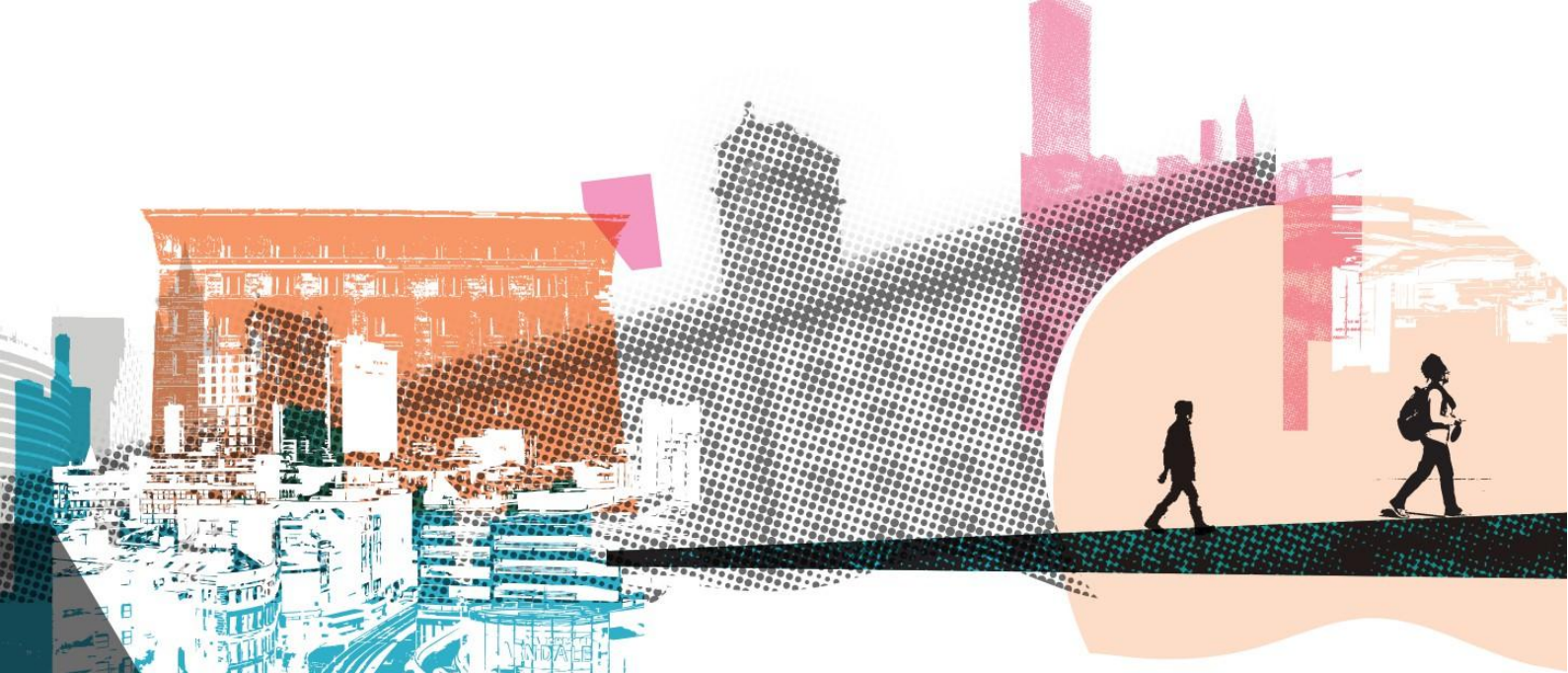


# THE BIG LiFE GROUP



**Agency Decision Maker (ADM)**  
**Big Life Futures Fostering**

This job changes lives



## About The Big Life Group

The Big Life Group's mission is to fight for equity, in health, in wealth and in life. We are a social business delivering a range of services across the North of England, covering everything from mental and physical health, addiction and criminal justice, to housing, education, family support and much more. What links them together is the way we work – The Big Life Way.

We always stand shoulder-to-shoulder with people, working with them on the things that matter most to them. Everything we do is designed and informed by the needs, priorities and strengths of people and communities.

