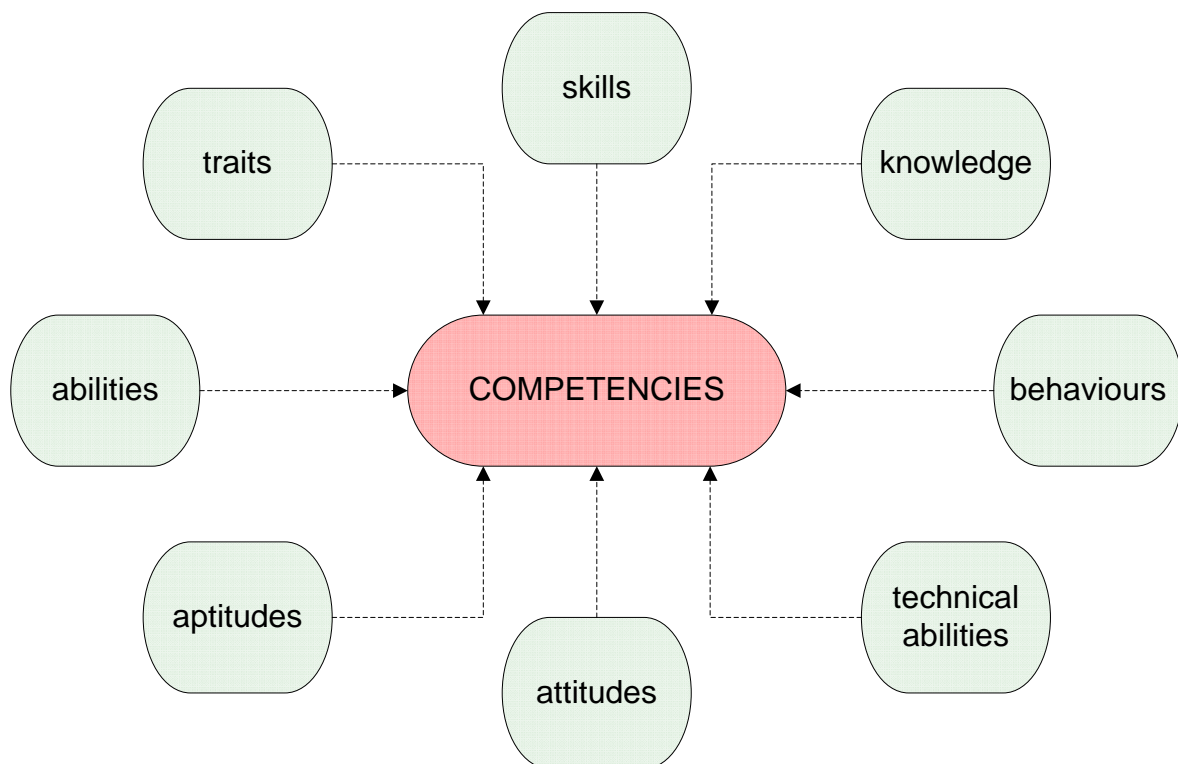


Rhondda Cynon Taf Council Competency Framework: Strategic Manager Framework

Competencies – An Overview

What are ‘Competencies?’

‘Competencies’ is a term used in RCT Council (the Council) to describe the knowledge, skills, and behaviours we need to do our jobs. Where a job description illustrates ‘what’ we do competencies illustrate ‘how’ we do it.



The Council’s competencies stem from the Council’s over-arching Vision, Beliefs and Values (available on the Council’s intranet or from Human Resources) and are designed to encourage an open dialogue (conversations) about how we work.

The Competency Framework gives us a starting point and a language we can all use when talking about the behavioural aspects of our work. This should mean that we’re clearer about what’s expected of us and that our performance is managed and developed in a way that supports everyone.

The competencies in this document describe how really ‘excellent’ staff would work in the Council. They don’t describe specific tasks that people do as part of their job - job descriptions do this. Instead they describe how someone who is really effective would do those things, and what else they would do in addition to those things. Working in a way that is described by the competencies doesn’t necessarily mean doing ‘more’ in terms of work, but it can mean working differently.

What is a Job Family?

