

Executive Management Team Cover Sheet

Report Title: Making greater use of Behavioural Science and Insight (BSI) in SCC and public services.			
EMT meeting: 12 th February 2019			
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Contact Number: 52747/34554		Directorate: DPHO/PPC	
Purpose: (please mark 'X')			
For Decision		Progress Update	X
For Steer	X	Other	
Report Summary: <p>This paper updates EMT on progress made in implementing behavioural science-informed approaches in Sheffield, following on from an EMT discussion on 30th January 2018.</p> <p>It highlights progress made and barriers to further implementation, and asks EMT to consider and provide a steer on the best way forward.</p>			
Recommendations <p>EMT are asked to support the creation of a Task & Finish Group to develop firm proposals, nominating suitable individuals for that group, and to receive a report from that group in 3 months time proposing a way forward.</p>			
Financial Sign Off:	N/A		
Report Approved by:	Greg Fell		

Background

On 30th January 2018, EMT discussed a paper setting out what is meant by Behavioural Insights, how they fit with the use of broader behavioural science, their application to public services, and the work undertaken so far to introduce them to Sheffield.

Following this discussion, EMT agreed that they:

- supported the work undertaken so far and actions planned for the future to develop the tools and embed use within the Council; and
- that an evaluation should be undertaken of the 10 projects agreed to highlight organisational learning and help develop the use of the tools and these be reported to EMT.

This paper provides EMT with a briefing on the work has been undertaken in the intervening period, highlights some of the challenges involved in implementing it as a Council-wide approach, and makes a recommendation to EMT on how to proceed.

Why are we doing this?

The previous EMT paper set out what is meant by behavioural science, but the following key points are worth reiterating:

- The knowledge and tools of behaviour science offer significant opportunities to meet our organisational aim of 'efficient and effective services for 2020 and beyond' taking a 'more preventative approach';
- Many of the policy and delivery challenges we face partly or mostly involve behaviour in some form. Developing solutions that do not encompass a full understanding of the factors that drive behaviour (such as that set out in the COM-B framework) will inevitably lead to sub-optimal outcomes;
- Behavioural Insights and in particular the EAST and TEST frameworks are a set of easy-to-use tools that sit within the wider COM-B framework. They can be applied to existing services to ensure they work to get the response required from service users, such as by improving communication, or utilising prompts.
- The COM-B framework and associated Behaviour Change Wheel offers a wider pallet of tools and interventions we can draw on to apply behaviour science in our work.
- There is a wealth of evidence demonstrating the impact that behavioural science can have on public services, including in terms of financial benefits.
- Whilst COM-B and EAST offer a set tools and interventions we can use to develop ideas for changing service delivery to optimise outcomes, they do not guarantee success. Careful evaluation is essential, so that we are able to say whether something has worked, and why.
- We are joining a significant group of Councils and push across national government to effectively harness behavioural science to improve the delivery of public services. The LGA is amassing a large body of evidence including case studies, demonstrating cash savings and improved demand management or service take up resulting from the use of behaviour science.

A summary of work to date

As part of the work to implement a behavioural science approach in Sheffield, we have:

- **developed a small core multi-agency group** with membership drawn from SCC, Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) and South Yorkshire Housing Association (SYHA) to support this work;
- **delivered three well received workshops and several follow up briefings** to cascade the learning, sponsored by the Policy and Strategy Network;
- **supported 11 learning projects to embed and share learning**, covering areas from social care demand management, to promoting rent payments by direct debit, to increasing employee survey completion rates, to increasing free early learning enrolments, to reducing failed bulky waste collections and boosting charitable giving at Graves Animal Park (see Appendix A for a full list).
- **built and supported a Community of Practice** of people who attended the workshops and others who have more recently expressed interest. This has served to spread awareness further, as well as share learning; beyond this we are aware of some peer to peer learning/mentoring and some application of the tools within BCIS project work.
- **started to explore regional and national developments**. National application is increasing and some limited work has been done to identify useful developments via PHE's Behavioural Science Public Health Network, the LGA and SHU. There is greater scope to learn from others and maximise opportunities for action and partnership including national and regional conferences taking place over the next two months.

