision of an evidence base to facilitate continuous service improvement.
- To maintain an overview of service and population areas that supports and informs strategic and operational commissioning – this will include the effective delivery of components of needs analyses, service reviews and Equality Analyses.
- To develop a commercial understanding of providers and markets and use this to inform commissioning activity.
- To carry out information gathering to support commissioning activities. This would include for example, the development of service specifications, market position statements (sufficiency statements) and contributing to equality impact analysis.
- To accept delegated responsibility for the preparation and response to statutory data returns required by Government, Freedom of Information requests and performance reports required by project governance structures.
- To establish and maintain an understanding of population and user (potential, current or future) demographics to inform forecasting, service projections and Equality Assessments.
- To undertake desktop research to inform service and policy development.

Plan

- To support the production of robust business cases in response to commissioning information, business intelligence and resource availability.
- To play a key role in the development of projects through the application of project management principles.
- To engage service users, carers and parents in developing services and evidence how the resulting services are better able to meet needs.
• To provide operational support in the adoption of a co-production model of service development wherever possible, using existing and new user engagement approaches.
• To make a key contribution to the preparation and delivery of options appraisals to inform decision making.
• To take a lead support role in the development of suppliers and markets that deliver the services required to promote improved outcomes.
• To develop and apply an understanding of corporate commissioning, contract management and procurement frameworks.
• To undertake commissioning activity that improves the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of citizens in Birmingham.
• To support the development and monitoring of the Strategic Business Plan and Service Plans.
• To be responsible for compiling and maintaining information of the supply, location and quality of provision in the ‘market place’ and for helping to shape the market to ensure the correct range of services are available to meet the service need.
• To develop management information datasets which meet both the requirements of the future operating model and statutory responsibilities.

Do

• To deliver efficient use of council services and those contracted from third parties and internal services, by the application of contract management, performance management, quality assurance and other relevant processes.
• To take a lead support role in the delivery of continuous improvements in performance, cost and quality to ensure KPI’s, key outcomes and targets are achieved in line with Council and partner priorities, statutory and community requirements.
• To take a lead support role in the development and delivery of the commissioning intentions and approach as defined by the strategic commissioning function.
• To make a key contribution to the operational delivery of individual projects within a service area using effective project management principles, tools and reporting processes.
• To make a key contribution to the development of services that can flex to meet the needs of individual citizens.
• To produce a range of information and reports in relevant formats for senior staff and elected Members on service activities as required.
• To successfully engage with a range of stakeholders including principal officers, schools and educational providers in a range of settings and so better communicate SENAR and directorate activity
• To ensure that members of a team are accountable, effectively managed, and supported.
• To carry out activity with suppliers to address risk and safeguarding issues for individuals, as well as organisational capacity and capability issues.
• To oversee brokerage/placement activity and ensure that services meet assessed need and provide best value.
• To carry out assessments of current service demand and market use at the appropriate level of granularity in order that statutory duties are met for the individual and for sufficiency.
• To take a lead role in the operational delivery of individual level commissioning for citizens across the Directorate.
• To undertake delivery of quality and audit activity across relevant commissioning areas.
• To strengthen the development of evidence informed policy and practice by providing advice and guidance relating to sources of evidence within SENAR and wider Council.
• Provide regular management information in relation to safeguarding, finance, activity, Human Resources and user experience that feeds the Directorate’s balanced scorecards and supports continuous improvements.
• To be responsible for the extraction, collection, validation and submission of information to meet statutory requirements within agreed timescales on behalf of the Directorate.
• Manage a resource for the Directorate of documents of interest such as key policy documents, legislation, inspection reports and research circulated by the partner organisations, research organisations and government agencies.

Review
• To identify and analyse a range of quantitative and qualitative data to review the delivery of activity against service delivery and to develop options and recommendations for Managers as to the future service delivery area.
• To take on delegated responsibility for the review of strategies and policies adopted by the City Council for which the Directorate for People is the lead Directorate to ensure these are compliant with legislation and deliver corporate and, as appropriate, regional and national priorities.
• To prepare regular and ad-hoc reports, as appropriate summarising status on issues, appraising outcomes and providing progress updates.
• To undertake delivery of continuous improvements in performance, cost and quality to ensure KPIs, key outcomes and targets are achieved in line with priorities.
• To take a lead role in undertaking the analysis, interpretation and presentation of data to highlight issues, risks and support future decision making.
• To take a lead role in carrying out analysis of service delivery to determine the effectiveness of reducing health, housing and other inequalities of disadvantaged groups.
• To build awareness of the benefits of diversity and build an active commitment to equality of opportunity for all.
• To work according to the principle of improvement through innovation.
• To support contract negotiations with relevant suppliers within agreed timescales.
• Identify developments that may impact on the Directorate through reviews of government strategies and policies ensuring information is disseminated to relevant audiences in an appropriate format.
• To deliver an effective complaints service as well as promoting learning from complaints.
To make a key contribution to ensuring that the Citizen Voice is embedded throughout the commissioning cycle