The Competency Framework consists of 9 main Job Families and all Council roles will fall within one of the job families included within this framework. The job families are:

- AD: Administrator
- AN: Ancillary
- CC: Community and Social Care (including Social Care Professionals)
- FL: Frontline and Customer Care
- MM: Middle Manager (for Managers who manage people that manage others)
- SM: Skilled Manual Worker
- ST: Strategic Manager (Heads of Service and above)
- SU: Supervisor / Team Leader (1st line managers)
- TS: Technical, Specialist and Professional

By using competencies to define what 'excellent' performance looks like for everyone, and encouraging people to work in these ways, the Council is more able to deliver levels of service that will really make a difference to our Community.

How do I know what Job Family I am in / my team are in?

The decision tree on page 7 will help you to identify which job family your role is most likely to be in, you may also find this information on your Person Specification.

The Decision Tree can also be used in a management role to discover the job families of the roles within your team, or when compiling Person Specifications. Each Job Family has a number of example roles listed under the title – but please note that this is just a snap-shot and not a complete listing.

If you have any questions regarding which competency framework is most suitable for your role, please discuss this with your line manager or contact Human Resources.

Understanding Your Competencies - What is a Competency Area?

The overview on page 8 shows a summary of all the competency areas that fall within each job family. Competency areas are just the main headings, all of which are numbered as illustrated on the summary – for example Communicating Effectively (3) or Achieving Results (4).

Common Competency Areas

There are a number of competency areas that have been identified as being relevant for all workers in the Council and although the actual demonstration of these may vary for different jobs, these competencies are important for everyone. The common competencies areas are:

- **Working in a Team** - this also includes the headings working with others; working with partners; working with team members; working effectively with others; working with partnerships and teams; working as a team member. (Reference number 1 and 2.)
- **Communicating Effectively** (Reference number 3.)
- **Focusing on Service Users** - this also includes the headings looking after Service Users best interests; earning Service Users trust; meeting customer needs; working with Service Users. (Reference number 7 and 15.)

Role Specific Competency Areas

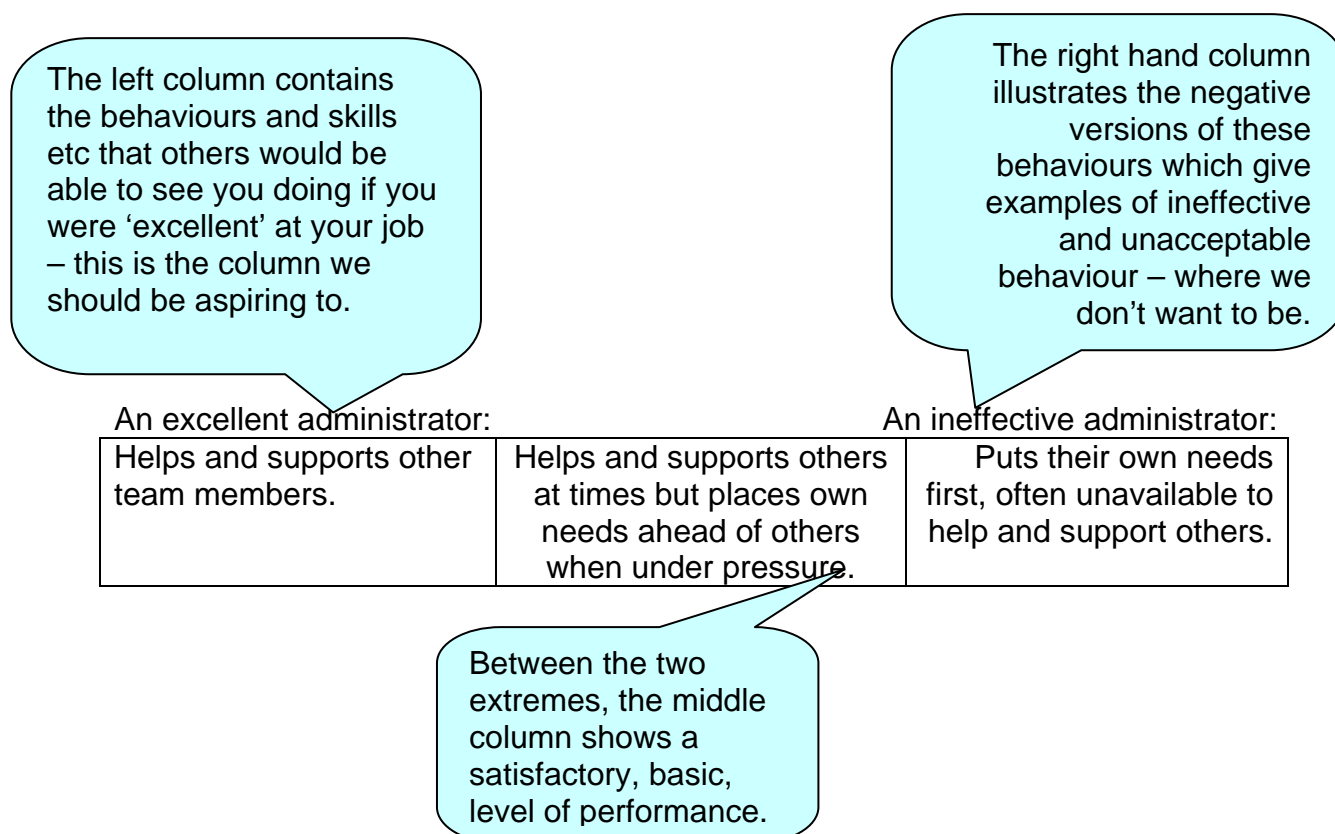
The remaining competency areas have been identified as being relevant depending upon your role and job family within the Council. These areas include:

