



## Job Description – Board Chair Person

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### Role Profile

Worcestershire County Council is creating a wholly owned company to take **operational responsibility for delivering the full range of services across Children's Services including Social Care, Education, Skills and Early Help.**

Worcestershire Children First's sole focus will be improving services and outcomes for children and young people in Worcestershire. Taking the lead from Worcestershire's Children and Young People's Plan, the Company's vision is for **Worcestershire to be a wonderful place for all children and young people to grow up. WCF will help create supportive communities where children and young people are safe, secure, supported to achieve, and nurtured to become independent adults.**

The Company's mission is **to make a positive impact on the lives of our children and young people aged 0 to 25yrs, and their families, by providing outstanding, innovative, child and young people-focused services where practice and practitioners flourish and we maximise life opportunities for all.**

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### The Company's Board

The Company's Board will provide strong and compelling leadership of Children's Services and have a single and unwavering focus on improving outcomes for children and young people.

The Board operates at a strategic level and is the responsible body for the operational performance, achievement and overall direction of Children services. The Board will provide clarity of direction that demands the highest quality practice; recognises the importance and value of working in partnership and centres all of its work on meeting the needs of children and young people. It will seek out innovative, collaborative and creative solutions to deliver the highest quality service in the most efficient and effective way. It will work openly and transparently with the Council and its partners about performance and outcomes and ensure that elected Members are able to exercise their democratic and statutory accountabilities to their communities.

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### The Chair of the Company

The Chair will lead by example, championing the needs of Worcestershire's children and young people. The Chair will ensure that the Company operates effectively and exercises its functions as set out in relevant legislation and supporting guidance, and will work collaboratively with senior and political leaders across Worcestershire to work to improve the safety and well-being of children and young people.

## Key accountabilities:

1. Whilst in intervention, the Chair will act as a nominee of the Secretary of State for Education and accountable to the Secretary of State, which will be through the Commissioner for Children's Services in Worcestershire during the currency of the Commissioner's appointment. The Chair will be responsible for overseeing the set-up of Worcestershire Children First, including:
  - Ensuring that the Company is established as an organisation able to drive demonstrable improvement and innovation in delivering Children's Services (including social care, education and early help) on behalf of Worcestershire County Council;
  - Establishing the Company Board. The Board members should have the necessary skills and vision to drive service improvements;
  - Providing a strong leading role in the promotion of effective, constructive partnership working with Worcestershire County Council and other key partner agencies.
2. Provide strategic leadership to the Company including:-
  - Establishing and embedding an ambitious vision for improvement and innovation in the delivery of Children's services in Worcestershire;
  - Setting out a strategic approach for the Board leadership that assists the Board to perform effectively its core functions;
  - Facilitating effective communication between the Board's Non-Executive Directors and the Executive Directors, and with other senior managers.
3. Establish effective corporate governance arrangements for the Company including:-
  - Supporting and guiding the Board to ensure the transparent selection, appointment, assessment and (should it prove necessary) the removal, of Executive Directors, or any other direct appointee;
  - Ensuring the Board's training needs are identified and addressed;
  - Collaborating with, the DfE, Council, Board members and stakeholders to identify, attract and recommend qualified candidates to serve as Non-Executive Directors.
4. Oversee Company performance, including:
  - Supporting and guiding the Board in the routine performance assessment of the Company's governing, advisory and administrative bodies;
  - Managing the annual performance assessment of the Executive Directors, and providing support to the annual performance assessments of other direct reports to the Board; and
  - Guiding the Board's termly strategic reviews on how to achieve and assess the impact of improvement in services for children and financial management.
5. Coordinating risk management, including supporting the Board in the establishment and regular review of the Company's risk management strategy, including risk classification, tolerance and mitigation;
6. Advocating on behalf of the Company, including acting as the principal spokesperson and representative for the Board, advocating, and promoting the work of Worcestershire Children First;
7. Maintaining effective communication and engagement with all necessary stakeholders such as Worcestershire County Council, partner agencies, government departments and national agencies, schools and colleges and employees and the media, to ensure the Board understands and addresses the issues and concerns of a diverse range of stakeholders;
8. Fulfilling a procedural role in the operation of the Company, including chairing and leading all Board meetings, strategy reviews, and meetings with the executive team ensuring the voices of children and young people and their families are integral to the work of the Company at all times.

