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# Elected members' planning skills framework

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Planning is a complex area for anyone to engage in. Elected members have an essential role to play in delivering a planning system that, if engaged with effectively, can deliver both the needs of the current and future communities in their area.

The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) has developed a set of competencies to recognise the skills that local elected members in all roles within the planning system use to deliver the best outcomes from the new spatial planning system.

The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) aims to facilitate self-sustaining change and improvement in the local authority planning sector. PAS helps councils provide faster, fairer, more efficient and better quality services.

PAS is funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and is part of the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). Building on the IDeA's work in the local government sector, PAS supports local planning authorities throughout England to develop both their capacity and capability to deliver services and the best possible outcomes for their communities.

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## Elected members' planning skills framework

Planning is a complex area for anyone to engage in. Elected members have an essential role to play in delivering a planning system that, if engaged with effectively, can deliver the needs of the current and future communities in their area.

We have tried to highlight the skills, knowledge and behaviours – competencies; that members use to deliver the most from the planning system from the different roles that members hold. Hopefully through highlighting these competencies members use in the planning system it will become an aid for members to develop to deliver the best they can through the planning system.

The audience for this document will be primarily local authority elected members with planning responsibilities, but it will also be useful to all members, senior planning officers, local authority member development teams and training providers to support capacity building with elected members.

It is recognised that planning can be a “difficult” area for elected councillors. For example:

- Local authorities' planning decisions are constrained by the need to operate within the law and to give considerable weight to policy, both local and national;
- Most councils are (party) political, and it can sometimes be a problem for a newly victorious political grouping to be effectively required to adhere to the planning policies set out and adopted by a predecessor political majority for the length of time that a development plan / local development framework remains in force;
- Councillors enjoy the freedom and responsibility of their perceived role as elected representative of their ward. The need to make planning decisions on an authority-wide basis, often putting the desires of local people second to the need to work within the authority's overall policy framework, can create real tensions.

The idea of providing a framework of “competencies”, in other words a combination of skills, knowledge and behaviours, attempts to meet the need to give councillors some helpful guidelines on how they can best use their position to be effective as a councillor working within the area of town and country planning, and to help them avoid some of the pitfalls which could lead to poor decision making, and the possibility of bringing themselves, and their council, into disrepute.

The following key roles that members can play have been identified when they become involved in planning:

- Portfolio holder / executive member (often for a group of services much wider than “planning”, and sometimes related to a cross-cutting theme, such as “local environment”)

- Planning committee member (usually but not always a development control committee, making decisions on planning applications)
- Planning committee chair (having additional responsibilities and expectations)
- Scrutiny member (sitting on a board or committee whose role is to scrutinise the work of the executive and council services)
- Ward member (any councillor not on the executive or planning committee but who wishes from time to time to become involved in planning issues)

It is understood that councillors can occupy additional roles, particularly as council representative on another body with planning responsibilities (e.g. National Park, AONB, Regional Assembly) but recognise that these roles usually form part of the duties of one of those listed above.

Several types of local (planning) authority have been identified which are relevant to this competency framework:

- Small shire districts with a traditional committee structure
- Medium / large shire districts normally with leader / cabinet structure
- Unitary councils
- Metropolitan authorities
- Counties

(NB: a small number of authorities have different political structures than the cabinet structure that the roles set out identify including elected Mayoral, mayoral-manager, and fourth option structures. The competency framework which is set out in this document, remains relevant to those councils as the actions of the roles highlighted will be undertaken by individuals in these other systems.)

Members operate in similar ways, according to their current roles, whatever the size of the authority, but clearly it is likely for example that councillors working in districts will be more likely than county colleagues to work closely with parish councillors; and councillors in unitary and metropolitan councils will have greater access to expertise in such areas as transport and education, than their district colleagues.

Town or parish councils have not been included in the research, although town and parish councillors may play an important role in statutory planning processes. Further work may take place to develop the skills and knowledge of town and parish councillors in the area of planning, to increase their confidence, and to ensure that training and learning opportunities are available to them.

The initial research studied the literature available on the topic, from sources such as the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Audit Commission (AC), Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), Local Government Association (LGA) and Joseph Rowntree Foundation. In addition discussions were held with most of these organisations, and telephone research with officer and / or member representatives of the following councils, most of which have been classified as "Excellent" by the Audit Commission - Chiltern; Kirklees; Hambleton; North Cornwall; Wandsworth; Stockton-on-Tees; Wellingborough; and Hertfordshire.