- **Achieving Results** (Reference number 4.)
- **Personal Effectiveness** – this also includes the headings being committed and reliable; demonstrating professionalism; managing time; being accountable. (Reference number 5 and 6.)
- **Complying with Health and Safety** – this also includes the headings working safely; maintaining safety and well-being. (Reference number 8.)
- **Demonstrating Technical Ability** – this also includes the headings encouraging professional development. (Reference number 9.)
- **Working with Change** – this also includes the headings managing change; leading change; incorporating change; creating and responding to change. (Reference number 10.)
- **Implementing Strategy** – this also includes the heading working strategically. (Reference number 11.)
- **Political Knowledge and Awareness** (Reference number 12.)
- **Managing Resources** (Reference number 13.)
- **Developing and Motivating People** – this also includes the heading leading and motivating. (Reference number 14.)

Please see the overview summary grid on page 8 for a clear picture of which competency areas can be found within each job family.

Understanding Competencies - What are the Competency Statements?

Each of the competency areas (headings) are broken down into a list of statements around behaviour, abilities and skills. These are displayed in 3 columns.



The statements help to set expectations on how we do our jobs and provides us with a language we can all use to start conversations around performance.

Health and Safety / Equalities and Diversity

The health and safety of our staff and Service Users and valuing diversity are core to all our values in the Council and are either expressed as specific competencies or are integrated into individual frameworks.

When and how do we use competencies?

The framework, and the competencies within the framework, can be used in many situations, these include:

- **Recruitment & Selection**
Designing Person Specifications; shortlisting; interviews.
- **Managing Performance and Performance Review**
Including induction and probation; setting expectations.

- **Workforce Planning**
Talent Management / Succession Planning
- **Developing Learning and Development Plans**
For individuals / teams / Service areas.
- **Career Development and Career Conversations**
- **Managing Underperformance (and capability)**

For advice and guidance in each of the areas above please see the Council's intranet or contact Human Resources for more information.

Realistic Expectations

Although these sets of competencies describe qualities of 'excellent' workers, it is accepted that it would not be realistic to expect anyone to show all the positive behaviours, across all of the competencies, all of the time. However, there is an expectation that people strive towards this ideal. The competencies should therefore be seen as something to aim towards, and to help you to clearly understand where your strengths lie and where you may need further development.

A scoring system has been developed around the competencies to aide with formal reviews of performance, but this may also provide a starting point for performance discussions – asking yourself where you would rate your performance, and asking others where they see themselves. An explanation of this scoring can be found below, for further guidance on Performance Reviews please see the Council's intranet or contact Human Resources.