## Person Specification

Applicants for the position of Chair of Worcestershire Children First will be asked to provide evidence of examples of their experience and/or achievements in each of the following selection criteria listed in the Person Specification.

Successful candidates will be expected to be able to demonstrate a strong record across the range of criteria listed. These responses will be further developed and discussed with those candidates invited for interview

### Experience, knowledge and skills:

1. Able to demonstrate substantial successful leadership experience at a senior strategic level within an organisation of appreciable scale and complexity.
2. Able to demonstrate the high level of 'know how' and management skills required to;
  - a) Deliver the Company aspirations
  - b) Effectively manage the significant day to day and strategic challenges of the role.
  - c) Ensure a strong customer focus and value for money ethos throughout the Company.
3. Must be a very effective communicator, able to extend and improve the Companies profile and influence, and build positive and productive relationships that gain the respect, trust and confidence
4. Ability to establish and articulate a brand, vision and strategy for an organisation, and the ability to lead, motivate and engage staff;
5. Experience and knowledge of Children's services
6. Evidence of working within a political and publicly accountable environment
7. Experience of working at Board level and effective corporate governance
8. Ability to work effectively with senior officers and with the wider Board members
9. Political sensitivity and an ability to establish positive relationships, which engender confidence and respect;
10. Highly effectively skills to performance manage and facilitate the development of staff to ensure continuing service improvement

### **Personal qualities and outlook:**

1. Expected to have the personal vision and presence to inspire and empower the Company to improve and achieve its key objectives.
2. A 'moderniser' – continually committed to improvement, clear customer focus and understands the Companies approach to delivery.
3. A modern approach to people management, demonstrating an effective balance between direction, empowerment and assertiveness.
4. Comfortable with the pressures and high level of accountability and associated responsibilities of the role.
5. Demonstrates the highest standards of personal integrity at all times, leading by example.
6. Demonstrates respect for others at all times and is a supporter of the equalities agenda.
7. The ability to promote a culture that emphasises high performance and continuous improvement
8. Focus on meeting the needs of children, young people and families in the context of promoting the resilience of their diverse communities.

Please note that the Company will not become fully operational until the 1 October 2019. Prior to this date, it is intended that the Board will operate in "shadow form".

Worcestershire County Council will have the right to terminate the Chair's appointment, through the provision of three months' notice in writing subject to the agreement of the Secretary of State for Education (save in the case of a breach by the Chair of their obligations in which case the Secretary of State shall have the right to terminate the appointment forthwith by notice). The Chair must provide a minimum of three months' notice in writing to Worcestershire Children First and the Department for Education of any notice of resignation.

### **Qualification criteria:**

The Chair must:

1. Be aged 18 or over;
2. Not be the subject of a bankruptcy order or an interim order or entered into a composition with his/her creditors generally in satisfaction of his/her debts;
3. Not have been convicted of any criminal offence, excluding any that have been spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as amended, and excluding any offence for which the maximum sentence is a fine or a lesser sentence.
4. Provide a satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure.

### **Those applying must:**

- Declare any interest(s). Specifically, any links or roles currently held with any local authority or organisations operating in the children's services sector within the past 10 years. Due diligence checks will be undertaken to determine whether the applicant is associated with any event likely to damage the reputation of, or embarrass Worcestershire County Council, Worcestershire Children First or the Department for Education. Those applying are asked to describe any such associations. The Council and Department for Education reserve the right to exclude applicants based on the information provided or identified through our due diligence checks.