



libraries ni
Deputy Head of Service
(South and East)
Candidate Information Pack

A visible, accessible and inclusive library service at the heart of communities, enhancing lives and valued by all.



Background

The primary duty of Libraries NI, as set down in the Libraries Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, is to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service for persons living, working or studying in Northern Ireland. In doing so we are required to:

- secure that facilities are available for the borrowing of, or reference to library materials sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements of adults and children
- encourage both adults and children to make full use of the library service
- provide advice as to the use of the library service and making available such bibliographical and other information as may be required by persons using the service
- promote literacy and lifelong learning
- maintain a collection of library materials relevant to the cultural heritage of Northern Ireland
- make library premises available for cultural and community activities
- meet any special requirements of adults and children by any appropriate means.

The Board of Libraries NI comprises a Chairperson and a maximum of eighteen non-executive Members, the majority of whom are councillors within the meaning of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972. There are currently thirteen Board Members. The Chief Executive is Jim O'Hagan.

The sponsoring body of Libraries NI is the Department for Communities (DfC). Libraries NI liaises directly with the Culture Division of DfC which sits within the Engaged Communities Group in the Department.

Our Vision

A visible, accessible and inclusive library service at the heart of communities, enhancing lives and valued by all.

Our Mission

Connecting people with information, ideas and experiences to foster lifelong learning, inspire curiosity, provide enjoyment and strengthen communities.

Our Values

Caring - we care about our library users, the community, each other and what we do. We will provide a safe and welcoming environment where people can connect and explore. We will show respect for users of our service and for each other, will build trust and will strive to provide positive experiences for both external and internal customers.

Accountable – we take responsibility as individuals and as an organisation, for effective stewardship of the resources allocated to us and for delivering on our commitments. We will act with honesty and integrity and maintain high standards of governance, responsible leadership and efficient operations.

Responsive – we are a learning organisation that is open to new ideas and better ways to serve individuals and communities. We have a focus on quality, are creative and flexible and will continue to explore innovative ways of working to ensure that services are vibrant, effective and relevant to the changing needs of our customers.

Our Network and Services

The library network is crucial to the delivery of both an effective and comprehensive library service taking account of the geographic and demographic spread of Northern Ireland. Our services are currently delivered through a network of 96 branch libraries, heritage libraries, mobile libraries, a Homecall service, online and outreach services. Services provided include:

- books and other material such as audio books, newspapers, periodicals and magazines
- downloadable eBooks, audio books and eMagazines and other online resources, most of which can also be accessed from home
- supported access to computers for use by the general public with free internet access for library members
- support for the development of ICT skills
- free Wi-Fi, enabling library members to use their own devices
- learning opportunities
- story times, rhythm and rhyme sessions and other activities for children
- school class visits
- family history, heritage and local studies material
- access to information from a range of sources and organisations
- access to cultural and creative experiences
- reading groups for children, teenagers and adults
- health and wellbeing information, activities and events
- social activities, such as 'Knit and Natter' and 'Tea and Newspapers', which promote community cohesion and combat isolation
- study, meeting and shared social space.

Services Directorate

The Services Directorate is responsible for the development and delivery of high quality, efficient and effective library services to the public through the public library network described above with teams organised around four Service Development Teams, including the library network, customers, collections, and online services and service support. The Marketing Team is also part of the Services Directorate.

The Directorate has some 600 staff located in libraries right across Northern Ireland. Under the Director of Library Services it is led by the Services Team which comprises the Director, two Heads of Service and two Deputy Heads of Service, each responsible for a geographical area broadly aligned to a number of local government districts.

The Post

The Deputy Head of Service (South and East) will provide strategic direction and expert leadership within the Services Directorate, working closely with other members of the Services Team.

The Deputy Head of Service will be responsible for leading and managing a range of services in the South and East geographical area as well as service wide and specialist functions.

The geographical areas comprise the following local government districts:

South and East (49 libraries)

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Belfast City Council

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

The service wide and specialist functions for which they will have responsibility include:

- Collections - Heritage, Stock & Reader Development, and
- Community Planning
- Belfast Central Library

The post holder will be a member of the Libraries NI Senior Leadership Group and also the Services Team and as such will contribute to the corporate leadership and strategic direction of Libraries NI.

Further Information

Please contact Jacqueline.mckinstry@librariesni.org.uk for further information on the post.

If you require information on the application process please contact Sharon Hawthorne @: HRRecruit@librariesni.org.uk t: 028 3839 9458.

DEPUTY HEAD OF SERVICE SOUTH AND EAST REGION

Job Description

Responsible to:

The Head of Service

Salary Range:

£55,971 to £58,998 per annum NJC Points 46-49.

