

## Job Description

Job title	<COMPLAINTS MANAGER FOR SOCIAL CARE>
Directorate	BUSINESS : Business Support
Division	< FINANCE AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT>
Range	MPR 5
Reports to	<CUSTOMER RELATIONS MANAGER>

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### Main purpose of the job:

To deliver a high quality, professional, modern and evolving service to internal and external customers dealing with compliments, comments and statutory and non-statutory complaints processes for Children and Adults' Social Care services so that the organisation meets its obligations arising from the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006, and the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 Regulations 2009, and subsequent legislation.

Work closely with social care teams and managers to manage complaints performance and ensure that complaints are responded to effectively, within target deadlines, and take the lead in coordinating multi-service complaints.

Enable continuous service improvement through customer feedback by analysing data, and producing, and presenting management information to a range of audiences, including relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees, highlighting volumes, timeliness, common themes and anomalies, and identifying learning.

Liaise with stakeholders in a way that promotes the [vision and values](#) of the Council.

### Accountabilities and outcomes:

Effectively manage the triaging of Children's and Adults' Social Care complaints and concerns to ensure that appropriate statutory or non-statutory process is followed.

Ensure that all complaints are thoroughly investigated and answered in a comprehensive and timely fashion and that remedies and learning are applied to prevent recurrence.

Thoroughly investigate stage 2 Children's Social Care complaints, Adult Social Care further investigations, and some stage 1 complaints where the Deputy/Assistant Director requests, to ensure that investigations are fair and conducted in line with the standards set out by the



Ombudsman.

Ensure that a robust system is in place to monitor for the completion of promised actions to effectively resolve complaint issues.

Ensure that processes are accessible, and that easy-to-understand guidance and literature is available via a range of media to enable fair and equal access to complaints, comments and compliments for any person receiving care, their parents, guardians, carers, advocates and foster carers.

Promote best practice and provide advice and guidance to the senior management of Children and Adults' Social Care and to all officers involved in social care complaints to ensure complaints are resolved in a timely, fair, and transparent manner.

Appoint Investigating Officers, Independent People and Review Panellists when required, working closely with internal and external colleagues, and the Panel Chair, to arrange Stage 2 investigations and Stage 3 panels, and participate in the execution of Stage 3 panel reviews.

Deliver training and workshops and commission external trainers where necessary, to ensure that all colleagues who work to resolve social care complaints are sufficiently and appropriately trained.

Discuss social care complaint cases regularly with the Customer Relations Team Leader, particularly those where complainants are dissatisfied after stage 1 responses, and cases escalating to Stage 2 or the LGSCO, and provide guidance on the management of these cases to ensure that they are progressed efficiently, that resources are available and that deadlines are managed.

Deal with complex problems that arise during the day-to-day investigation of complaints, which may affect a number of service areas and refer problems of an unprecedented, sensitive, or reputational nature to the Customer Relations Manager.

Establish positive and constructive relationships with:

- the Customer Relations Team Leader, Customer Relations Manager and the Customer Relations Investigations Officers who support social care complaints
- the Children and Adult social care directorate management team, and their service managers, senior managers and local liaison officers,
- the Legal service to ensure all relevant legislation is observed;
- other senior managers who support social care (e.g. Customer and Business Support, Finance) and may be required to contribute to the investigation of complaints
- independent people engaged in investigating Stage 2 complaints or reviewing Stage 3 panels.

Disseminate lessons learnt from compliments and complaints to staff in Children and Adults' social care through attendance at team meetings, running workshops, and attendance at quality assurance forums.

Help drive and manage change, including new technologies and new ways of working, and to help ensure the modernisation and improvement agenda is continuous and embedded throughout the team.

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

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### Key Corporate Accountabilities:

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

To understand and actively keep up to date with GDPR responsibilities, including completing regular refresher training.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all employees are required to act in such a way that safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

To participate in the Performance Appraisal process and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs utilising the Career Development Framework.

To actively promote the Council's Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

Promote the Medway Carbon Neutral by 2050 commitment; supporting the Council action plan to ensure we play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

### Organisation:

This role reports to the <CUSTOMER RELATIONS MANAGER>.

The post holder will not be required to line manage others but may be required to direct, coordinate or train other employees.

The post holder will be required to liaise with all stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation.

## Working Style:

HYBRID - a flexible working arrangement whereby an employee can undertake their work either in the office and/or partially or mainly from home on a temporary or permanent basis.



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## Person Specification

All criteria at level A are considered essential unless stated otherwise.

### Qualifications

#### Level A

- High level of general education to A level or equivalent, with a particular emphasis on English and Mathematics

#### Level B (in addition)

- Undertaken a full range of trainings offered by the Practice Development Service

#### Level C (in addition)

- Evidence of ongoing continuous professional development
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### Knowledge

#### Level A

- A thorough knowledge of social care complaints processes as set out within the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006, and the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 Regulations 2009, and subsequent legislation and how Medway Council applies these.
- Knowledge of the structure of Customer and Business Support Services within Local Authority and how this functions to support services and complainants.

