

SOMERSET COUNCIL

Role title	LCN Link Officer
Directorate	Partnerships and Localities
Reporting to	LCN Development Manager
Grade	10
Evaluation ref	AG1293
Role purpose	
Lead the local implementation of Somerset Council's approach to community development, locality and partnership working within a designated geographic area through establishing and managing 1 to 2 Local Community Network areas. Develop collaborative approaches to improving outcomes for residents and establishing strong connections between the Council's varied services and its diverse communities, partners, Voluntary, Community Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE), Town, City and Parish and business sectors.	
Key results area	Accountability
Corporate Responsibilities	Understand, uphold, and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.
Service Delivery	Leading the establishment, development and management of Local Community Networks in a specific geographic area. Support Somerset Council Members in their community leadership role, within the specific LCN areas. Engage, convene and work with a range of stakeholders to identify local priorities and develop a coordinated approach to addressing these, including the creation of prioritised action plans and delivery of local projects. Establish, co-ordinate and where appropriate lead thematic working groups within the LCN area, aligned to agreed priorities. Work with colleagues across the Council to progress action plans to address need identified in the local priorities, working with partners and reporting back to LCNs and Executive members and council colleagues. Work with colleagues across the Council, in particular Democratic Services, Communications and IT, to ensure efficient practical running of LCN meetings, including technology, the collation and publication of agendas, meeting notes / minutes, reports and LCN comms plans. Develop networks of colleagues across the council to negotiate solutions to operational issues raised via LCNs and progress the priorities of the LCN plans.

	Act as the 'eyes and ears' of the organisation on the ground and reacting expediently to deal with local issues to enhance the local reputation of the Council. Work with services and managers at an appropriate level to ensure services are delivered effectively and efficiently at a local level. In times of crisis to lead and / or support response and/or mobilise local resources to aid and support response and recovery work.
Stakeholder Engagement	Acting as an ambassador for Somerset Council with local stakeholders within a geographical area, engaging, developing and maintaining stakeholder relationships, including local members, residents, Town and Parish Councils and VCFSE organisations. You will facilitate residents, partners and local members to come together to find solutions to local issues, to 'have their say' and influence public service design and delivery. Supports Somerset Council services in their community engagement and locality working activities by working across the council to develop, broaden and embed shared understanding of different communities, their priorities and local area working.
Project / Programme Management	Build the knowledge, skills and understanding of all partners to affect positive change. Contribute to and where appropriate lead the planning and delivery of projects and specialist initiatives. Pro-actively identify and support the delivery of cross-cutting initiatives and projects to benefit geographical communities, facilitates working (sub) groups to support the action plan and address priorities.
Creativity and problem solving	Problem solving is a key requirement of this role, with the postholder taking responsibility for finding solutions to many of the issues raised within LCNs, using initiative and knowledge to engage with the appropriate services or partners. They will use their judgement to know when to escalate more complex or strategic matters, whilst retaining responsibility for tracking their resolution. LCN Link Officers will work closely with managers and other members of their team to ensure a coordinated and strategic approach to the management of LCNs across Somerset. LCN Link Officers will have responsibility for identifying and addressing barriers to participation and the achievement of agreed objectives, working with all partners including residents to agree outcomes, harness community assets and inspire creative solutions at a local level. The post holder will need to manage competing priorities and effectively facilitate multiple stakeholders with sometimes conflicting agendas. They will need to navigate organisational and political complexities whilst remaining focussed on delivering agreed objectives.
Financial / budget management	Seek ways to source or generate external funding into the county / LCN area to support delivery of priorities. Many funding streams will already be in existence, it will be about ensuring they can be accessed for the particular projects which may require this type of support in each area. Working within agreed budgets you will support the delivery of projects in your area.

Performance Frameworks	Using an agreed framework, work with the LCNs to create, deliver and measure the impact of plans which address local priorities and align with and inform the Council and other partner objectives. Produce reports which demonstrate the activity and achievements of LCNs and enable feedback from users, communities and partners, providing a link between LCNs and the Council and supporting a two-way dialogue.
Commissioning / Contract Management	Support the development of contracts, commissions or service level agreements relating to LCN projects and priorities, on behalf of the Council (in line with corporate policies and contract procedure rules) and partner organisations.
Communication	Work closely with the wider Partnerships and Localities teams and other colleagues across all departments/services to ensure a coordinated approach to development of local priorities, commitments, and areas of focus. Champion the role and purpose of LCNs with colleagues and communities internally and externally. Work with colleagues to develop effective and co-ordinated communications plans to support LCNs and encourage wide engagement. Work with City, Town and Parish councils to encourage and support effective participation in LCNs and enable groups of parishes across LCN areas with common goals to work together.

Knowledge / skills / experience

Knowledge

- Educated to degree level in a relevant discipline or with relevant professional qualification.
- Sound understanding of the principles of community development.
- Understanding of how Council and partners work at both strategic and operational level and the changing face of the public and VCFSE sector landscape
- Knowledge of the Town and Parish Councils and of voluntary and community sector and the business sector, how they work and the challenges they face
- Principles of project management
- Financial awareness and ability to manage budgets at a service and project level.
- Political Awareness and understanding of the Council's decision making processes
- In depth knowledge of local government and local democracy with a working knowledge of public sector functional structures, services and statutory responsibilities

Skills

- Ability to engage with and influence a wide range of colleagues, partners and stakeholders in order to achieve the objectives of the role
- Ability to analyse /interpret and present complex data.
- Expert communication/presentation skills to include presentations at a senior level and in public on contentious issues.
- Ability to identify local assets and work within an asset based community development approach.
- Ability to use existing knowledge and contacts to identify key partners and stakeholders relevant to any topic and ensure their participation where appropriate and the capability to build new relationships.
- Ability to share knowledge and provide continuity across LCN areas, working with colleagues across the Council and other statutory, VCFSE and local services.

- A skilled communicator who can provide support for Somerset Council members to take a leading role in the development of LCNs in their area.
- Team worker who will work closely with the wider Localities team and other colleagues across all departments/services to ensure a coordinated approach to development of local priorities and commitments and areas of focus.
- High levels of resilience, tenacity, tact and diplomacy

Experience

- Significant community development experience gained through working directly with a range of stakeholders including residents, Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprises, businesses Convening and facilitating meetings in a way which is participative and consensus building.
- Experience of delivering or contributing to cross agency projects.
- Experience of resolving conflicting priorities and goals from experience of managing conflicting stakeholder expectations
- Working in partnerships, with both internal and external stakeholders, building strong and lasting relationships
- Experience of resident engagement and translating needs into deliverable options
- Experience of developing action plans based on a participative approach to identifying priorities, using data, perception and lived experience to agree priorities.

Dimensions of role

Ability to travel to meetings and work out of normal office hours
To manage and service 2 LCN areas out of 18 across Somerset
Operational management of all aspects of the running of LCNs and delivery of objectives under their management.

Notes

Competencies / attributes

Working conditions:

Working arrangements:

The role will require attendance at meetings outside of normal office hours and the ability to travel across the County.