Job Description and Person Specification

HEAD OF OPERATIONS

LEADERSHIP STRATEGY IMPACT	**Leading people, systems and resources to support safe, effective services and sustainable organisational growth.**

Role detail	Information
Job title	Head of Operations
Salary	£40,000–£45,000 per annum, full-time equivalent (dependent on experience).
Hours	Full Time (37 hours per week)
Contract	Permanent
Reporting to	Chief Executive Officer
Direct Reports	Operations Team and Client Support Team.
Location	Hybrid working across organisational sites
Holiday	26 days, rising to 29 days, plus bank holidays
Checks	Eligibility to work in the UK and a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check
Application closing date	9am, Friday, 20th November 2026
Interview date	All day, Thursday, 3rd December 2026

About STARS Dorset

STARS Dorset provides specialist support to people affected by rape and sexual violence. We work across Dorset to deliver safe, inclusive and trauma-informed services that place each client's needs, choices and wellbeing at the centre of our practice.

Job Overview

The Head of Operations is a member of the Senior Leadership Team, overseeing governance, compliance, people, systems and resources to support safe, effective services and sustainable growth.

Working closely with the Chief Executive, Trustees and senior managers, the postholder will drive operational improvements and digital development, including integrated systems, appropriate AI implementation and staff training. They will also act as Safeguarding Lead and deputise for the Chief Executive in their absence.

Key Responsibilities

01	02	03	04
STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP	**PEOPLE & DEVELOPMENT**	**OPERATIONS & RESOURCES**	**GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE**

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership

- Contribute to the development and delivery of the organisational strategy.
- Support achievement of strategic objectives and annual business plans.
- Lead organisational development initiatives and continuous improvement programmes.
- Identify opportunities to improve operational effectiveness and organisational resilience.
- Ensure operational activity aligns with the charity's mission, values and strategic priorities.
- Deputise for the Chief Executive in their absence, providing leadership and making decisions within agreed delegated authority.

Governance, Compliance and Risk

- Lead and oversee organisational governance systems.
- Support the Board of Trustees and relevant committees.
- Maintain effective policy, compliance and assurance frameworks.
- Ensure compliance with charity law, employment legislation, GDPR and regulatory requirements.
- Oversee organisational risk management and business continuity planning.
- Ensure health and safety obligations are met across all organisational activities.
- Act as a designated First Aider and Fire Marshal, completing and maintaining the relevant training and carrying out duties in accordance with organisational procedures.

Operations and Corporate Services

- Oversee operational systems, processes and organisational infrastructure.
- Lead business support and administrative functions.
- Ensure efficient management of facilities, equipment and organisational assets.
- Manage supplier and service contracts.

People Leadership

- Line manage, support and develop the Operations Team and Client Support Team, ensuring clear responsibilities, regular supervision and effective performance management.
- Foster a positive, values-led and high-performing culture.
- Support recruitment, induction, retention and workforce development activities.
- Oversee volunteer coordination, ensuring effective recruitment, induction and ongoing support.
- Promote accountability, professionalism and continuous learning.
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the organisation.

Financial and Resource Management

- Contribute to annual budget setting and financial planning.
- Monitor operational expenditure and ensure effective resource utilisation.
- Support procurement and contract management processes.
- Identify opportunities to maximise value for money and operational sustainability.

Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement

- Build positive relationships with external partners and stakeholders.
- Represent the organisation at meetings, networks and partnership forums.
- Support collaborative working arrangements which enhance organisational impact.
- Contribute to maintaining a strong organisational reputation.

Safeguarding

- Act as the organisation’s Safeguarding Lead, providing guidance and oversight on safeguarding matters.
- Lead the response to safeguarding concerns, ensuring appropriate recording, escalation and referral in line with organisational procedures.

- Ensure safeguarding responsibilities are embedded within operational systems, policies and working practices.
- Support managers and staff to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities, identifying training needs and promoting good practice.
- Keep safeguarding policies and procedures under review and report relevant concerns, risks and learning to the Chief Executive and Trustees as appropriate.
- Champion a strong safeguarding culture that places the safety and wellbeing of clients, staff and volunteers at the centre of decision-making.