The postholder will be employed on NJC Terms and Conditions.

Working Hours:

The normal hours of work are 36 hours per week, Monday – Friday. The post holder will be required to work a mix of mornings, afternoons, evenings and weekends, for which no additional remuneration will be paid.

Location:

The postholder will be based in the geographical area for which they are responsible and will be expected to travel throughout Northern Ireland. They will be required to work collaboratively with the Deputy Head of Service (North and West region) to support a cohesive service wide provision of Services Priorities.

Responsible for:

1. Corporate, business and service planning to support the delivery of public library services for designated geographic areas and service-wide and/or specialist functions.
2. Project management.
3. Being a point of contact with stakeholders, politicians and the public in support of the Heads of Service and Senior Management Team.
4. Providing expertise based on their professional knowledge on specific topics to the Heads of Service, Senior Management and the Board.
5. The development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of library services in relation to designated geographic areas and service-wide and/or specialist functions.
6. Staff in a geographical area and staff working on designated service-wide and specialist functions.
7. The efficient and effective use of resources.
8. Promoting and supporting high standards of corporate governance.
9. Deputising for the Head of Service.

Job Purpose:

Under the direction of the Library Services Directorate, reporting to the Head of Service (South and East region), the Deputy Head of Service will be responsible for leading and managing a range of services in a geographical area, including Belfast Central Library, and service wide and/or specialist functions. The postholder will be responsible for operational delivery and policy development and implementation.

They will contribute to the development and implementation of Libraries NI's corporate strategy and work with the Libraries NI Services Committees.

The postholder will be a member of Libraries NI's Senior Leadership Group and of Services Team and as such will contribute to the corporate leadership and strategic direction of Libraries NI.

The postholder will provide visible leadership, internally and externally, and maintaining high standards of governance and accountability.

The postholder will deputise for Head of Services as required.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Under the direction of the Head of Service

Geographic Area

1. Lead and manage the delivery of effective public library services in a designated geographic area in line with Libraries NI's vision, aims and objectives, ensuring that services meet statutory requirements and are relevant to the needs of local communities.
2. Support the work of the Heads of Service and Senior Management Team Directors, ensuring that all strategic proposals are connected in a manner that promotes a consistent and co-ordinated approach to the delivery of services.
3. Support the work of the Heads of Service and Senior Management Team in ensuring effective integration of the corporate and business plans with the resource allocation model.
4. In conjunction with the Heads of Service and Senior Management Team develop and implement appropriate performance indicators, benchmarks and standards to measure the quality and impact of services.
5. Monitor performance against business, service and local plans and report to the Heads of Service, Senior Management Team and Board of Libraries NI, as required.
6. Develop and implement Service and local plans for the geographic area in line with Libraries NI's Corporate and Business Plans, which incorporate agreed Departmental targets and performance indicators; monitor progress against the Plans and take necessary action where appropriate to bring about improvements.
7. Manage and direct the work of staff in the designated geographic area, ensuring appropriate levels of delegation of responsibility and accountability and the establishment of clear standards and targets for performance.
8. Ensure that the skills, competencies and knowledge of staff within the geographic area are developed to support service priorities.

9. Ensure the provision of professional library expertise in all capital development programmes.
10. Lead and manage processes for consulting and communicating with both current and nonservice users. Ensure the development and delivery of customer-focused services that are responsive to community needs and achieve a high level of customer satisfaction.
11. Lead and manage processes to engage with statutory, voluntary, community and private sector organisations to enhance the services available.
12. Represent Libraries NI's interests on Community Planning Partnerships and other local planning forums.

Service-wide and/or Specialist Functions

1. Work collaboratively with other senior officers of Libraries NI to advance the vision, aims and policy objectives of Libraries NI.
2. Lead the development of policy in relation to service-wide and/or specialist functions.
3. Advise and support the Libraries NI Board and its committees on the formulation, development and implementation of policy.
4. Manage and direct the work of designated staff working on the designated service-wide and/or specialist functions, ensuring appropriate levels of delegation of responsibility and accountability and the establishment of clear standards and targets for performance.
5. Facilitate effective consultation on policy.
6. Develop relevant and timely implementation plans; monitor, review and evaluate policy implementation and use the information to inform future developments.
7. Manage multiple and/or complex projects
8. Act as a senior point of contact with stakeholders, politicians and the public in support of Services Team. The postholder will be required to represent Libraries NI's interests with a wide range of stakeholders and to engender sound and productive internal and external relationships in support of Libraries NI's business.
9. Promote Libraries NI within the local, national and international library profession. Share best practice and expertise and look for opportunities to work collaboratively to support more effective and efficient service.

