

Non-Executive Directors

Role and Person Specification

Remuneration: £600 per day

Time Commitment: Up to 24 days per annum

Background

Bradford Metropolitan District Council have been working with an appointed Children's Commissioner since September 2021 to focus on improving services for Children and Young People in Bradford.

Whilst improvements have been made, there is a recognition that the pace of change must increase. A decision was taken earlier this year to establish a Children's and Families Trust to support the progress of change with, initially, a dedicated focus on Children's Social Care.

Our past failings have been well publicised and have been difficult to hear, added to the findings from the National Panel Review, has strengthened our determination to learn from these findings and take the focused actions needed to improve and create high quality Children's Services. We are all committed to doing ever better for our children, young people and their families.

Bradford Children's and Families Trust will be owned by the Council and operate at arm's length, having strategic and operational responsibility for the delivery of Children Social Care Services. There will be focused, clear business and improvement plans agreed with the Department for Education and the Council in order to achieve good, safe, sustainable support services for children needing social care or early help support and intervention.

The Trust Board

The Trust Board will provide strong leadership and financial oversight of Children's and Families Services and have a single focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and families in Bradford; making sure that their views are recognised in helping to shape, develop and improve services. The board will have the opportunity to shape the new Trust for a new future, working with the Council, key stakeholders and the DfE.

The Board operates at a strategic level and is the responsible body for the operational performance, achievement and overall direction of Bradford Children 's and Families Trust.

The Board will provide clarity of direction that demands the highest quality practice; recognises the importance and value of working in partnership and focusing all its work on meeting the needs of children and young people. It will use its independence to actively seek out innovative, collaborative and creative solutions to deliver the highest quality service in the most efficient and effective way. It will prioritise creating a working environment where

colleagues feel welcomed, supported and developed throughout their careers with the Trust. 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.

The Trust Board will consist of a number of Executive Directors and Non-Executive Directors (NED's) comprising the following:

- A chair, (Eileen Milner) has been appointed by the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Council, as a non-executive director during the period of statutory direction.
- Executive directors including the Trust Chief Executive; Finance Director, Director of Social Work Operations and Practice and HR Director
- The Council will appoint two people to the Board
- Up to 5 NED's to be appointed, with collective knowledge expertise and experience across children's social care, transformational service change and improvement, governance, finance, people, HR and culture change.
- Appointments will be made by the Chair in consultation with the DfE and the Council.

The role of a Non-Executive Director (NED)

NED's will contribute to the work of the Board based upon their independence, their experience and knowledge, and their ability to stand back from the day-to-day operational management.

They will play a full and active role in the governance of the Trust bringing an independent judgement on issues of performance, forward planning and accountability: and are required to contribute and support corporate decisions to ensure a joined up, robust and transparent decision-making process by the Board.

All NED's, will as appropriately represent the Trust locally, regionally and nationally, developing and maintaining excellent relationships with a range of key partners and stakeholders including the Council (as a customer under its services contract), other councils, Government, health organisations, and partners in the delivery of high quality and value for money services to children and their families.

NED's will attend board meetings, which take place monthly. In addition, there will also be pre-reading required and attendance at committees, as well as undertaking other tasks as appropriate and required.

The meeting structure is to be determined by the new Chair and their board. All board and committee meetings take place during the day.

Board and Committee meetings will normally be held in Bradford, however some work can be done remotely/agile and by telephone/video.

Person Specification

We are looking for a blend of skills and experience to lead the delivery of statutory and preventative children's and Families services in changing environment with several significant challenges. Being able to improve services from their current levels whilst creating and using the Trust's status to its best advantage.

We are particularly interested in those with backgrounds and experience in children's social care, transformational service change, professional development and performance improvement. We would also welcome those with expertise in governance/law, finance, risk and assurance, People, HR, diversity and inclusion and culture change. Applicants with experience of working in or with the voluntary sector would also be warmly welcomed.

