

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Project and Change Officer – Early Years Communities (BSiL)		
Service	Education		
Reporting to	BSiL Education Workstream/Assignment Lead		
Grade	11		
Evaluation ref:	TR0322	Job Family ref:	
Role purpose			
The Project and Change Officer is responsible for supporting the effective development, co-ordination and delivery of locality-based Early Years Communities as part of the Best Start in Life (BSiL) programme. The postholder will apply project and change management principles to ensure agreed activity is appropriately planned, governed, delivered, monitored and reviewed against defined timescales, resources, quality standards and intended benefits. This includes coordinating project plans, facilitating collaboration across partners, maintaining governance and project documentation, monitoring progress and supporting the successful delivery of agreed outcomes. Working collaboratively with early years settings, schools, health services, SEND partners, family support services, community organisations and other stakeholders, the role will support the development of strong locality networks and Communities of Practice, helping to promote information sharing, effective partnership working and the spread of best practice. Through the co-ordination of engagement, improvement and learning activities, the postholder will contribute to improved early years transitions, greater consistency of support for providers and progress towards Good Level of Development outcomes, particularly for children experiencing disadvantage or additional barriers.			
Accountabilities			
Responsible for supporting all aspects of the successful delivery of projects or other time specific work assignments to defined time, cost and quality. Responsible for project planning; change planning and management; resource planning; communications planning; stakeholder engagement, proactive risk analysis, management and resolution and benefits realisation. Support the establishment and management of appropriate governance arrangements, including production and maintenance of key documentation – business case, project mandate, highlight reports, project plan etc. Coordinate the delivery of change activities associated with programmes and projects of change. Be a positive ambassador of change.			

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Provide advice and guidance on change and project management activities, tools and methodology in support of programmes and projects of change.

Work with staff at all levels across the authority.

Act in an advisory capacity to ensure services are ready to operate new processes or within new environments that are associated with the implementation of a new system, process or transformation.

Ensure the effective understanding and operation of any specific statutory or regulatory duty contained within the role.

Assist the Project and Programme Manager or assignment lead to develop realistic and achievable implementation plans, identifying risks to implementation.

Identify and assess project and programme benefits, carry out change impact assessments, map stakeholders and create change plans.

Track and monitor progress against the project, programme and change plans, identifying issues and carrying out corrective actions as necessary to ensure progress remains on track.

Report progress, risks and issues to the relevant Project and Programme Managers or assignment lead, Programme Management Office and relevant governance boards.

Engage with business areas to identify level of change, supporting managers and staff throughout the change process.

Identify and co-ordinate the delivery of appropriate stakeholder events such as consultation, workshops, awareness events to ensure they are engaged in the process, represented and informed.

Develop and deliver co-ordinated project and change communications using a variety of media and communications channels.

Monitor feedback from stakeholders and staff, vary the stakeholder management plan where necessary and considering the requirement for service-specific messages in addition to general change project messages; recommends appropriate communication interventions to build and sustain the desired level of commitment.

Ensures all issues arising from communication events are resolved (or escalated) and feedback provided.

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Impact

Contacts and relationships

Works as part of a Project and/or Programme team, taking direction from Project and Programme Managers as appropriate.

Operates as part of a wider Programme Management Office, ensuring that quality standards are maintained and that project, programme and change products are produced in a consistent and timely manner.

Reports into Project/Programme Governance structures under the ultimate direction of a Senior Responsible Owner.

When required, works with colleagues across Education, Early Years, Health, SEND, Family Support, Communities, HR, Finance and other partner organisations to ensure appropriate specialist input supports project delivery.

Liaises with lead officers within Council services, identifying cultural, logistical and technical barriers to change and identifying and agreeing actions to overcome these challenges.

Resources

Generally works to clear precedents, specific policy objectives, established procedures and standards.

Develops and reviews processes as required.

Exercises judgement in the selection of the appropriate solution and presentation of recommendations through the application of acquired knowledge. The solutions may often be novel and untested and require careful implementation to ensure success.

Will support initiatives delivering transformational change to the way in which Somerset Council delivers services and with significant financial savings attached.

May be responsible for the line management of staff within the Programme Management Office or programme/project team including managing staff performance and staff development. Improve the professional standards of staff, including morale, motivation and personal development. Set clear targets and objectives for staff.

Knowledge / Experience / Qualifications / Skills

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Sound knowledge and practical understanding of project and change management methods, tools and controls,	X	

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including planning, governance, risk, issue, dependency, stakeholder and benefits management.		
Understanding of the Early Years and the factors that influence child development, school readiness, effective transition and Good Level of Development outcomes.	X	
Knowledge of effective stakeholder engagement, facilitation, communication and co-production approaches in multi-agency or community settings.	X	
Understanding of equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, and their application to project design and delivery.	X	
Knowledge of the early years, SEND, health, family support or community-services landscape and the respective contributions of partners.		X
Understanding of evaluation, improvement methodology, Communities of Practice or place-based/locality working.		X
Experience		
Demonstrable experience of managing or coordinating projects or defined work assignments to agreed time, quality and resource parameters.	X	
Experience of producing and maintaining clear project documentation, including plans, milestones, reports, risk and issue logs, action logs and benefits measures.	X	
Experience of building effective relationships and influencing delivery across organisational or professional boundaries without relying on direct line-management authority.	X	
Experience of supporting the development, testing and spread of effective practice or service improvement.	X	
Experience of coordinating work relating to early years development, transition, inclusion, SEND, education improvement, family support or community development.		X
Experience of facilitating professional networks, workshops, Communities of Practice or multi-agency groups and securing clear actions and follow-through.		X
Experience of managing externally funded, fixed-term or outcome-based programmes, including reporting against specified deliverables.		X
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
A relevant higher-level qualification, or equivalent substantial experience, in project management, business administration, education, early years, public services or a related discipline.	X	
A recognised project or change management qualification, such as PRINCE2, Agile, APM, Prosci or APMG Change		X

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Management.		
A relevant early years, education, SEND, facilitation, evaluation or improvement qualification.		x

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Skills		
Strong organisation and planning skills, with the ability to manage concurrent activities, deadlines, dependencies and competing priorities.	X	
Highly effective facilitation, communication and interpersonal skills, including the ability to engage varied professional audiences and create shared ownership.	X	
Ability to translate strategic outcomes into practical delivery plans, measurable outputs, clear responsibilities and proportionate reporting.	X	
Ability to analyse data and feedback, identify patterns and gaps, and turn insight into focused locality improvement activity.	X	
Strong problem-solving, judgement and decision-making skills, with the confidence to challenge constructively, resolve barriers and escalate appropriately.	X	
Ability to write concise reports, briefings, recommendations and communications for operational and governance audiences.	X	
Confident use of Microsoft 365 and appropriate project, reporting and collaboration tools.		X
Working Conditions		
Dimensions of the role		
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, 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: 7th October 2026