Governance and Accountability

1. Provide visible leadership internally, ensure compliance with corporate governance for Libraries NI and maintain high standards of governance and accountability.
2. Support the Head of Service as the budget holder for services within the geographic area and for service wide/specialist functions, ensuring that resources are deployed in pursuance of Libraries NI's objectives and be accountable for effective financial monitoring and control.
3. Lead the development and implementation of risk management strategies within the geographic area and ensure the maintenance of relevant risk registers.
4. Lead and manage processes for ensuring continuous improvement in services and ensure that they are embedded in the geographic area and specialist/service wide functions.
5. Ensure that services provided demonstrate Libraries NI's commitment to the promotion of equality, inclusion and diversity and that policy is developed and implemented.

This job description is intended to indicate the broad range of responsibilities and requirements of the post. It is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive. Libraries NI reserves the right, in consultation with the postholder, to amend the job description to meet the changing needs of the organisation.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Criteria

Applicants must provide evidence that by the vacancy closing date, they meet the following essential criteria:

Qualifications

1. Qualified to degree level with evidence of continuous professional development.

Experience

2. Have at least five years' experience in the development and delivery of library services.

Plus, provide evidence of experience in;

3. The development and implementation of new services or new approaches to service delivery and any associated policies and procedures.
4. Problem solving at an operational and strategic level.
5. Successfully prioritising and managing a diverse range of tasks within a demanding work environment, to required timeframes and quality thresholds.
6. The management and supervision of staff.
7. Acting as a role model, leading and developing teams and empowering staff.
8. Partnership working to deliver customer focused services

Other Requirements and Constraints:

9. Applicants must have access to a suitable vehicle (appropriately maintained and insured for Libraries NI business) or other suitable form of transport which will enable the successful candidate to fulfil the requirements of the post to the satisfaction of Libraries NI.

Desirable Criteria

1. Hold a professional library qualification.

The above essential criteria will be used for shortlisting purposes. However, Libraries NI reserves the right to enhance criteria at the shortlisting stage. If deemed necessary criterion 2 above may be enhanced to seven years.

Where a competition identifies more appointable candidates than there are available vacancies, a Reserve List may be created in order of suitability for further appointments within Libraries NI. This may be used for up to 12 months to fill the same or like vacancies with a similar job description and personnel specification and on the same salary scale, without further testing of merit.

Closing Date for receipt of applications is 23:59 on Sunday 15 June 2025.

LIBRARIES NI IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITES EMPLOYER

Application Process

It is essential that applicants provide sufficient details in their application form, using examples and dates where appropriate to demonstrate that they meet the requirements. It is not sufficient to simply list duties and responsibilities. Libraries NI will not make assumptions from the title of the post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained. If you fail to provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the essential criteria, your application will be rejected.

Application forms should be completed in conjunction with the Notes of Guidance for Applicants which may be downloaded with the application pack from Libraries NI staff Intranet:

Selection Process

Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be carried out on the basis of the information provided against each specific criterion as presented on the application form. Applications will first be considered against the essential criteria. Where necessary enhanced and or desirable criteria may be applied.

Interview

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview and will be expected to demonstrate at interview their knowledge and skills in the following key areas and draw on their personal qualities to support their answers.

Key Areas:

- Current thinking in librarianship as it relates to public libraries
- Change Management
- People development

- Achieving Quality Outcomes
- Risk and Resource Management
- Strategic Planning.

Applicants may be required to make a presentation to demonstrate their understanding of the current and anticipated challenges of this role. The presentation topic will be provided in advance and candidates may make use of PowerPoint. The selection panel will wish to question candidates on the content of their presentation. Depending on the number of candidates who meet the shortlisting criteria there may be a two stage interview process.

Terms and Conditions

This is a permanent appointment. The successful candidate will be employed on NJC terms and conditions of service and membership of the Northern Ireland Local Government Pension Scheme is automatic for persons eligible to join. Further information about pensions is available on the NILGOSC website www.nilgosc.org.uk

Annual leave entitlement for the full leave is 28 days increasing to 34 days after five years' service. In addition, there are 12 statutory holidays.

Where applicable the appointment will be subject to satisfactory completion of all procedural and pre-employment checks.

Where applicable the successful candidate will be subject to a probationary period of six months.

An unpaid meal break of 30 minutes will normally be taken by employees who are contracted to work 4 hours or more per day.

Travelling and Subsistence

Travel expenses at rates approved by Libraries NI will be paid in respect of approved journeys necessary as an employee of Libraries NI.

Mobility Clause

The post will be located in an agreed location, or at any alternative premises as may be reasonably required and may be subject to change following consultation with the post holder.

Excess Fares

If you are in receipt of excess fares, this provision will cease on appointment.