



RCC Director

Expression of Interest – Secondment Opportunity

Location

West Midlands (hybrid working)

Host Authority

Sandwell Council

Reporting To

Chair of the RCC Governance Board / Senior Responsible Officer

Accountable To

- Director of Children's Services, Sandwell Council (as Host Authority)
- RCC Governance Board

Duration

To March 31st 2028

Background

The West Midlands Regional Care Cooperative (RCC) has been established following successful approval of the region's Expression of Interest by the Department for Education.

The RCC represents a significant opportunity to strengthen regional collaboration across children's social care, bringing together local authorities and partners to improve sufficiency, placement stability and outcomes for children and young people.

Hosted by Sandwell Council on behalf of the region, the RCC will build upon existing regional strengths, including the West Midlands Commissioning Hub, Regional Placement Portal, regional sufficiency arrangements, fostering developments and wider partnership programmes.

The RCC Director will provide strategic leadership during the mobilisation and development phases of the programme, working across organisational boundaries to establish the RCC as a credible and influential vehicle for regional collaboration and reform.



The postholder will be responsible for leading mobilisation activity, supporting implementation of the RCC delivery plan, developing governance and partnership arrangements, and ensuring alignment with wider regional and national reform programmes.

Working closely with Directors of Children's Services, partner agencies, the Department for Education and delivery partners, the postholder will champion a collective approach to improving outcomes for children and young people whilst strengthening the region's approach to sufficiency, commissioning and market development.

Opportunity

The West Midlands ADCS Network is seeking expressions of interest from experienced senior leaders to undertake a secondment as RCC Director.

The role offers a unique opportunity to shape one of the Department for Education's Regional Care Cooperatives and lead a significant programme of regional reform and collaboration.

The secondment is expected to commence during Autumn 2026 and will be hosted by Sandwell Council on behalf of the West Midlands partnership.

The arrangement, duration, hosting arrangements and backfill support will be discussed with the successful applicant and their employing organisation.

Key Working Relationships

The role will work closely with:

- Directors of Children's Services across the West Midlands
- Chief Executives and senior local authority officers
- Health partners and Integrated Care Boards
- Police and Youth Justice partners
- Regional commissioning and sufficiency leads
- Residential, fostering and supported accommodation providers
- Department for Education representatives
- Care experienced children and young people
- RCC Governance Board
- RCC Operational Group
- West Midlands ADCS Regional Team
- Regional partnership boards and stakeholder forums
- Elected Members and Lead Members for Children's Services
- Mutual Ventures and other commissioned support partners
- Regional commissioning, placement and sufficiency networks

Key Responsibilities



Strategic Leadership

- Provide visible and credible leadership for the West Midlands RCC.
- Lead the strategic development and implementation of the RCC vision, objectives and delivery plan.
- Ensure the RCC remains focused on improving outcomes for children and young people.
- Act as a champion for regional collaboration and system reform across the children's social care sector.
- Lead the development of the RCC as a sustainable long-term regional partnership and delivery vehicle.
- Support the development of future governance, legal and operating arrangements for the RCC.
- Work with senior leaders to position the RCC as the primary mechanism for regional collaboration around sufficiency, commissioning and market management.
- Ensure alignment between local, regional and national children's social care priorities.
- Ensure effective alignment between RCC delivery and wider reform programmes, including Home Again, Room Makers and emerging children's social care reform initiatives.
- Promote a balanced approach to both demand management and sufficiency, recognising that sustainable improvement requires action across the whole children's system.

Programme Delivery and Performance

- Lead delivery of the RCC mobilisation and development phases.
- Oversee implementation of the RCC Delivery Plan and associated workstreams.
- Ensure programme objectives, milestones and key performance indicators are delivered.
- Establish effective programme governance, reporting and assurance arrangements.
- Support the establishment and development of RCC governance arrangements, including the Governance Board, Operational Group and associated workstreams.
- Manage programme risks, dependencies, issues and opportunities.
- Provide regular reporting to the RCC Governance Board, Directors of Children's Services and key partner organisations.
- Act as the senior programme lead in relationships with the Department for Education and other national bodies.
- Ensure compliance with grant conditions, reporting requirements and programme governance expectations.

Regional Infrastructure and Intelligence

- Provide strategic oversight and direction for the West Midlands Commissioning Hub as a key delivery component of the RCC.
- Lead the development and utilisation of the Regional Placement Portal as a strategic tool for forecasting, sufficiency planning, market intelligence and performance management.
- Ensure effective use of regional data, intelligence and benchmarking to support strategic decision-making.



- Strengthen regional approaches to forecasting demand, analysing sufficiency and understanding market trends.
- Promote data quality, information sharing and intelligence-led commissioning across the region.
- Develop and maintain a shared evidence base to support service improvement and future investment decisions.
- Support the development of a shared regional understanding of demand, forecasting and system pressures to inform strategic decision-making.

Sufficiency, Commissioning and Market Development

- Lead implementation of the West Midlands Sufficiency Strategy and associated regional priorities.
- Support the development and delivery of regional commissioning and market-shaping initiatives.
- Oversee implementation and development of the WM Collaborative Soft Block and other collaborative commissioning approaches.
- Work with partners to improve placement sufficiency, stability and access to local provision.
- Build constructive and effective relationships with providers across fostering, residential care and supported accommodation markets.
- Support initiatives that reduce reliance on crisis purchasing, unsuitable provision and distant placements.
- Identify opportunities for regional investment, innovation and service development.
- Promote a strategic and coordinated approach to provider engagement and market management.
- Promote approaches that address both demand and sufficiency, reducing escalation into increasingly specialist and restrictive provision while increasing local capacity.
- Work with partners to better understand the drivers of demand and opportunities to improve system flow and placement stability.
- Ensure commissioning activity is informed by robust regional intelligence, forecasting and service-user needs.

