

ROUGH FIRST DRAFT

WLGA Continuing Professional Development for Councillors 2014/15

Competency Framework

This competency framework describes the range of skills and knowledge required by members and a set of associated effective behaviours. It has been developed by the WLGA working with members and officers across Wales and is intended to be used by members when considering their need for professional development or reviewing their performance. It also provides a “curriculum” for authorities when developing local strategies for member development. The Framework includes a range of generic competencies required by all members and separate sections for specific roles on the council.

1. Fundamentals: A range of generic skills required by all members

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
Understanding of the role of councillor	The extent and limits of a councillor's individual responsibilities and powers and responsibilities in corporate governance. Corporate responsibilities such as corporate parenting and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.	Undertakes their role effectively in the council, the community and with partner agencies. Understands when it is and is not appropriate to act parochially or in the interests of the area as a whole.
Understanding the role of the council	Understanding of the services delivered, both statutory and discretionary and the policies, procedures, plans and strategies which underpin them	Is able to describe the work of the council to the public and where these responsibilities lie with other agencies such as community councils or the Welsh Government. Contributes to the development of council plans and strategies and takes decisions in the light of these.
Balancing commitments	An understanding of time management principals including prioritisation and delegation	Maintains an effective work/life balance, managing the time available to concentrate on the issues with the most significant outcomes
Information management	Data protection Freedom of Information Understanding information and data.	Receives all meeting papers electronically Manages own information electronically Does not keep records about people without seeking their agreement
Using ICT and social media	Word processing, presentation, spreadsheets, email, tweeting, blogging, personal website maintenance.	Conducts all council business electronically Communicates with the community electronically and through social media where appropriate
Meeting participation	Standing orders Protocols and rules of debate Public speaking Debating	Contributes to positive meeting outcomes Effectively contributes to meetings making points clearly and succinctly Remains focussed on the business in hand Prepares well in advance Understands and applies meeting 'rules'
Working with the media	Interviews Engaging with the local press	Speaks confidently, authoritatively and appropriately to the media.
Self promotion	Developing a profile in the	Writes an annual report on

	community Reporting on activities	achievements and activities
Working with officers	Acting as a corporate employer. Appointments panels interviewing skills Understanding the role of officers	Maintains professional relationships with officers, recognising appropriate boundaries. Acts as an effective member of an appointment panel applying sound HR and equality and diversity principles to secure the best candidate
Health and safety	Health and safety legislation in the work of the council. Understand how to assess risks and ensure personal safety and that of others	Promotes and ensures the health and safety of everyone in the council. Ensures personal safety when working in the council and alone in the community
Equalities and respect	Equalities law relating to the work of the council Respectful behaviour towards others	Applies appropriate equalities legislation and demonstrate equalities values in personal behaviour and council decisions.
Continuing and development	professional personal Identification of development needs Participation in development activities	Undertakes regular personal development reviews, takes responsibility for developing personal skills and knowledge
Conduct	Ethical framework Code of conduct Role of the monitoring officer Emotional intelligence Relationship building	Always declares and defines interests Abides by the code of conduct at all times Seeks advice from the monitoring officer when appropriate Treats others with respect in all settings Demonstrates integrity Gets on with and values others Listens Stays calm in difficult situations
Financial capability	Understanding and contributing to the budget setting process. Personal financial capability Understanding the impact of welfare reform and the impact of the austerity agenda	Demonstrates numeracy Engages in the budget setting process
Interpersonal skills	Self-awareness, self management, "good manners" emotional intelligence, listening. Negotiation and mediation skills.	
Sustainable development	Understanding of issues that impact on future generations such as health and	Takes decisions based upon the needs of future generations as well as the current population

	wellbeing, financial security and the environment	
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2. Local Leadership. A range of skills required by all councillors in their role as community leaders

Working with the community	Knowledge of community groups and leaders Understanding of community issues and concerns Ability to seek the views of all relevant parties	Understands the needs of the local community and secures action from the council on behalf of local people
Consultation and engagement	Understands the different levels of engagement ranging from communication to co-production set out in the national principals of engagement for Wales.	
Voluntary sector	Understand the role and responsibilities of the voluntary sector in their area.	Builds effective relationships with the voluntary sector and works with them when appropriate
Local issues	Understand the issues of importance to people locally	Works with the community to find solutions to local problems. Secures funding for local initiatives
Working with community and town councils	Understanding of the responsibilities of community councils and their forward work programmes	Works with community councils to deliver outcomes for the community

3. Casework

Being accessible to the public	Arrangement of surgeries Publicising availability Using social media to communicate and seek views	Makes themselves available through the most appropriate means to connect with the greatest number of people. Surgeries, street surgeries, informal settings, at home and through social media
Managing casework	Case management techniques and software	Promises only that which can be delivered Monitors progress of cases after they have been referred to

		officers or other agencies. Uses the established referral schemes within the council
Signposting	Knowledge of sources of information and advice within the council	Makes links between members of the public and the appropriate source of help in the council