The emerging framework has been further refined following useful sessions held with senior planning councillors at meetings of the Leadership Academy "Strategic Planning" modules, organised by the Planning Advisory Service during 2005/06.

The planning member competency framework has, as far as possible, been built around the ***Skill Framework for Members*** produced by IDeA. This identifies nine key skills. The skills listed are:

- Community leadership
- Regulating and monitoring
- Scrutiny and challenge
- Communication skills
- Working in partnership
- Political understanding
- Providing vision \*
- Managing performance \*
- Excellence in leadership \*\*

These are described in more detail at Appendix 1. Those marked \* are particularly for cabinet members, and the skill marked \*\* is particularly for leaders.

PAS have recognised many from the above list as key competencies for local authority elected members exercising their planning responsibilities, and add the following:

**Sound understanding** of the spatial planning system and process, as a positive and proactive activity, which exists to deliver sustainable development.

**Development management:** encourage elected members to take a "management" as opposed to a "control" approach when sitting on planning committees.

**Possess an understanding** of the development process, need for elected members to understand how the development process operates and how the planning system can influence its activities to deliver high quality outcomes.

Competencies for elected members are a combination of personal qualities, developed skills and acquired knowledge. Very few of us possess all, or even the majority, of these highly desirable attributes, but many of us can add to our own list of competencies by virtue of increasing experience, gaining knowledge, and undertaking training. Councillors owe it to their community, however they may define it, to increase their areas of competency so that they can act effectively on their community's behalf, whether as champions, representatives, policy makers or visionaries, depending upon their role at the time. Sometimes they will need to occupy more than one of these roles at the same time; occasionally they will have to step into a role which is unfamiliar to them through succession or substitution.

All of this is especially important in the area of planning, where there is a statutory background to many of the decisions taken by a council (decisions must fall within the law), where most decisions are informed by policy (decisions taken contrary to policy may be the subject of expensive and time-consuming challenge), and where there is an abundance of technical expertise and detail. It is not assumed that councillors engaging with the planning process should become experts in technical, legal and policy matters, indeed to do this would be to usurp their officers' role. An effective councillor will readily engage in a partnership of trust with those whose job it is to advise them on these technical matters, normally their officers. Officers are encouraged to provide key information in an easily accessible form, in understandable and jargon-free language, to all councillors involved in the planning process, in order to enable them to carry out their work effectively as elected members; no assumptions should be made about age (as a quantum of knowledge or experience) or academic qualification.

An important outcome from the identification of the special competencies which planning councillors need to possess, will be the identification of opportunities for those councillors to receive additional training. Planning is now such an important and high profile issue, and the risks for councils (and councillors) who do not do the job properly are so great, that it is essential for any councillor who is going to become involved in the planning process, to receive training. Some authorities require councillors to have gone through a training programme before they serve on a planning committee, and this is recommended. It follows that authorities should consider training implications for newly elected councillors, who are going to sit on planning committees, and that they should ensure that adequate training is immediately available, post-election and before the first meetings of the newly elected committees are held. Opportunities for more detailed training for councillors should follow this basic induction. Planning law and practice changes quickly and it is equally important for update training to be available for all councillors involved in the planning function.

Many councils allow members to act as substitutes at various meetings, and it is clearly desirable that substitute members should possess the same base of competencies as those for whom they are substituting, and that they should certainly have benefited from the same training modules.

It is recognised that councillors can play a number of different roles concurrently (for example, a scrutiny board member becoming involved in a development control issue at ward level), and successively (a planning committee member in one council year may become executive member the following year), and therefore it will be appreciated that the set of competencies described will be relevant to all or most councillors at different times.

In carrying out consultation on this document, a number of authorities have queried whether or not it is good practice for the portfolio holder with responsibility for planning, to sit on the authority's development control committee. Guidance published in 2000? by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister – *'New Council Constitutions: Guidance to English Authorities'* - indicates that this practice is acceptable and can be valuable. It should however be highlighted that there may be risks associated with the portfolio holder sitting on the Development Control Committee and these should be fully considered before taking this approach. As a general rule the portfolio holder should not chair the development control committee and should be aware of situations where they would need to remove themselves from the committees decision making process for probity reasons – these would include sites which are or were in Council ownership and proposals where they have been involved in extensive briefings with officers and other members of the executive. On the positive side, the value of such an arrangement is the close relationship between the portfolio holder with responsibility for Development Plan documents and the committee with responsibility for implementing these policies via development control decisions.