Fostering and Family-Based Care

- Support the continued development and alignment of fostering recruitment hubs across the region.
- Promote collaboration between fostering services, commissioning arrangements and wider RCC priorities.
- Support initiatives to increase fostering capacity and improve placement choice.
- Champion approaches that improve placement stability and permanence.
- Promote solutions that enable more children and young people to remain close to their families, communities and support networks wherever possible.



Partnership and Stakeholder Engagement

- Build and maintain strong relationships across local authorities and partner agencies.
- Develop effective engagement with health, police, youth justice and provider partners.
- Develop strong strategic relationships with Integrated Care Boards, policing partners, youth justice services and other key stakeholders.
- Ensure partner agencies are fully engaged in the governance and development of the RCC.
- Facilitate collaborative working and consensus-building across a complex partnership landscape.
- Represent the RCC regionally and nationally.
- Ensure children, young people and care-experienced individuals have a meaningful voice in shaping RCC priorities and delivery.
- Support effective communication and engagement with Chief Executives, elected members and senior leaders.

Financial and Resource Management

- Provide oversight of RCC programme funding and resources.
- Ensure robust financial governance, accountability and value-for-money arrangements are in place.
- Work with Sandwell Council, as Host Authority, to ensure appropriate financial governance and accountability arrangements are maintained.
- Support the development of sustainable funding arrangements beyond the initial grant period.
- Contribute to the development of future operating and sustainability models for the RCC.
- Ensure resources are deployed effectively to achieve agreed outcomes and priorities.

Team Leadership

- Lead and develop the RCC core team.
- Create a high-performing culture focused on collaboration, innovation and delivery.
- Support workforce development and succession planning.
- Manage recruitment, performance and professional development activities as required.
- Ensure effective use of specialist expertise and commissioned support.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Essential



Knowledge and Experience

- Degree-level qualification or equivalent professional experience.
- Significant experience of operating at a senior level within children's services, public services or a related sector.
- Strong understanding of children's social care policy and reform.
- Significant experience of leading large-scale change, transformation or commissioning programmes.
- Strong understanding of placement sufficiency, children's social care commissioning and provider markets.
- Experience of working effectively within complex multi-agency partnerships.
- Experience of influencing senior leaders and governance bodies across multiple organisations.
- Experience of programme and project leadership.
- Experience of managing complex budgets, funding arrangements and resources.
- Evidence of delivering strategic improvements and measurable outcomes.
- Experience of working across organisational boundaries without direct line-management authority.
- Experience of providing strategic leadership across organisational boundaries.
- Experience of operating successfully within complex governance and partnership environments.

Skills and Behaviours

- Outstanding leadership and influencing skills.
- Strong partnership-building and stakeholder management capability.
- Excellent strategic thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Exceptional written, presentation and communication skills.
- Strong political awareness and organisational sensitivity.
- Ability to manage complexity and competing priorities.
- Strong analytical and decision-making skills.
- Ability to build consensus and navigate challenging environments.
- Commitment to collaborative leadership and system working.
- Ability to translate policy into practical delivery.

Desirable

- Experience of regional commissioning, sufficiency or market-shaping programmes.
- Knowledge of Regional Care Cooperatives and children's social care reform.
- Experience of working with Department for Education programmes.
- Understanding of fostering, residential care and supported accommodation markets.
- Experience of placement forecasting, business intelligence and performance management systems.
- Experience of working with elected members, Chief Executives and senior political stakeholders.



- Knowledge of governance, partnership and consortium delivery models.
- Sound understanding of relevant legislation, statutory guidance and best practice within children's social care.

Key Outcomes

The postholder will be expected to contribute to:

- Successful mobilisation and implementation of the West Midlands RCC.
- Establishment of effective governance and partnership arrangements.
- Delivery of the RCC Development Plan and DfE programme requirements.
- Effective utilisation of the West Midlands Commissioning Hub and Regional Placement Portal.
- Development and implementation of the WM Collaborative Soft Block.
- Improved regional forecasting, intelligence and demand analysis.
- Improved understanding of demand drivers and opportunities to safely reduce escalation into higher-cost and more restrictive provision.
- Strengthened partnership working across local authorities, health, police and youth justice services.
- Increased placement stability and improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Growth in local and regional provision capacity.
- Reduced reliance on distant, unsuitable and crisis-driven placements.
- Alignment of RCC priorities with wider reform opportunities including Home Again and Room Makers.
- Development of a sustainable long-term operating model for the RCC.

General

The postholder will be expected to work flexibly across the West Midlands region and maintain strong relationships with a wide range of partners and stakeholders.

The role requires an individual who is comfortable operating within a complex, politically aware and fast-moving environment, balancing local priorities with regional ambitions whilst maintaining a relentless focus on improving outcomes for children and young people.

During mobilisation, the postholder will be supported by specialist delivery partners and subject matter experts appointed by the region.

This role profile is intended as a guide to the principal duties and responsibilities of the post and is not intended to be an exhaustive list. The postholder may be required to undertake other duties consistent with the nature, level and responsibilities of the role.

