

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Behavioural Science Practitioner		
Directorate	Public Health		
Reporting to	Behavioural Science Specialist		
Grade	10		
Evaluation ref:	AU1151	Job Family ref:	
Role purpose			
The Behavioural Science Practitioner supports the design, delivery and evaluation of public health programmes by applying behavioural science principles and evidence-based approaches. The role focuses on understanding behaviours that influence health outcomes and translating insights into practical, targeted interventions that contribute to improving population health and reducing inequalities across Somerset. Working as part of the Public Health team, the postholder contributes to research, analysis and evidence synthesis to ensure programmes and services are informed by robust behavioural insights. The role involves collaborating with internal teams and external partners to embed behavioural science approaches within policy, strategy and service delivery. This includes supporting the development and evaluation of interventions, contributing to research outputs, and communicating findings clearly to a range of stakeholders. The Behavioural Science Practitioner also plays a key role in applying behavioural frameworks, supporting project delivery, and influencing practice to ensure that services are designed to effectively support behaviour change and optimise health outcomes.			
Responsibilities			
Contribute to the overall work programme of the Somerset Public Health Team, including the delivery of the Improving Lives Strategy (2018-2029), County Plan and the Public Health Outcomes in the Public Health Outcomes Framework which relate to the wider determinants of health, and tackling health inequalities (Including but not limited to housing, education, employment, poverty). Influence work with partners and providers to reinforce the adoption of behavioural science approaches. Manage the technical tasks assigned from either the Behaviour Science Specialist or the lead consultant including supporting with a range of research and administration activities underpinning the planning, implementation, and evaluation of behavioural science initiatives. Support the development of interventions across Somerset Council business areas to optimise service design, programme delivery and key outcomes using behaviourally informed approaches and interventions.			

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Lead on and contribute to the writing of high-quality reports, including systematic reviews, literature reviews and reports, gathering evidence from a variety of sources including peer reviewed journals, policy/strategy documents, and grey literature.

Lead on the critical appraisal of behavioural science evidence (both qualitative and quantitative) to identify specific drivers for behavioural change interventions.

Support the Behaviour Science Specialist with the synthesis and interpretation of evidence and insights to inform methodology and theory selection.

Support project teams who are delivering agreed interventions with the analysis, development, implementation, evaluation and review of interventions.

Provide project management approaches to project teams designing and delivering interventions.

Collect, interpret and disseminate findings to senior managers, commissioners, elected members and stakeholders through verbal and written presentations as required.

Impact

Contacts & Relationships

The post will take a role in developing and sustaining inter-agency and interdisciplinary plans for the adoption of behavioural science approaches. This will be in partnership with a range of agencies in the statutory, non-statutory, voluntary and private sectors. This requires demonstrable influencing and negotiating skills in a complex field across other agencies and voluntary organisations.

Within the public health team, will have key relationships with Health Promotion Managers Specialists, and Consultants.

Research and Behavioural Insights

A core impact of this role lies in the generation and application of behavioural insights to inform public health strategy and service design. The Behavioural Science Practitioner will contribute to high quality research activities, including critical appraisal of evidence, data collection, and the synthesis of behavioural science findings to inform intervention development. With expertise in both qualitative and quantitative methods, the role supports the translation of complex behavioural data into actionable insights. This includes applying frameworks such as the Behaviour Change Wheel to real world challenges, ensuring interventions are evidence-based, contextually relevant, and designed to optimise health outcomes.

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Resources

The total public health budget for Somerset Council in 2024/25 was approximately £23 million. The allocation for 2025/26 is currently being finalised. While this post will not have direct responsibility for this spend, it will contribute to the allocation of resources from budgets through discussions with their line manager and ensure the effective use of these and the wider public health budget is used to maximise the impacts on health and wellbeing adopting behavioural science approaches.

	Essential	Desirable	
Knowledge			
Understanding of the use of behavioural science to inform intervention development.	X		
Knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of different data sources.	X		
Knowledge of research and evaluation methods for understanding the effectiveness of behaviour change interventions.	X		
Understanding of local government cultures, pressures, and processes.		X	
Experience			
Experience of conducting literature reviews, using robust methods (preferably as part of a research team).	X		
Experience in critically appraising research.	X		
Skilled in quantitative and qualitative research methods.	X		
Skilled in writing up research findings (to academic journal publication standard).	X		
Experience of using a variety of behavioural science tools and approaches e.g. Behaviour Change Wheel or Behavioural Insights.	X		
Experience of building and maintaining productive relationships, including those with stakeholders and partners.	X		
Experience of successfully leading, developing and implementing projects or programmes.	X		
Experience of developing effective verbal and written communication of public health messages for the public.	X		

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Good organisational skills and ability to delegate effectively.	X		
Proven practical experience of applying behavioural insights to real world issues, preferably with or for public sector organisations.		X	
Experience of organising and delivering training.		X	
Presentation of research at academic conferences and/or journal publications.		X	
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications			
Educated to a minimum of Masters degree level in a behavioural science e.g. Psychology, Health Psychology, Behavioural Economics.	X		
Evidence of formal research skills training.	X		
Membership of a professional body.		X	
Skills			
Strong, effective verbal and written communication skills.	X		
Well-developed written, presentation and report writing skills, using effective language to convey ideas and arguments convincingly and the ability to simplify technical and complex information.	X		
Proficient ICT skills including using web-based applications.	X		
Ability to manage expectations and tensions, including having difficult or challenging conversations.	X		
Good partnership working skills.	X		
Ability to make considered logical and rational decisions in a timely manner and communicate them clearly.	X		
Hold a UK driving license or have access to transport and be able to attend / participate in meetings across Somerset.	X		
Ability to speak fluent English as stated in Part 7 of the Immigration Act(2016).	X		
Self-motivated with proven ability to work proactively and independently under the guidance of senior colleagues.	X		
Ability to work as part of a team	X		
Ability to work effectively across different teams and departments in a collaborative manner.	X		
Adaptable approach to meet the needs of the service.	X		

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Flexible and self-motivated to improve the health and well-being of the population of Somerset	X		
High level of organisation and time management skills and ability to prioritise workload and work to deadlines.	X		
Able to respond to a changing pattern of demand at work which can be unpredictable and unplanned requiring constant shifts of priority.	X		
Able to influence and motivate others.	X		
Ability to identify and respond to the political context updating the Public Health Consultants or Director of Public Health where necessary.		X	
Politically aware.		X	
Working Conditions			
Working Arrangements			
Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.			
Corporate Responsibilities			
Understand, uphold and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion policies: health and 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.			

Date: May 2025