Concern is expressed, however, about the practice of a small number of councils who place all of their councillors on a development control committee. It would be expected that each councillor is trained to a level of competency in development control practice, has a sound knowledge of the council's planning policies, and understand the rules of probity in planning. This is a potential waste of scarce Councillor resources, demanding attendance at committees and time to be familiar with agendas, but also extinguishes the valuable role which non-planning councillors can play in the process. Councillors who are not planning committee members can freely become involved in planning issues without the particular constraints which accompany planning committee membership including ward councillor activities, community leadership or taking up a campaigning role on planning issues affecting their constituents. Councillors acting as community representatives are in many ways just as vital to the planning process as planning committee members, and large planning committee structures overlook this to the authority's disadvantage. This is a similar issue for authorities that run a number of area based planning committees. ***For further information on area committee working practices please see "Area-based decision making for development control: a review" on the PAS website.***

As a general point, there is concern that some councillors fail to understand, or seek to resist, the government's performance agenda for planning. It is believed that members should at least be aware of this agenda, and the resources which are required to deal with it effectively. It should be noted that the speed of a planning system is an integral element of a high quality planning service. Councillors who understand the performance agenda will become aware of the benefits which can flow to their council from continued good performance, which might be expressed as a high satisfaction level amongst stakeholders, a quality environment where good decisions are made in partnership with others; or it might be expressed as a high Planning Delivery Grant settlement through the broad range of national planning performance indicators. Accompanying the particular competencies listed below, therefore, should be an understanding of performance and process management, and how these contribute to the making of speedy and high quality decisions for the benefit of the community.

No specific reference to probity or conduct is included in this document, as a competency for councillors, as all councillors are required to abide by a code of conduct, which sets high standards of probity and propriety. Councillors in potential difficulty over probity issues, which can loom large in the area of planning, should refer to their authority's own Monitoring Officer, and to the Standards Board for England, for further information on this vital aspect of their work.

***Further information on this for Councillors can be found in the Probity in Planning document LGA 2002; the National Planning Forum good practice note 2 "Pre-application discussions" NPF December 2004; "Member engagement in planning matters" LGA Jan 2005; and "Positive Engagement – a guide for planning councillors" PAS 2005.***

Finally, it is of course recognised that most Councillors are politicians with allegiance to an identifiable political party. Ward Councillors may well identify planning issues as opportunities for political campaigning, as these can be issues which affect the future of people and communities. However, Councillors who take on a specific planning role – executive member for planning, planning committee Chair or member – should be especially sensitive to the relationship between party politics and the good planning of a district or borough. There can be no doubt that the setting of planning policy is, or can be, a political act, and that the various political parties rightly accommodate a broad spectrum of views on policy issues. In development control, however, Councillors should look at the merits of a planning issue and consider these alongside all other material factors, coming to a balanced decision having weighed up all of these factors. The clear rules of probity which govern development control activity rule out party political involvement in decisions on planning applications. Applicants and objectors alike are entitled to trust in the independence of thought of planning committee members, and the knowledge that they will come to a decision on the basis of planning considerations only.

## Roles and competencies

The following information indicates some of the exceptional competencies which will desirably be held by councillors occupying the various identified roles. Recognising, though, that members wear different 'hats' at different times, it is useful for members to extend themselves 'out of the box' and to develop other strands of competency so that they can act in the best interests of the council and community, whatever role they find themselves occupying at any particular time.

## Executive member/portfolio holder

### Community Leadership;

acting as advocate for the council in planning and wider environmental matters; acting as champion of the service and ambassador, externally and internally; credibility; determination; committing personal resources (time) to achieve success

*Example: The effective executive member / portfolio holder will frequently take the lead on statements to the media regarding matters of planning strategy.*

### Regulating and monitoring;

understanding protocols and performance measures and monitoring compliance

*Example: The effective executive member / portfolio holder will regularly meet with senior officers and the chair of the planning committee to analyse and understand performance with regard to key dates and milestones, such as the timetable for the local development framework.*

### Scrutiny and challenge;

ability to challenge and analyse information coming from a number of sources; reality check

*Example: The effective executive member / portfolio holder will balance their own authority's political stance on regional housing figures against those of other nearby authorities, and will understand the differences.*