#### Level B (in addition)

- An awareness of social care practices through working with services and attending relevant workshops and training.
- A good understanding of a range Medway Council processes and Policies, including:
  - GDPR and its importance when handling customer data
  - Fair access and inclusion
  - Prevention of Violence of Work and Aggression
  - Persistent Complainer Policy
  - Domestic Abuse
  - Safeguarding referral
- A thorough knowledge of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Parliamentary and Health Care Ombudsman and their processes and powers.
- A practical understanding of the Ombudsman's Guidance on Remedies and the ability to advise colleagues on appropriate and early remedies.
- A good Knowledge of the DFE's Getting the Best from Complaints guidance, and the requirements and roles set out within it.

### Level C (in addition)

- Proficient knowledge of a range of social care practices,  
  
or;
- A working knowledge of the full range of services provided by unitary authorities and a sound knowledge of customer services and/or administration business support services.

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## Experience

### Level A

- Experience of working in a social care setting which may include complaints management.
- Experience working within a Public Sector Organisation.
- Experience of regularly analysing data and presenting accurate and concise written and verbal management information and performance reports to a range of audiences.
- Experience in investigating, responding to, and effectively resolving stage 1 social care complaints and further investigations, ensuring that investigations and responses are well coordinated for complex complaints, for example where the issues span across several service areas.
- Experience in acting as the Investigating Officer for stage 2 Children's Social Care complaints.
- Experience in resolving complaints through Alternative Dispute Resolution meetings, using negotiation and mediation.
- Experience in managing and prioritizing own workload, working with high levels of work-related pressure, for example, from deadlines, interruptions, or conflicting demands.

### Level B (in addition)

- A minimum of 12 months' satisfactory and consistent performance working within this or a comparable role, including up to date mandatory training.
- Completed at least four 'shadowing' days within a 12-month period, within a high complaint social care service.
- Experience in analysing complaint and compliment data and producing and presenting monthly, quarterly and annual complaints analysis reports to a range of audiences, including relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- Experience in working with the chair to organise stage 3 children's social care complaints panels, including preparing panel papers, sending invitations, arranging funding and settling invoices within timescales.
- Experience in appointing Independent People to work on stage 2 Children's Social Care complaints including arranging funding and settling invoices.
- Experience of developing individuals and teams by coaching/mentoring and sharing best practice.

## Level C (in addition)

- A minimum of 18 months' satisfactory and consistent performance working at the previous level including up to date mandatory training.
- Experience of working in customer service or a centralised administration or business support function.
- Starting to gain experience in leadership through working alongside the Team Leader to support with task allocation and deputising for Customer Relations Manager where required.

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## Skills

### Level A

- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook and Teams, and all relevant bespoke/task specific systems for the management of compliments, comments and complaints.
- Ability to work independently within defined procedures and use initiative to deal with straightforward problems where there are no recognised procedures, making decisions without referring to a supervisor / line manager, where necessary.
- Ability to analyse and interpret complex information and situations relating to repeated complaints issues, develop solutions and plans for the medium term and to adopt an imaginative and innovative approach to problem solving.
- Ability to use well developed communication skills to present complex/sensitive information in an understandable way, to a range of audiences, and in line with good practice.
- Ability to work on his/her own initiative, organising their own day-to-day work, subject to the overriding control of management.
- Excellent customer care skills to professionally manage dissatisfied, persistent or unreasonable complainers over the phone or face to face, applying relevant policies effectively and robustly.
- Ability to provide general information, advice and guidance on established procedures in relation to complaints management
- Ability to act appropriately in response to risks arising from complaints, for example in relation to the media or the Ombudsman's powers.
- Ability to identify and deal with problems that arise during the day to-day investigation of complaints, which may be complex across several service areas and knowing when to refer any problems of an unprecedented, sensitive, or reputational nature to management.
- Ability to provide guidance on the management of cases and discuss cases regularly with the Customer Relations Team Leader, particularly those where complainants are dissatisfied after stage 1 responses, cases escalating to Stage 2 or the Ombudsman.
- Ability to establish positive and constructive relationships with:
  - the Customer Relations Team Leader, Customer Relations Manager and the Customer Relations Officers who support social care complaints
  - the Children and Adult social care directorate management team, and their service managers, senior managers and local liaison officers,
  - the Legal service to ensure all relevant legislation is observed



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- other senior managers who support social care (e.g. Customer and Business Support, Finance) and may be required to contribute to the investigation of complaints
- independent people engaged in investigating Stage 2 complaints or reviewing Stage 3 panels.

#### Level B (in addition)

- Ability to advise colleagues on the use of all relevant bespoke/task specific systems for the management of complaints and compliments.
- Ability to deliver trainings, workshops and presentations relating to learning from complaints
- Ability to contribute to discussion around good complaints handling principles at the Complaint Handlers Groups
- Ability to use initiative to identify areas for improvement and either contribute to projects to develop new and improved ways for working, or take the lead in managing a small project
- Ability to confidently prepare for, and efficiently lead, discussions with senior managers and services, following Ombudsman's upheld decisions and to ensure learning from Ombudsman complaints.
- Ability to confidently manage meetings, for example team meetings, including preparing agendas, chairing and leading discussions through engagement and collaboration, agreeing and recording actions and monitoring for completion of actions.

#### Level C (in addition)

- Adept in delivering trainings, presentations and workshops, leading discussions and using technology to present data.
- Ability to regularly contribute to the development of the agenda, and lead discussions at the quarterly Complaint Handlers Group.
- Ability to lead in a project which may impacts internal and/or external contacts, including careful planning, identifying and communicating with stakeholders, setting medium to long term plans, using SMART objectives and milestones and monitoring progress of the project through to completion.