### Our values

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- **Courage:** We stand up for ourselves, and the people and communities we work alongside, even when that makes us unpopular, or challenges accepted wisdom.
- **Creativity:** We find innovative solutions that work, never accepting the easy option or the status quo.
- **Honesty:** We act with integrity, speaking the truth to ourselves and others.
- **Inspiration:** We are inspired by the people and communities we work with and share what we learn from them to inspire others.
- **Thoughtful:** We act with care and compassion and work to understand people's experiences. We take time to listen, reflect and continually learn.
- **Valuing difference:** We recognise and celebrate the unique qualities, gifts, insights and perspectives that different people offer.

## **Working at Big Life**

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At Big Life, work is more than a job – it's about standing shoulder-to-shoulder with people and communities, making a difference every day. We fight for equity in health, in wealth and in life, and that commitment starts with how our staff.

## **Be yourself**

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We want you to feel safe, respected and able to bring your whole self to work. Difference is celebrated here, and our staff networks - from menopause to neurodiversity, LGBTQI+ and more - create space to connect and support each other.

## **Recognised as outstanding**

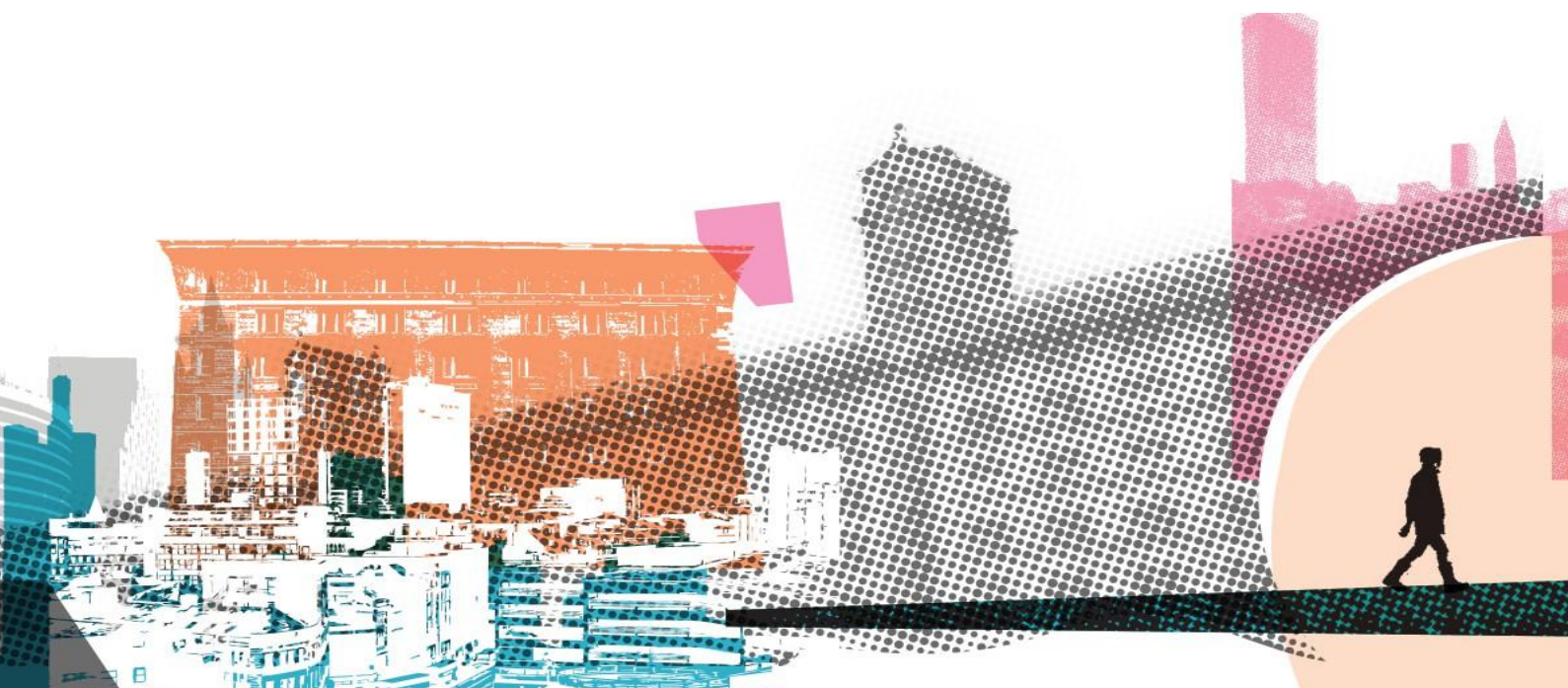
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We're proud to be ranked by Best Companies as one of the UK's outstanding places to work, with a two-star accreditation in 2024.