### Communication skills;

articulate; interpersonal skills, listening skills; commanding respect; assertiveness; "selling" skills and persuasion, ability to work positively with the media

*Example: The effective executive member / portfolio holder will act as spokesperson for the service in high level discussions for example with the Audit Commission (on CPA) or ODPM (on Planning Delivery Grant).*

### Working in partnership;

balancing the interests of many stakeholders within and outside the council; responding calmly to pressure; securing equity for the service (e.g. in resolving budgetary issues); finding common ground whilst winning resources; developing trust, maintaining a good network of contacts

*Example: in working at cabinet level to set a sustainable budget, the portfolio holder will balance real community needs against service-related demands for resources and the authority's strategic objectives.*

## Political understanding;

carrying forward political principles whilst working with a team; political skills; ability to focus, possessing an independence of mind and ability to seek consensus using influencing and negotiating skills

*Example: the effective cabinet member / portfolio holder should be able to operate equally well in a majority-led council or a "hung" authority, having a full appreciation of the appropriateness and strength of the political agenda on each occasion.*

## Providing vision;

identifying priorities and strategic linkages; providing leadership in articulating the vision; capable of long term thinking; able to make and sustain decisions; using judgement; capturing optimism

*Example: the effective cabinet member / portfolio holder will be able to define political and community priorities and to articulate how these can be linked into effective planning policies.*

## Managing performance;

understanding and setting targets and working with others to maintain them

*Example: the effective cabinet member / portfolio holder will be keen to set up local performance indicators which challenge the organisation and demand high quality working.*

## Understanding the spatial planning system;

up to date with main trends in policy and legislation; forging linkages to wider community strategies; at ease with the culture change; understanding social inclusion

*Example: the effective cabinet member / portfolio holder will be up to date with central and regional government advice on planning issues and will work with officers to ensure that local policies are continuously related to that advice.*

## Understanding the development process;

balancing the vision against the realities of the development process; tenacity to take advantage of real opportunities

*Example: the effective cabinet member / portfolio holder will have sufficient understanding of how planning and development are linked, in order to promote development opportunities effectively within the authority, consistent with council policy.*

The effective portfolio holder / executive member will be someone who can work at the council's highest level of policy making, able to articulate a vision and to integrate the portfolio into the council's wider set of priorities. They will have a sound understanding of the statutory planning system with particular reference to the policy framework, and possess the skill to ensure that planning is a key player in implementing the council's agenda.

## Committee chair

### Community leadership;

taking authority-wide decisions and creating / following authority-wide policy

*Example: the effective committee chair will ensure that if a planning decision is taken which does not conform with council policy, that the reasons for doing so, and the implications of the decision, are well understood.*

### Regulating and monitoring;

chairing skills; operating consistently and without bias; understanding committee procedures; time management; ability to delegate; diplomacy; discipline; transparency

*Example: whilst taking a leading role at committee, the effective chair will ensure that each person present plays a clear role and that proceedings are carried on with mutual respect.*

### Scrutiny and challenge;

ability to provide challenge to opinions and advice; ability to separate major issues from minor ones

*Example: the effective committee chair will ensure that the "bigger picture" is foremost at all times and will not allow meetings to become embroiled in parochial matters.*

### Communication skills;

working sensitively with people inside and outside committee; explaining decisions clearly; listening to and balancing advice; articulate; interpersonal skills; ability to communicate "unpopular" decisions without losing credibility; assertiveness; patience

*Example: the effective chair will be satisfied that each person leaving a committee meeting will understand how decisions have been reached at that meeting.*

### Working in partnership;

team building and loyalty; negotiating skills; obtaining consensus; discretion; understanding and withstanding pressure; encouraging and developing new councillors

*Example: recognising that councillors, officers and the public all play key roles in making good planning decisions, the effective chair will ensure that each is listened to, understood and treated with respect.*

### Political understanding;

objectivity; understanding varied agendas; balancing interests; judgement

*Example: the effective committee chair will be able to understand, and to guide fellow committee members with impartiality, as to the weight and value to be attached to all arguments raised for and against development proposals.*

## Understanding the spatial planning system;

understanding policy and its linkages to decision making; keeping up with national, regional and local agendas; interpreting and evaluating specialist advice

*Example: the effective committee chair will not allow ad hoc planning decisions to be raised based on public opinion rather than an understanding of policy and long term strategy*

## Development management;

linking development control with spatial planning and wider sustainability issues

*Example: the effective committee chair will give clear and unambiguous guidance to fellow members who agree that, for example, increased housing densities are in principle a good thing, but are not appropriate "in my patch".*

## Understanding the development process;

achieving goals via understanding complex processes not all of which are within the authority's control

*Example: the effective committee chair will be aware of the advantages and limitations of working pro-actively with a developer to achieve legitimate "planning gain".*

The effective committee chair will easily understand the link between individual planning decisions and the council's bigger picture, with an ability to listen and to balance conflicting information, but also to be decisive. They will have a working knowledge of the technical and statutory background to planning, as well as the performance agenda for decision making.

