



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

Job Specification

Behavioural Scientist

3 Year Fixed Term Contract

(Grade VI)

Cork City Council

Closing Date:

4pm, Thursday 8th October 2026

To be read in conjunction with

[Our Candidate Information Booklet](#)

BACKGROUND

Located on Ireland's scenic south coast, Cork City is the country's second-largest urban centre and home to over 224,000 people. Since the 2019 boundary extension, Cork has entered a new phase of ambitious growth and development, with its population projected to reach 335,000 by 2040. Backed by over €2.5 billion in investment, this expansion is focused on sustainable, infrastructure-led growth-enhancing housing, transport, public amenities and cultural services across the city.

Cork City Council is a large urban local authority with 1,675 employees operating across more than 40 locations. The Council is made up of 31 elected members who represent five wards across the city and play a vital role in shaping local policy, decision-making and strategic priorities. The Council has an annual revenue budget of approximately €362 million for 2026 and delivers a broad range of public services including housing, planning, transport, libraries, parks and recreation, community development, culture and placemaking. Internal services include Finance, ICT, Human Resources, Legal Affairs, and Corporate Affairs.

Our work is guided by the Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029, which sets out a clear vision and values for Cork's future – placing sustainability, innovation, service excellence, and community wellbeing at the heart of everything we do. Cork's international recognition as a UNESCO Learning City, a WHO Healthy City and one of the EU's Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities reflects the city's ambition and global outlook. We believe that all Council services and areas of responsibility are climate change relevant. Our impact is, in large part, determined by the way our services engage and affect the public. By adopting behavioural science informed service design and delivery as part of the Council's way of working we expect that our services and responsibilities create positive impacts on people, the mitigation of climate change and adaptation to it.

Cork City Council is committed to delivering high-quality public services by working collaboratively with strategic partners, businesses, communities and neighbourhoods. Together, we are shaping a city that continues to thrive as a vibrant place to live, study, visit, and work.

We are now seeking applications from individuals who are passionate about public service and eager to contribute to Cork's ongoing transformation. If you bring relevant experience, a commitment to service excellence, and a forward-thinking approach to innovation and customer focus – we want to hear from you. Our people are committed to our values of public service, integrity, respect, a people centred approach, responsibility, and ambition. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to play a meaningful role in shaping the city's future, driving impact and supporting Cork's continued growth and success.

The Corporate Plan can be viewed here: [Cork City Council Corporate Plan 2024–2029](#)

Vision, Mission, & Values

Our Vision

Make Cork City Better

Our Values

Public Service

Provide high quality services and address peoples' needs in a manner that is both inclusive and equitable.



Integrity

We act honestly, openly and fairly in all our dealings.



Respect

We treat all people with respect



People Centred

We engage with people in a fair, courteous and timely manner. We strive for continuous improvement.



Responsible

We are accountable and transparent and act responsibly in our dealings and decision making.



Ambitious

We work to attract investment to the City



Our Mission

People – A City of Welcomes where a Public Service ethos is at the core of how we do business.

Place – An Ambitious, Vibrant, and Sustainable City ready for the future while continuing to deliver high-quality services every day.

Prosperity – A Vibrant City of Neighbourhoods, Communities and Businesses working together to deliver on our economic and cultural potential.



THE ROLE

The Behavioural Scientist will support the embedding of behavioural science into Cork City Council's ways of working, providing specialist expertise to improve the design and delivery of Council services.

The role will work collaboratively with service and delivery teams to understand how residents, businesses and staff interact with services and make decisions in real-world conditions. By identifying behavioural barriers and opportunities, the postholder will support the development and testing of evidence-informed interventions that improve service outcomes, accessibility, efficiency and public value. The role will provide hands-on support to teams across the Council and help them to develop knowledge and skills to apply behavioural science approaches to their work themselves.

The role will contribute to the Council's strategic priorities, including its ambition for an environmentally sustainable city and its commitments under the Corporate Plan 2029, the Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2029, the EU Mission on Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities, and relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals.

DUTIES

The principal duties of the post will include:

Behavioural Science Strategy, Analysis and Advisory Support

- Identify, assess and prioritise opportunities to apply behavioural science across Cork City Council services, programmes and organisational initiatives using quantitative and qualitative approaches.
- Analyse behavioural challenges, including low uptake, misunderstanding, habitual behaviours and process friction, and apply behavioural science tools and methods such as behavioural diagnostics, problem framing, systems mapping, user research, choice architecture and behavioural trials to identify barriers and opportunities for change.
- Provide specialist behavioural science advice, guidance and technical support to staff, senior management, service areas and project teams to inform policy development, service design, organisational change and decision-making.
- Contribute behavioural science expertise to strategic Council priorities, including climate action, sustainability, organisational change and other priority areas, supporting innovation in policy design, service delivery and organisational processes.

Intervention Design, Delivery and Implementation

- Design, test and support the implementation of practical, proportionate, ethical, inclusive and evidence-informed behavioural interventions to improve outcomes for citizens, communities and the organisation.
- Work collaboratively with service and delivery teams to integrate behavioural insights into policy development, service design and operational delivery.