Scoring against competencies – how you carry out your role, your skills, behaviours

When reviewing yourself (or others) against the competency statements you will choose from the following scoring system:

5 – Clear strength – constantly exceeds role requirement in this area

the individual demonstrates this at an exemplary level on an everyday basis and could coach others in the development of this area (left hand column)

4 – Moderate strength – often exceeds role requirement in this area

the individual demonstrates this when the need arises and is seen to do this very well (top of middle column, just into left hand column)

3 – Acceptable Demonstration - meets role requirements in this area

the individual demonstrates this adequately when required to meet the expectations of their role (neither a strength or a development need) (middle column)

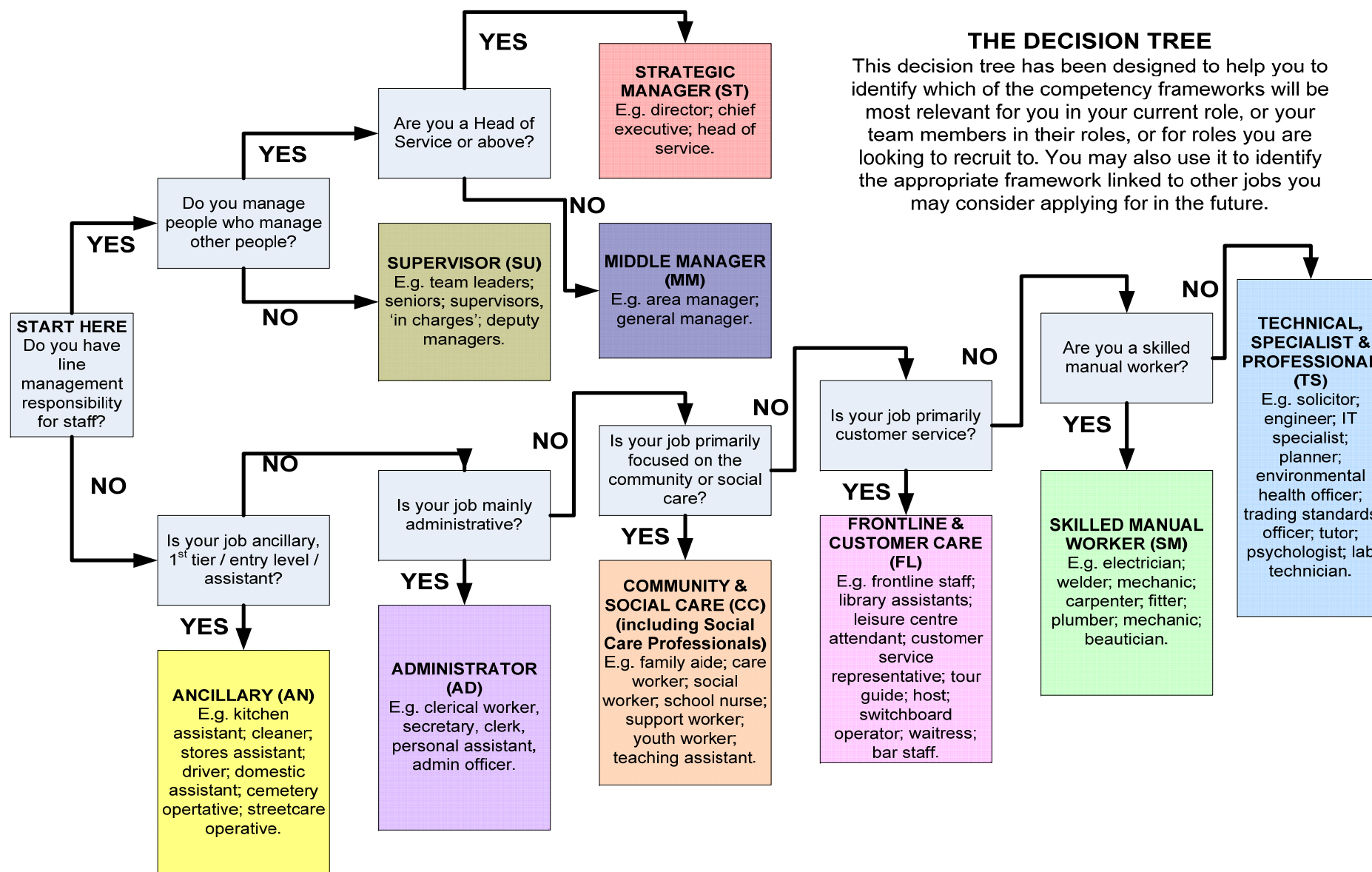
2 – Moderate Development Need - met some, but not all role requirements in this area

the individual has been seen to demonstrate this on occasion and is aware of the importance of this to their role but does need to develop their ability in this area to integrate it into everyday practice (bottom of middle column, just into right hand column)