## **A culture of trust and flexibility**

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Our people describe our culture as relaxed and supportive. You'll be trusted to plan your own day, take breaks when you need, and work in a way that fits with your life as well as your role.



# Job Description: Agency Decision Maker (ADM)

## The basics

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### Rate of pay

Set full and half day rate of pay – subject to negotiation (dependent on qualifications, skills and experience). Hourly rate for ad hoc work - £60

### Hours

Initially, 1 – 2 days per month with the possibility of this increasing to reflect the needs of the developing service.

### Base

Flexible to include working from home. Current office location - Zion Community Resource Centre, 339 Stretford Road, Manchester, M15 4ZY (may be subject to change).

### Line manager

Director of Children's Care Services

### Closing date for applications

17 August 2026

## What you'll be doing

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The Big Life Group is currently developing a fostering service, Big Life Futures Fostering. As part of our current development work, we are looking to appoint an Agency Decision Maker (ADM) who will be a senior member of the proposed fostering service.

Initially, prior to registration as a fostering agency, the post holder's responsibilities will be on the development, support and scrutiny of our plans for Big Life Futures Fostering. The ADM will support the Proposed Registered Manager and Responsible Individual in the early developmental stages of the fostering agency and provide social work supervision to the Proposed Registered Manager.

Upon successful registration of the fostering agency, the ADM will carry out the regulatory duties of the fostering ADM including quality assurance and supporting with management and monitoring processes.

## Main duties

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1. To work alongside the Proposed Registered Manager and Responsible Individual to ensure our plans for Big Life Futures Fostering are compliant with fostering regulations and mandatory and best practice guidance.
2. To support the development of a service that holds children and young people central to its offer and maximises opportunities to improve stability and outcomes within the framework of our service proposal.
3. To provide Social Work supervision to the Proposed Registered Manager at least once per month.
4. To provide scrutiny and feed into the development, monitoring and review of the agency's policy, procedures and approach to practice. Ensuring they are compliant with relevant legislation and guidance.
5. Play a key role in the development of the agency through provision of specialist knowledge and expertise.
6. Provide advice and guidance on data protection and safeguarding matters affecting the agency as required.
7. Maintain an up-to-date knowledge on new legislation, case law, policy guidance, and local and regional policy developments, and support the adoption of new legislation and guidance into practice in conjunction with the Proposed Registered Manager and Responsible Individual.
8. Provide training to key staff on the role and function of the Agency Decision Maker.
9. Alongside the Proposed Registered Manager, ensure the Panel Chair is suitably qualified and equipped to discharge their duties. The ADM will conduct annual appraisals of the Panel Chair.
10. Review and scrutinise the quality-of-care report produced by the Proposed Registered Manager on a quarterly basis.
11. Provide reports to the agency and its executive team as required.
12. Undertake the role of ADM, making objective, robust decisions on behalf of the agency in respect to suitability and ongoing approval, considering all relevant recommendations and information, ensuring these decisions are compliant and aligned with the relevant statutory timescales as well as being communicated effectively.
13. Support with ongoing quality assurance and improvement alongside the agency management team.
14. Ensure that equality, diversity and equity are considered in the documentation produced by the agency in which the ADM's decisions are based upon.
15. Work closely with the Proposed Registered Manager and Panel Chair to ensure that Panel functions effectively and complies with all fostering regulations.