From this work a number of points have emerged:

1. **The proven nature of the science and the methodologies nationally and internationally gives us high confidence that we can use them across all services**, including implementation in customer experience programmes, People and Place Change Programmes and person-centred changes across health and social care. The tools and solutions frameworks can also be easily dropped into Design Thinking approaches.
2. **It's not just about the work we do with the citizens of Sheffield**: we can also apply this thinking to communications with our employees and workforce wellbeing initiatives.
3. **There is a clear interest in and demand for more understanding and knowledge of behavioural science from our workforce**, both to embed this learning in 'business as usual' and to spread the learning to allow others to use it.
4. **Evaluation of the 11 projects that emerged from the initial workshops has shown impact**: a lot of organisational learning, with pockets of real impact including some quantitative impact. However, it is still early days regarding hard impacts.
5. **Capacity remains an issue**. Some projects have made good progress, but not all; where this is the case it has been a result of lack of staff time to progress good ideas and evaluating the work has been a challenge for staff.
6. **We have so far only scratched the surface** of the range of potential SCC applications.
7. **There is clearly scope to develop 'invest-to-save' opportunities** such as the charitable giving project or major service reviews such as Revenues & Benefits and Homelessness Services. There is also scope to apply the thinking to wicked problems such as developing active environments' as a 'complex' problem. All would require design and evaluation support.

Where next

The work to date has generated a lot of interest and an appetite to do much more, and not solely within the services who attended the workshops and undertook project work. National and local developments have produced a ripple effect and the core group has linked with other services such as Revenues & Benefits, Equalities, Housing/Homelessness (BCIS) and Sheffield BID. Individual services have also worked with DfE and external consultants to identify opportunities for further work. However, this work is currently piecemeal and un-coordinated.

National government, other Councils and public service providers are benefiting from greater efficiency and service effectiveness by putting more focused dedicated resource into the application of BSI.

To realise the potential and achieve organisational behaviour change more 'structural' support and focussed activity is needed in Sheffield. To do this we are recommending two strands of activity:

a) Further general workforce development to enable staff at SCC and those in wider partnerships to have a broad understanding of the factors driving behaviour, the importance of behaviourally-informed approaches, and the potential for impact.

This will introduce a range of staff, and managers in particular, to the COM-B framework and provide a basic introduction to BIT's EAST framework. Actions will include:

- Updates on behaviour science good practice at key meetings such as SCC Directors Group, ACP, Managers Briefings, or the Policy and Strategy Network. Work will also take place to explore how an understanding of the approaches can be built into the corporate development offer.
- Making information and tools easily available on the intranet supported by a series of simple, focussed communication briefings to generate a general understanding across the city of the benefits of applying an understanding of behavioural science to how services are reviewed, designed and delivered.
- Continued support to the Community of Practice. There is a limited amount of time being put into this currently and this will continue in the short term. However, the role of/support to the COP will be reviewed as part of the work below.

b) Develop internal and external 'expert' advice, support and capacity in behavioural science.

This will cover a range of activity:

- to actively search for opportunities across the organisation to review and remodel services;
- to support services applying the thinking in their work, embedding understanding of the approach in business change and providing support to develop, implement and evaluate proposals.

For this function, there are a range of models developing nationally for us to consider:-

- A number of councils are working with external consultants on specific projects to enhance service effectiveness;
- GMCA have developed a partnership with BIT, leading to the establishment of BIT North;

- Some Councils employ a Health Psychologist to focus on implementing behavioural science, others have developed links or shared posts with local universities, such as that between Warwickshire County Council and Coventry University;
- Others have developed in-house specialist teams to identify, develop and implement projects e.g. Croydon Council.

It is proposed that a small internal task and finish group explores these potential options further with key stakeholders, especially those engaged in business change and staff development programmes. This will allow us to consider the potential for a behaviour change ‘hub’ and develop proposals for Sheffield incl. costed recommendations as needed. This might involve the following:

- A small but agile group of experts who can provide guidance and support to apply behavioural science thinking to business improvement projects and key areas of business change.
- Working with local assets such Centre for Behavioural Science & Applied Psychology (CeBSAP) at SHU and/or the University of Sheffield (UoS), or others such as BIT North. This might include consultancy on specific initiatives such as major service or system reviews, or some jointly funded work/posts.

Recommendation

EMT are asked to support the creation of a Task & Finish Group to develop firm proposals, nominating suitable individuals for that group, and to receive a report from that group 3 months-time proposing a way forward.

Appendix A – A dashboard of SCC BSI project and wider organisational activity during 2018
(Appended as a separate document)