- Support teams to translate policy objectives into effective and achievable on-the-ground actions through the design and delivery of trials, pilots and experiments, informing scaling decisions and continuous policy and programme refinement.
- Lead or contribute behavioural science expertise to multidisciplinary projects and initiatives, working across organisational boundaries to embed behavioural approaches in Council activities and funding proposals.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

- Design and support monitoring, evaluation and learning processes, including research design, behavioural diagnostics, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, to assess the effectiveness, outcomes and impact of interventions.
- Prepare reports, briefings, presentations and other communications that translate behavioural evidence, research findings and insights into practical recommendations for operational, strategic and policy decision-makers.
- Foster a culture of experimentation, learning and evidence-based improvement across the organisation, supporting the continuous enhancement of climate action initiatives, organisational practices and service delivery.

Organisational Capability and Knowledge Sharing

- Develop and deliver behavioural science training, guidance, tools and resources to build organisational capability, confidence and capacity for behaviourally informed practice.
- Promote the sharing, application and embedding of behavioural science approaches, evidence and lessons learned across the organisation.
- Keep abreast of emerging research, developments and good practice in behavioural science and apply relevant learning to improve Council policies, programmes and services.

Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership Working

- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with internal teams, external stakeholders, academic institutions and partner organisations to support the application and advancement of behavioural science across Council activities.

The above duties are not intended to be a comprehensive list of all responsibilities associated with the post. Accordingly, the post holder may be required to undertake other duties appropriate to the role, as may be assigned from time to time, and to contribute to the ongoing development and evolution of the role while in office.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE POST

Character

Candidates shall be of good character.

Health

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

Education, Experience, etc.,

Candidates shall on the latest date for receipt of completed application forms for the post:

- Hold a Level 8 qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications in Behavioural Science, Psychology, Behavioural Economics or a closely related discipline. **and**
- Demonstrable experience applying behavioural science in applied, real-world contexts.
- Strong research, analytical and evaluation skills.
- Excellent communication and facilitation skills.

Desirable Skills

- Experience in climate action, sustainability or environmental policy.
- Experience in local government or public sector organisations.
- Experience designing or evaluating behavioural interventions or trials.
- Experience delivering training or organisational capability-building initiatives.

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

Candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate in their application and at interview (should they be called) that they possess these competencies through the experience and skills they have gained to date.

MANAGEMENT AND CHANGE

Strategic Ability

- Contributes to the development and implementation of corporate strategy and policies.
- Develops and implements ambitious operational plans and evaluates performance to ensure full alignment with corporate objectives, mission and values.

Bringing about Change

- Identifies and implements service improvements; effectively managing the introduction of change.
- Fosters a culture of change by encouraging improvement suggestions from colleagues and service users.

Networking and Representing

- Establishes, maintains and contributes to networks.
- Works collaboratively with stakeholders to enhance service delivery.

DELIVERING RESULTS

Problem Solving and Decision-Making

- Pinpoints critical information to address issues logically with timely and effective decisions.
- Considers the need for inter/cross organisational decision making and action.

Managing Resources

- Manages the allocation, use and evaluation of resources to ensure efficient service delivery.
- Develops management and accountability structures to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Delivering Quality Outcomes

- Organises the delivery of services to meet or exceed the required standard while managing resources effectively.
- Identifies and shares organisational learning from the evaluation of processes and outcomes and promotes excellence in public service delivery.

PERFORMANCE THROUGH PEOPLE

Leading and Motivating

- Leads, motivates, and engages others to achieve quality results.
- Creates a work environment that encourages team members to seek challenges and to reach their full potential.

Managing Performance

- Builds and leads a positive, diverse and productive team. Through provision of information and support ensures delegated responsibilities are completed successfully.
- Manages underperformance or inappropriate behaviours effectively, openly and directly.

Communicating Effectively

- Recognises the value of and requirement to communicate effectively with all employees.

- Actively listens to others and looks for feedback. Uses the most appropriate communication channel when communicating with others.

Salary

The salary scale for the post is:

€58,474 - €59,869 - €61,570 - €64,767 - €66,677 - €69,051 (LSI 1) - €71,437 (LSI 2)

In accordance with Departmental Circular Letter EL 02/2011, a person who is not a serving local authority employee on or after 1st January 2011 will enter the scale at the minimum point.

Hours of Duty

- The standard working week is **35 hours per week**. The role may, on occasion, require evening or weekend work.
- Holders of the post may be required to attend for duty at any time, in accordance with arrangements made by the local authority. The Council reserves the right to alter hours of work from time to time.
- All hours worked will be subject to the provisions of the **Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997** and the **Organisation of Working Time (Regulations) Act, 2001**.

Garda Vetting

This post may come within the scope of the **Local Authorities Garda Vetting Scheme**. Further information is available in our [Candidate Information Booklet](#), which provides details on vetting requirements, the format of the competition, the principal conditions of service, and data protection under the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Cork City Council is an **equal opportunities employer**. We welcome and encourage applications from suitably qualified candidates, regardless of gender, age, civil or family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, race, ethnic origin, membership of the Traveller community, religion, or belief.

Closing Date

The deadline for receipt of applications is **4:00pm on Thursday 8th October 2026**.