16. Attend quarterly joint supervisions with the Proposed Registered Manager and Responsible Individual.

## **Work-related expectations**

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1. Work within Big Life's values, ethos, and vision
2. Contribute to the development of Big Life, Big Life Futures, and achievement of project goals
3. Ensure the safety of all people by adhering to safeguarding, information security and all other Big Life policies
4. Commit to personal development and complete relevant training or professional development activities
5. Work in accordance with relevant legislation and regulatory expectations
6. Participate in regular supervision and formal inspections
7. Maintain a proactive, positive, and enthusiastic approach to work
8. Undertake any other duties required, appropriate to the position

# Person Specification: Agency Decision Maker (ADM)

The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate that they meet the following points, either in their application, at interview, or through provision of references and certifications.

Safeguarding is fundamental to everything we do at Big Life. As a result, our expectations of the ADM post holder will be high, both in terms of practice, knowledge and ability to work collaboratively with the Proposed Registered Manager and Responsible Individual. The lived experience, wellbeing and safety of children and young people will be central to our decision when appointing the role.

Following successful application and interview, applicants will be the subject of necessary checks and references, including an enhanced DBS check. Our safer recruitment approach for the ADM post holder will meet the requirements laid out in The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 (s19, s20, s21, schedule 1) and Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (standard 23).

## Experience

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1. Extensive experience of fostering and children's social care practice, including management and leadership responsibilities.
2. Evidence of recent, self-directed, professional development and a commitment to continue.
3. Significant and demonstrable knowledge and understanding of legislation, guidance, policy and procedure as well as best practice in relation to the ADM role and responsibilities.
4. Experience in performance management and the implementation of systems to support excellent performance.

## Education and qualifications

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### Essential

1. Qualified Social Worker with current registration with Social Work England and a minimum of 5 years post-qualification experience.
2. At least 3 years post-qualifying experience in childcare social work with knowledge of childcare law and practice.
3. Ongoing registration with Social Work England.

## **Skills**

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1. Very strong administrative skills
2. Very strong interpersonal and communication skills
3. Excellent organisational skills
4. Able to motivate, direct, and delegate where appropriate
5. Able to develop teams and services to create effective and efficient working environments
6. Be curious, analytical and evidence based in their approach to practice and support

## **Knowledge**

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1. Expansive knowledge and understanding the aims and principles of the Children Act (1989) and associated mandatory childcare legislation and guidance.
2. Expansive knowledge and understanding of the Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011 and associated mandatory guidance to also include the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards.
3. An understanding of the current draft proposals linked to New Fostering Standards.
4. A robust understanding of the National Referral Mechanism and associated processes.
5. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the role of the fostering ADM including the options available to them when considering their decision.
6. Understanding of Ofsted's Social Care Common Inspection Framework for Fostering Services.
7. Understanding of the impact and experiences of care proceedings on children and families
8. An understanding of fostering practice and approach when supporting children, young people and foster carers.
9. A robust understanding of assessment and review practices in the fostering sector.

## **Personal**

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1. Demonstrates integrity and good character
2. Reliable, flexible and proactive
3. Professional and confident
4. Positive outlook and a 'can do' attitude
5. Non-judgemental and inclusive
6. Commitment to the ethos and values of Big Life Group and Big Life Futures
7. Commitment to personal development and willingness to regularly update skills and experience
8. Pride in delivering high-quality outcomes

# Leadership Competency

## Shapes and manages strategy

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1. Inspires a sense of purpose and direction
2. Focuses strategically
3. Interprets and analyses information (including financial) and opportunities
4. Shows judgement, intelligence and common sense

## Drives results

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1. Builds organisational skill and responsiveness
2. Marshals professional expertise
3. Steers and implements change and deals with uncertainty
4. Delivers intended results
5. Manages Resources

## Builds productive relationships

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1. Nurtures internal and external relationships
2. Facilitates cooperation and partnerships
3. Values individual differences and diversity
4. Guides, coaches and develops people
5. Skill sharing

## Exemplifies personal integrity and self-awareness

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1. Demonstrates the group values, professionalism and probity
2. Engages with risk and shows personal courage
3. Commits to action
4. Displays resilience
5. Demonstrates self-awareness and a commitment to personal development
6. Self-management

## Communicates And Influences Effectively

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1. Communicates clearly
2. Listens, understands and adapts to audience

3. Negotiates persuasively
4. Influencing



# **THE BIG LiFE GROUP**

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in health, in wealth and in life.

[thebiglifegroup.com](http://thebiglifegroup.com)