

## Assistant to the Executive – Children’s Services

**Primary Departmental Links:** Principal link to Children’s Services with engagement across all departments of the County Council as required. Additionally, links to partner organisations, *service users and other key forums as determined by the Executive Lead Member for Children’s Services.*

### Key outcomes:

The essence of the role is to help support and co-ordinate political engagement and to provide political advice and support for the developing work of the County Council in respect of children and young people *against the backdrop of the Council’s statutory responsibilities as set out in the following primary pieces of legislation:*

- *Children Act 2004*
- *Children and Families Act 2014*
- *Education Act 2002 and 2011*

*The need for robust and effective political engagement is critical as the Department seeks to manage ongoing demand and cost pressures, embrace the potential offered by new technology, and respond and recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.* Ensuring high quality services to safeguard children and young people, ensuring the right support and challenge to schools and colleges and securing the right level of provision for vulnerable children is essential for the County’s future. All of these outcomes require a wide engagement across a range of stakeholders to ensure a common endeavour.

### Key Functional Areas:

- To directly support and advise the Leader, Deputy Leader and Executive Lead Member for Children on all aspects of the council’s work with vulnerable children.
- To support the development of and maintain political links with key partner organisations such as schools, police, NHS and district councils.
- To attend the Children and Young People’s Select Committee, the Children and Families Advisory Panel, The Education Advisory Panel and the Corporate Parenting Board and supports and deputises as appropriate for the Executive Lead Member – *recognising that the role does not have an Executive function.*
- To assist in the establishment and maintenance of relationships with service users, in particular children and young people, through the Corporate Parenting Board and the Youth Council.

- To actively represent Hampshire County Council, including deputising for Executive Members, *as appropriate*, on key forums associated with children and young people and schools, such as Schools Forum and the Local Safeguarding Partnership Board.
- *Assist the Executive Member, Leader and wider Cabinet colleagues in making representations as appropriate on areas of regional and national policy development.*
- *Assist the Executive Member as required to communicate the County Council's position with regards to children and young people related matters, as agreed through established corporate communication processes and channels.*
- *Support the Executive Lead Member in areas of policy development as instructed. This may include, but not be limited to:*
  - *learning and applying lessons from Covid-19*
  - *safeguarding children and young people*
  - *strengthening the voice of service users, their families, carers and wider communities in the developing work of services for children, young people and families*
- Promotes Hampshire County Council's objectives policies and priorities, and associated partnerships as a key contribution to promoting the welfare and improving outcomes for children across the county.

Contrary to the Executive Member Lead Member for Children's Services, the Assistant to the Executive – Children's Services is not a statutory role and post does not carry Executive decision-making powers. However, importantly, it does provide political support and advice to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services directly in her role, and as required to the Leader and other Executive Members.

#### **Scale of financial gearing/impact of work undertaken:**

The role encompasses a broad range of statutory services requiring engagement across a range of stakeholders.

The Department has a gross revenue budget of some £241m in 2021/22, which continues to come under increasing demand and cost pressures. The Department faces a further savings targets of £21m by 2022/23, which must be met on top of the £68m savings already between 2017/2021. This role will play an important part in supporting the County Council's interface with its stakeholders and the public to ensure that decisions on what the Department can and cannot provide in the future are informed by the views of residents and service users. This applies equally to engagement on new ways of working, as the County Council seeks to maximise the positive innovations arising from the pandemic.