IT, Digital Development and Innovation

- Lead the strategic development of the organisation's IT and digital systems to support operational needs and future growth.
- Review existing systems and recommend integrated solutions that improve core operational activities, reduce duplication and strengthen information management.
- Oversee the selection, implementation and integration of digital systems, working with staff and external IT providers to ensure suitability, value for money and effective support.
- Identify and lead opportunities to improve efficiency through automation and appropriate AI implementation, with clear arrangements for confidentiality, data protection and human oversight.
- Coordinate and deliver practical training and guidance to help staff use systems confidently and effectively.
- Monitor the impact of digital improvements and use staff feedback to inform further development.

General Responsibilities

- Undertake additional duties consistent with the seniority of the post.
- Maintain confidentiality and professional standards at all times.
- Work in accordance with organisational policies and procedures.
- Act as a role model for organisational values and behaviours.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates will be assessed against the criteria below. Essential and desirable requirements are shown separately for clarity.

Qualifications and Professional Development	Essential	Desirable
Degree level qualification or equivalent professional experience	✓	
Evidence of continuing professional development	✓	
Leadership or management qualification		✓
Professional qualification relevant to operations, governance, HR, compliance or project management		✓

Experience	Essential	Desirable
Experience in a senior operational leadership role	✓	
Managing multidisciplinary teams	✓	
Leading organisational change and service improvement	✓	
Developing operational systems, policies and procedures	✓	
Governance, risk management and compliance experience	✓	
Budget and resource management	✓	
Working effectively with external stakeholders and partners	✓	
Supporting Boards or Trustee governance structures		✓
Experience within the charity, public or VAWG sector		✓
Business continuity and organisational resilience planning	✓	
Experience of leading IT and digital improvement projects, including reviewing, selecting and implementing integrated operational systems.	✓	
Experience of training and supporting staff to use digital systems effectively.	✓	
Experience of managing safeguarding concerns, including recording, escalation and referral.	✓	
Experience of implementing AI tools or automation to improve operational efficiency.		✓

Knowledge	Essential	Desirable
Operational management and organisational development	✓	
Information governance and GDPR	✓	
Health and safety legislation and good practice	✓	
Safeguarding principles and responsibilities	✓	
Workforce development and performance management	✓	

Knowledge	Essential	Desirable
Equality, diversity and inclusion principles	✓	
Trauma-informed and survivor-centred practice	✓	
Understanding of challenges affecting victims and survivors of abuse		✓
Charity governance and funding environments		✓
Understanding of system integration and the secure, responsible use of digital tools and AI.	✓	

Skills and Abilities	Essential	Desirable
Strategic planning and operational leadership	✓	
Strong leadership and people management skills	✓	
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills	✓	
Project and change management capability	✓	
Strong analytical and problem-solving skills	✓	
Ability to manage competing priorities effectively	✓	
Stakeholder management and influencing skills	✓	
Ability to prepare reports and present information to senior audiences	✓	
Contract negotiation and contract management		✓
Ability to evaluate digital solutions and lead systems improvements that increase operational efficiency.	✓	
Ability to exercise sound judgement and provide organisational leadership when deputising for the Chief Executive.	✓	

Special Requirements	Essential	Desirable
Commitment to the organisation's mission, values and objectives.	✓	
Ability to travel between organisational sites and external meetings.	✓	
Flexibility to attend occasional evening meetings and events.	✓	
Commitment to undertaking relevant training and professional development.	✓	
Willingness to complete and maintain the training required to act as Safeguarding Lead, First Aider and Fire Marshal.	✓	

Values and Behavioural Competencies

Behaviour	What this means
Supportive	• Demonstrates empathy, professionalism and emotional intelligence. • Supports colleagues to succeed whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries. • Encourages resilience, accountability and professional growth. • Promotes a culture of learning and continuous improvement.
Impactful	• Focuses on achieving meaningful outcomes. • Uses evidence and insight to improve performance. • Takes ownership of decisions and actions. • Drives innovation and organisational improvement.
Connected	• Builds strong and productive relationships. • Works collaboratively across teams and partnerships. • Communicates openly, professionally and respectfully. • Encourages shared ownership of organisational goals.
Safeguarding focused	• Places safety and wellbeing at the centre of decision-making. • Demonstrates professional curiosity and sound judgement. • Promotes safeguarding accountability throughout the organisation. • Supports a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
Values-Led	• Acts with integrity and professionalism. • Champions equality, diversity and inclusion. • Leads by example. • Demonstrates commitment to the organisation's mission, vision and charitable objectives.

Additional information

- Reasonable adjustments will be considered throughout the recruitment process and employment.

Appointment Process

Assessment will normally include:

- Application Form
- Pre-interview written task
- Interview
- Presentation
- References
- Enhanced DBS Check