Applicants for the NED positions will be asked to provide evidence of examples of their experience and/or achievements in each of the selection criteria listed in the Person Specification.

We are looking for a range of diverse experiences, which collectively will construct the most effective board composition. As such, candidates do not need to possess all the outlined skills and experiences below. Significant strength in certain areas could offset a lack of experience in other areas as we seek to enhance the combined strength and diversity of the board.

Personal Qualities and Skills

- A genuine commitment to improving the life chances of children and young people in Bradford and an understanding of diverse and complex communities and the disadvantages faced by vulnerable children and young people.
- Strong interpersonal, listening and communication skills which engender confidence and support and the ability to engage with other Board members, Trust and Council employees.
- Ability to think and act strategically in assisting the Trust to set and deliver on its objectives.
- Ability to work effectively with senior officers, wider Board members and the Chair.
- Capacity to commit the necessary time and presence to fulfil the role.
- The ability to promote a culture that emphasises high performance and continuous improvement.
- Be able to demonstrate integrity, high ethical standards, sound judgment and a willingness to constructively challenge.
- Political sensitivity and an ability to establish positive relationships, which engender confidence and respect.
- Effective analytical skills; and commercial acumen.
- Observe and fulfill the seven principles of public life (also known as the Nolan Principles) and our values.

Experience

- Evidence of senior leadership and management, and of delivering service improvement.

- Evidence of effective strategic and operational resource management.
- Experience and strong professional knowledge of children's services.
- Experience of children's social care, transformational service change and improvement, governance, finance, people, HR and culture change.
- Understanding of working within a political and publicly accountable environment.
- Experience/understanding of working at Board level and steering corporate governance.
- Experience/understanding of Bradford and its diverse communities

The NED with finance skills and experience will ideally have:

- A qualification in accountancy and chartered status with one of the main professional bodies e.g., ACCA, CIMA.
- Experience as a senior leader with a background in finance, audit and risk management.
- Experience of successful service improvement with a financial focus.
- Ability to provide effective and appropriate challenge to current ways of working, thinking and delivery.

Terms of Appointment

Each NED will be appointed for a fixed term of three years, with the potential for re-appointment at the end of that term.

NEDs are anticipated to commit to approximately up to 24 days per year, including attendance at Board meetings together with any further Board or committee meetings that may be arranged, and to undertake work on behalf of the Board from time to time as required.

NED's will be remunerated on a fixed rate per day basis; the remuneration is £600 per day which is intended to cover reasonable expenses. In exceptional circumstances consideration will be given to the payment of expenses.

Please note that the company will not become fully operational until April 2023 (i.e., the service commencement date under the proposed services contract with the Council). Prior to this date, it is intended that the Board will operate in "shadow form".

Whilst the relevant children's services will remain part of the Council until April 2023 the Board throughout the shadow period will start to oversee and influence on an informal basis:

- the formation and development of the leadership team
- the delivery of the transferring services during this interim period
- approve the necessary set-up arrangements
- shape the governance and monitoring arrangements for the Board NED's must provide a minimum of three months' notice in writing to the Trust of any notice of resignation.

Essential Criteria

All Non-Executive Directors must:

- Be aged 18 or over.
- Not be the subject of a bankruptcy order or an interim order or entered into a composition with their creditors generally in satisfaction of their debts.
- Be eligible to be a company director under the provisions of the Companies Acts and not be disqualified from being a company director.
- 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; and
- Provide a satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure.

Values and Behaviours

Applicants will be able to demonstrate the following:

- Ability to develop and promote a culture that emphasises high performance and continuous improvement
- High expectations for themselves and others in achieving and delivering high quality public services
- Strong, persuasive communication skills that can be adapted to meet specific audiences and differing situations
- Team player able to work effectively at all levels with the ability to influence and inspire, as well as to act with care and kindness
- A clear commitment to and understanding of supporting diversity and inclusion in service design, practice and the workforce