## Committee member

### Scrutiny and challenge;

confidence to challenge opinion and advice whilst respecting the source

*Example: the effective committee member will absorb and analyse all information presented to help in the determination of planning applications, and will question this if it is not understood.*

### Communication skills;

articulate, credible; evidence-based; ability to listen; ability to advocate views and present evidence

*Example: the effective committee member will when speaking engender confidence that all issues have been understood and balanced, before reaching a decision on how to vote.*

### Working in partnership;

taking evidence from variety of sources; understanding and withstanding pressures; respect and trust

*Example: even when statements are made which cause concern or doubt, the effective committee member will listen with respect and understand the reasons lying behind the statements.*

### Political understanding;

recognising and understanding different agendas; balancing interests; consistency; displaying courage in difficult situations

*Example: the effective committee member will understand the emotion and involvement which many people expend upon planning matters, but their impartiality will not be swayed.*

### Understanding the spatial planning system;

balancing key issues; listening to and balancing advice; understanding the importance of policy; identifying and evaluating considerations and evidence; asking relevant questions; analysing complex information, understanding enough about the planning system to be able to "do the homework on key applications"

*Example: the effective committee member will understand how to identify and give weight to the material considerations which, when balanced, will lead to a planning decision.*

### Development management;

understanding wider spatial planning and sustainability issues in the context of planning proposals; ability to move from micro to macro; ability to read plans

*Example: whilst planning committee members are not expected to have detailed knowledge of planning legislation, familiarity with basic concepts (outline planning permission, use classes) should be gained, together with an ability to understand plans and drawings.*

## Understanding the development process;

understanding the role and limitations of the council; recognising the interests and motives of development proponents and opponents

*Example: development raises high emotions and can involve large profits and losses; the effective committee member understands these facts but does not allow them to take priority over effective decision making.*

The effective committee member will always balance local detail against an understanding of policy, and will have a working knowledge of the statutory planning framework and the performance agenda. They will possess sound judgement and where necessary will challenge information received from multiple sources.

## Scrutiny member

### Regulating and monitoring;

judging evidence impartially; preparation and consideration

*Example: the effective scrutiny member understands the work programme and priorities for the board / committee and does not allow short term or local issues to get in their way.*

### Scrutiny and challenge;

understanding performance measurement and targeting in order to challenge effectively; rigorous; ability to focus; getting to the bottom of issues

*Example: where information is obscure or confusing, the effective scrutiny member will ensure that correct questions are asked to facilitate clarity and understanding.*

### Communication skills;

articulate; credibility; effective questioning

*Example: the effective scrutiny member will be able to question council officers and representatives of outside organisations equally effectively, in such a way as members of the public can understand and identify with.*

### Working in partnership;

acting as critical friend; providing constructive feedback; ability and will to assist and influence the portfolio holder

*Example: even if their questions are designed to put someone under pressure to give an accurate and considered response, the effective scrutiny member will maintain a good and cordial relationship at all times and treat others respect.*

### Political understanding;

understanding vision, direction and pace of travel; ability to be direct but non-confrontational

*Example: the effective scrutiny member will link the role to the council's corporate policy agenda, and not to politics or parochial issues.*

### Understanding the spatial planning system;

understanding planning policy-making in order to challenge it; ability to understand when policies are not working; ability to understand when processes are not working

*Example: the effective scrutiny member, in challenging decisions and policies in the area of planning, will understand the planning framework rather than set out to achieve the impossible.*

The effective scrutiny member will have an excellent understanding of the council's vision and objectives and will be able to understand how individual decisions link into the broader picture. They will be able to challenge information in a rigorous and focussed way and to question information received from many sources. They will carry out their role constructively with the interests of the community in mind.