Professional Development

- To maintain personal and professional development in order to meet the changing demands of the role.
- To promote and maintain organisational values and behaviours at all times, leading by example.
- To keep up to date with relevant professional developments.
- To contribute to the team's effectiveness by developing and sharing best practice.
- To attend and actively participate in appropriate training activities both internal and external.
- To encourage and support others in their learning, development and training.
- To develop productive working relationships with colleagues.

Supervision Required

- **Supervision Officer**: SENAR Commissioning Manager
- **Level of Supervision**: Plan own work to ensure the meeting of defined objectives.
- **Supervision Given** (excludes those who are indirectly supervised i.e. through others).
  Post holder will be required as necessary to manage staff within their Team/Area including (but not limited to) 4 x Commissioning and Finance Officers

Special Conditions

- This vacancy is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- A DBS check may be undertaken
- Observance of the City Council’s Equal Opportunities Policy will be required.
# Directorate for People

## Person Specification

**Job Title:** Senior Commissioning Officer (Operational)  
**Grade:** GR5

**Division:** Complex Needs  
**Section:** SENAR

### Method of Assessment (M.O.A.)
- A.F. = Application Form; I. = Interview;  
  T. = Test or Exercise; C. = Certificate; P. = Presentation.

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<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>ESSENTIAL</th>
<th>M.O.A.</th>
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| Experience  
(Relevant work and other experience). | 1. Experience of undertaking the analysis and interpretation of complex data from a variety of sources | A & I |
| | 2. Experience of developing and maintaining collaborative relationships to develop customer insight with diverse stakeholder groups, including citizens, providers and colleagues | A & I & P |
| | 3. Experience of negotiation and influencing stakeholders including colleagues, external partners and citizens. | A & I |
| | 4. Demonstration of strategic awareness and supporting the development and implementation of strategies/service changes which deliver improved outcomes for stakeholders | A & I & P |
| | 5. Demonstration of an ability to build effective partnerships in order to understand and develop markets to reflect evolving need. | A & I |
| | 6. Experience of supporting service areas to ensure vulnerable citizens are safeguarded | A & I |
| | 7. Experience of playing a lead role on activity in the commissioning cycle, for example commissioning intention development, service specification development, contract negotiation, service review | A & I & P |
| | 8. Supporting the delivery of change projects or programmes | A & I |
9. Experience of involving citizens and stakeholders in co-production and consultation leading to the development of services.

10. Experience of the development and delivery of performance management frameworks to ensure service improvement and effectiveness.

11. Understanding how equal opportunities in both employment and service delivery are applied within a large and complex organisation.

12. Experience of applying knowledge of relevant legislation in the development and implementation of service specification standards and related performance reporting.

13. Experience of the development, maintenance, evaluation and review of systems and supporting tools to support the data requirements of a large and complex organisation.

Skills and Ability

1. Ability to prioritise competing demands on own resources to deliver identified objectives/outcomes

2. Effective IT skills which enable successful service delivery

3. Demonstrable ability to communicate and engage with all stakeholders effectively to shape service development and delivery, utilising appropriate tools and techniques

4. The ability to successfully build and maintain effective relationships with senior colleagues, external agencies, children and their families and carers, demonstrating effective interpersonal skills in dealing with people at all levels and from a wide range of backgrounds.

5. Ability to manage and motivate teams, creating a positive environment which supports performance, builds capability and empowers staff.

6. Ability to translate strategic priorities/policies into defined plans for delivery
| 7. Highly developed knowledge of data analysis, information gathering and research approaches and techniques | I |
| 8. Ability to deliver objectives in a pressurised environment and against tight deadlines | I |
| 9. Highly developed numerical skills, knowledge and understanding of budget monitoring, planning and forecasting. | I & T |

**Qualification & Training**

| 1. Ability to demonstrate a significant level of experience working at this level. | A, I & P |
| 2. Evidence of recent development and learning | A & I |

This is a politically restricted post as defined by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989

Birmingham City Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment

All staff are expected to understand and be committed to Equal Opportunities in employment and service delivery