4. Political environment

Party Policy	Awareness of manifestos both nationally and locally	
Liaison with National Government WG and NAFW	Understanding of the functions of WG and means of engagement, petitions etc.	Liases with local MPs and AMs Brings local issues to the attention of the WG when appropriate
Group membership	Rules and constituency group structure and policies	

5. Scrutiny

Understand the role and potential of scrutiny for driving improvement	Understanding of the characteristics of effective scrutiny (appended)	Contributes to the work programme Acts in a non-political and non-parochial manner Prioritises the areas of work where scrutiny can make a difference Promotes the work of scrutiny within the council
Policy development	Understanding of the area of service council function for which the committee is responsible	Makes evidence based recommendations
Performance monitoring	Ability to understand complex data, financial information and other information required for performance measurement	Identifies and challenges poor performance
Meeting skills	Understanding of the questioning strategy Able to listen and question	Listens actively and effectively Makes appropriate use of pre meetings to plan a questioning strategy Focuses on outcomes rather than process
Engaging with the public	Raising public awareness	Encourages the public to become

in scrutiny	of scrutiny and work programmes	involved in the policy and decision making process through scrutiny
Joint scrutiny	Understanding of the role, remit and powers of any joint scrutiny committee and the role of the individual member on that committee	

6. Chairing

Meeting management	Understanding of meeting protocols and the rules of debate. Ability to manage the agenda, contributions and time. Ability to engage with viewers in the case of webcast meetings	Chairs clearly and authoritatively enforcing the rules and encouraging fair participation. Manages the agenda by introducing items, summarising debate, focussing on outcomes and limiting contributions which do not contribute to the outcomes
Committee leadership	In depth understanding of the role of the committee and its scope. Ability to liaise with relevant officers, members and agencies.	Works with the committee outside of meetings to develop its effectiveness and that of participating individuals. Communicates with members and officers with an interest in committee proceedings
Work programme development and management	Understanding of the subjects within the scope of the committee and how these interact with council policies generally and the roles of other committees.	Works with officers and committee members to develop the work plan taking account of the fit with the work of other committees.
Resourcing	Ensuring that the committee has the staffing, information and finances to function effectively	Negotiates the support required by the committee

7. Statutory/Regulatory

Planning	Understanding of planning law generally Understanding of how to apply the code of conduct to planning issues. The declaration of interests as this relates to planning matters Understanding of the Local development plan Development	Objectivity Takes decisions according to planning considerations
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	<p>Management</p> <p>Understanding of Sustainable development</p> <p>Environmental, welfare and design considerations.</p>	
Audit	<p>Ability to scrutinise financial performance.</p> <p>Risk management.</p> <p>Internal and external audit arrangements.</p>	
Licensing	<p>Licensing regulations</p> <p>Licensing policy</p> <p>Understanding of local policies which impact in this area such as the Community Plan</p>	
Democratic services	<p>Understanding of the legislative requirements for a DS committee.</p> <p>Understanding of the requirements for member support and development.</p> <p>Liaison with the Head of Democratic services and Lead member for member support and development.</p> <p>Promoting diversity in local government.</p>	
Standards	<p>Understanding of the law and constitution in relation to Conduct. Ability to advise and train members of principal and community councils in relation to the Code of Conduct</p>	

8. Cabinet

Portfolio lead	<p>Thorough knowledge of relevant service areas</p> <p>Ability to build relationships with relevant officers and scrutiny chairs</p>	<p>Actively seeks and values the input of scrutiny to policy development and performance monitoring.</p> <p>Works with officers to consider issues, priorities and take decisions.</p> <p>Provides political direction to officers in the portfolio area</p> <p>Is accountable for communication, policy and performance in the portfolio area</p>
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Collective responsibility	Ability to handle information and take decisions after full consultation and consideration of the issues. Ability to prioritise issues of most importance to the authority. Ability to work with other authorities and agencies to secure services for the Council	Takes responsibility as a cabinet member for strategic council decisions.
Taking decisions under delegated responsibilities		

9. Strategic Leadership

Manage the reputation of the council	Ability to act as an ambassador for the authority	
Leadership of area/region/place	Ability to develop a vision for the area/region/locality	
Develop, communicate and lead a vision for the council	Ability to develop a vision for the work of the council	
Maintain a successful relationship with the chief executive and Senior Management team		Meets and communicates openly and regularly Makes expectations clear and provides political leadership
Leadership of the Council	Promote and support good governance in the council Manage performance	

10. Partnership and representation

Work on outside bodies	Understanding of the role of the outside body Understanding of the role of the councillor on the outside body council representative, locality representative, or as an individual?	Reports to and from the council and outside body as appropriate
Joint committees		
School governors	Understanding of education policy and school organisation	Oversees the school performance Challenges the school management as a critical friend Takes part in governor training
Community or town councils	Understanding of the role of the community council and its limits	
Co-optees	Understanding of the role and limits of the role of co-optees on committees	