## Ward member

### Community leadership;

acting as advocate; knowledge of "the patch"

*Example: the effective ward member will bring relevant local knowledge to the planning decision-making process.*

### Scrutiny and challenge;

ability to research and challenge; finding alternative and effective outcomes

*Example: the effective ward member will find out the true facts rather than believing unchallengingly all information received.*

### Communication skills;

articulate; listening; credible; persuasive; ability to use diverse techniques, including, where appropriate, passion

*Example: the ward member will be ineffective in planning matters if unable to communicate important issues comprehensibly.*

### Working in partnership;

community engagement; building relationships

*Example: a ward member who makes enemies in the process of advancing a partisan view is not acting effectively on behalf of the whole community, even at a local level.*

### Political understanding;

balancing interests; identifying and engaging community focus

*Example: every planning application has supporters and opponents; an effective ward member listens to and understands "both sides" and will be able to work with both again in the future.*

### Understanding the spatial planning system;

understanding policy so as to articulate and challenge it or use it constructively

*Example: a ward councillor who continually objects to planning proposals for unsustainable reasons unrelated to planning, will not operate effectively and will lose respect.*

## Understanding the development process;

working within the process to achieve, influence and understand outcomes

*Example: the development process is complex and rarely allows for simplistic solutions; an effective ward member begins to understand these processes and the effectiveness of negotiation in order to achieve results.*

The effective ward member, engaging in the planning process, will have sufficient understanding of that process to be able to focus on relevant issues, and will be able to articulate local concerns in a persuasive way whilst recognising the wider policy picture. They will understand that it is important not to raise expectations unduly but have the ability to utilise the planning process and policies for their community's benefit.

## The need for training

This work has highlighted that there both skills and knowledge are used in members' roles in planning. New information is always being produced especially since the changes to the planning system following the 2004 Act and this information needs to be made available to elected members through their authorities and bespoke training programmes.

Members need also to look at the skills that are needed for their role. They need to be quite self analytical and recognise the skills they have and the skills that they might need to develop, and undertake training to develop these specific skills.

Helping elected councillors to understand the complexities of planning – the need to balance local issues against policy; the need to act at all times with probity and propriety; the need to act and speak without bias; the need to have regard to the law and the reputation of the authority – has always been recognised as difficult and many organisations provide training opportunities for new councillors and refresher courses for those with wide experience.

Our discussions have indicated that there is a widely held view that the recent "culture change" in planning, particularly following the 2004 Act, has left some members and indeed authorities behind, and hopefully this work will point the way towards identifying some real training opportunities for members operating at many levels within the planning process at a time of great change.

# Appendix 1: the skills framework for members

Produced by IDeA

IDeA have researched the skills required by councillors operating at different levels and these are summarised below.

## For elected members:

**Community Leadership:** engages enthusiastically and empathetically with the community in order to learn, understand and act upon issues of local concern. Mediates fairly and constructively, encouraging trust by representing all sections of the community.

**Regulating and Monitoring:** understand and executes judicial role by following protocol, evaluating arguments and making decisions that balance public needs and local policy. Ensures progress by monitoring and intervening where necessary.

**Scrutiny and challenge:** acts as a critical friend by seeking opportunities for scrutiny and providing constructive feedback. Analyses information quickly and presents arguments in a concise, meaningful and easily accessible way.

**Communication skills:** listens sensitively, uses appropriate language and checks for understanding. Communicates regularly with individuals and groups in the community, speaks clearly and confidently in public, and makes sure that people are informed.

**Working in partnership:** builds positive relationships by making others feel valued, trusted and included and by working collaboratively to achieve goals. Maintains calm and focus, recognises when to delegate or provide support and is able to take a long-term view in developing partnerships.

**Political understanding:** acts ethically, consistently and with integrity when communicating values or representing group views in decisions and actions. Works across group boundaries without compromising values or ethics.

## For cabinet members:

**Providing vision:** creates a shared council vision by establishing strategic policies and prioritising actions. Actively encourages involvement of others in policy formation and works collaboratively to analyse information and promote understanding. Open to new ideas and ways of doing things.

**Managing performance:** works closely with others to develop, promote and achieve objectives and represent council at a strategic level. Encourages scrutiny, monitors performance and responds positively to feedback and ideas.

## For leaders:

Excellence in leadership: provides visionary and charismatic leadership, is well prepared, able to troubleshoot and juggle conflicting responsibilities. Works to shape a culture of excellence by acting as the public face of the council and a role model for others. Encourages co-operation and communication across political and council boundaries.



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