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| **Job Title** | Service Improvement Officer | | | | |
| **Directorate** | Children and Families Operations | | | | |
| **Reporting to** | Service Manager – Social Work | | | | |
| **Grade** | Grade 9 | | | | |
| **Evaluation ref:** | AG0657 | **Job Family ref:** | | C&F09 | |
| **Role Purpose** | | | | | |
| Design, facilitate and manage a comprehensive range of quality assurance activities, drawing together research and evidence to analyse information and identify areas of strength and development. Provide expertise and guidance to the wider workforce to utilise this evidence base.  Advise the Council’s Senior Management Group in respect of operational planning and commissioning, policy matters and service delivery issues and engage with partners in the promotion, communication and delivery of services.  Establish and maintain effective working relationships with multi-agency partners, collaborating, negotiating and demonstrating strong analytical skills to identify creative solutions to complex systemic challenges.  Co-ordinate Inspection activities including preparation and delivery of statutory inspections. | | | | | |
| **Accountabilities** | | | | | |
| 1. Lead the development, delivery and implementation of service improvements ensuring strategic alignment with other services and partnership agencies. Ensuring that changes are embedded across the service  2. Drive and oversee the implementation of complex, high profile improvement programmes and projects within Children’s Services and associated partners, to improve performance across the service.  3. Design, implement and maintain management systems and processes to foster a culture of continuous improvement across Children’s Services. Co-ordinate the quality assurance framework and use to best effect in enhancing professional practice and improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.  4. Champion an improvement and performance management culture focused on outcomes and rigorous in offering challenge. Ensure that the organisation measures outcomes, set ambitious goals, and achieves them.  5. Contribute to the Council’s objectives by securing continuous improvement in Children ‘s Services performance. Lead on all aspects of strategic performance improvement and quality management for Children’s Services.  6. Support a timetable for auditing throughout Children’s Services, ensure this is implemented and reports are produced providing recommendations to improve practice and performance against recognised standards and targets.  7. Ensure Service/Strategic plans align with the overall direction of the service and ensure reporting on progress is timely. Identify, propose and implement efficiency changes in order to realise budgetary savings whilst improving performance.  8. Critically appraise practice, systems, processes and procedures and offer advice on re-engineering and organisational design to maximise outputs and outcomes.  9. Support inspection and planning activity. Monitor the delivery of identified action plans arising from review and inspection activity.  10. Ensure that all learning from complaints, participation, exit interviews, and other sources is captured and considered by Performance Management forums alongside more formal sources such as audit reports and performance data.  11. Research and analyse best practices from other organisations and explore their applicability within Somerset Council to improve services for children and families. Keep up to date with relevant policy and professional developments at national and local levels.  12. Project manage and implement specific programmes and projects under the leadership of the Director of Children’s Services, Strategic Managers or Assistant Director and Strategic Manager for Safeguarding, Care and Quality Assurance.  13. Maintain accurate and accessible information online and within SharePoint about Children’s Services policies and procedures for public, staff, partners and providers.  14. 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. Ensure that Equality and Diversity practices are integrated into interactions with staff, service users and communities and include challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all. | | | | | |
| **Knowledge / Experience / Skills** | | | | | |
|  | | | Essential | | Desirable |
| **Knowledge** | | | | | |
| Experience in the development and implementation of service improvements and quality assurance activities. | | | X | |  |
| Demonstratable experience in supporting policy and practice changes | | | X | |  |
| Demonstratable experience of working with a range of stakeholders | | | X | |  |
| Understanding of policy relevant to Children’s Service and within a complex political organisation | | | X | |  |
| Demonstrate a high level of understanding of the issues and practice involved in implementing policy within day to day practice in Children’s Services | | |  | | X |
| **Experience** | | | | | |
| Have considerable experience in a relevant professional post | | | X | |  |
| Demonstratable experience of managing complex projects and project based work | | | X | |  |
| Experience of working with service users and partner organisations | | | X | |  |
| **Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications** | | | | | |
| Level 3 qualification or equivalent | | | X | |  |
| Evidence of continuing professional development | | | X | |  |
| Project Management qualification | | |  | | X |
| Degree level qualification or equivalent | | |  | | X |
| **Skills** | | | | | |
| Ability to speak fluent English as stated in Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016) | | | X | |  |
| Have excellent presentation, communication and interpersonal skills | | | X | |  |
| Sound planning and organisational skills to determine a clear specification, smart objectives and a realistic, achievable timetable | | | X | |  |
| Be able to think creatively and critically | | | X | |  |
| Ability to support the learning of others | | | X | |  |
| Be confident in offering support and challenge to senior management levels as well as the wider workforce, to address practice concerns. | | | X | |  |
| Strong budget development and resource planning skills to identify costs and resources needed to achieve objectives | | |  | | X |
| **Working Conditions** | | | | | |
| Flexible working available, using a hybrid model - working from home and your contracted work base in County Hall, Taunton, as well as other county bases when required. | | | | | |
| **Impact** | | | | | |
| The Service Improvement Officer will have a significant impact on the quality and effectiveness of services provided by the organization. This role involves working closely with senior management, multi-agency partners, and the wider workforce to drive continuous improvement and ensure that services meet the highest standards.  **Contacts and Relationships**  The Service Improvement Officer has contact with Senior Managers across the Authority as well as externally such as Ofsted, Department for Education, Auditors, etc. The purpose of such contacts is to ensure that there is a co-ordinated and coherent approach to implementing improvements and provides a single point of contact.  The postholder has a significant role with policy and practice areas that are key to successful performance in the quality assurance framework.  Contact with the Senior Leadership team to keep them fully briefed on progress against service improvement plans.  Liaison with colleagues in Education, Early Help and Adult Services to ensure co-ordination and alignment of policies.  Engage with partners to provide working practical protocols between organisations that clarify responsibilities and enable a fully accountable service to be operated for the benefit of children and families, including cost effective criteria.  **Resources**  The Service Improvement Officer has a key role in informing how specific budgets or grants are used to meet service objectives and ensuring that they become mainstreamed within the Council’s wider services to secure sustainability.  The management of specific budgets or grants may be delegated to this post up to circa £500k when they are within the post’s work programme. | | | | | |
| **Working Arrangements** | | | | | |
| *Somerset Council’s Dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.* | | | | | |
| **Corporate Accountabilities** | | | | | |
| *To be added by Reward team.* | | | | | |

Date: June 2025