1 – Clear Development Need – has not met requirements of role in this area

the individual has not been seen to demonstrate this when carrying out their role and needs clear development in this area. (right hand column)

RCT Council Competencies – Decision Tree



Overview of all the competency headings for all the job families RCT Competency Framework Page 8 of 21

Administrator AD	Working in a Team (1)	Communicating Effectively (3)	Achieving Results (4)	Personal Effectiveness (5)	Focusing on Service Users (7)	Complying with Health and Safety (8)						
Ancillary AN	Working with Others (1)	Communicating Effectively (3)		Being Committed and Reliable (5)		Working Safely (8)	Demonstrating Technical Ability (9)					
Community & Social Care CC	Working with Partners (1) Working with Team Members (2)	Communicating Effectively (3)	Achieving Results (4)		Looking After Service Users' Best Interests (7) Earning Service Users' Trust (15)	Complying with Health and Safety (8)	Encouraging Professional Development (9)	Working with Change (10)				
Frontline and Customer Care FL	Working Effectively with Others (1)	Communicating Effectively (3)	Achieving Results (4)	Demonstrating Professionalism (5)	Meeting Customers' Needs (7)	Maintaining Safety and Well-being (8)	Demonstrating Technical Ability (9)					
Middle Manager MM	Working in Partnerships and Teams (2)	Communicating Effectively (3)	Achieving Results (4)		Focusing on Service Users (7)			Managing Change (10)	Implementing Strategy (11)	Political Knowledge and Awareness (12)	Managing Resources (13)	Developing and Motivating People (14)
Strategic Manager ST	Working in Partnerships and Teams (2)	Communicating Effectively (3)	Achieving Results (4)		Focusing on Service Users (7)			Leading Change (10)	Working Strategically (11)	Political Knowledge and Awareness (12)	Managing Resources (13)	Developing and Motivating People (14)
Skilled Manual Worker SM	Working with Others (1)	Communicating Effectively (3)		Being Committed and Reliable (5)	Working with Service Users (7)	Working Safely (8)	Demonstrating Technical Ability (9)					
Supervisor SU	Working as a Team Member (2)	Communicating Effectively (3)	Achieving Results (4)	Managing Time (5) Being Accountable (6)	Focusing on Service Users (7)	Complying with Health and Safety (8)	Encouraging Professional Development (9)	Incorporating Change (10)				Leading and Motivating (14)
Technical, Specialist, Professional TS	Working in Partnerships and Teams (1)	Communicating Effectively (3)	Achieving Results (4)	Being Accountable (6)	Focusing on Service Users (7)		Professional Expertise and Development (9)	Creating and Responding to Change (10)			Managing Resources (13)	

RCT Council Strategic Manager Competency Framework (ST)



RCT Council Strategic Managers - Competency Framework (Overview)

People

Developing and Motivating People (ST14)

Promotes staff development; values, motivates and empowers team members; maximises the team's performance by recognising and using skills and strengths; promotes a culture of open, honest, and constructive two-way feedback.

- Inspires, passionate, positive
- Celebrates, supports, develops, empowers, challenges
- Consistent, fair, values people
- Culture of learning

Working in Partnerships and Teams (ST2)

Works effectively with people both inside and outside the organisation; proactively builds strong relationships in order to achieve goals.

- Respect, trust, constructive relationships
- Involves and encourages, inclusive
- Interested, shares, team-focused, influences
- Across areas and beyond the Council, democratic accountability

Communicating Effectively (ST3)

Communicates key issues clearly and effectively; promotes a culture of open, honest and transparent communication; adapts their communication style and approach as necessary.

- Courteous, polite, listens, receptive
- Informs, explains, openly shares, creates opportunities
- Clear, effective, timely
- Assertive, willing to challenge

Leading Change (ST10)

Creates a culture of innovation and improvement; supports others to adapt to change and takes responsibility for responding to challenges creatively.

- Instigates, drives, embraces
- Innovative, creative, receptive
- Encourages, supports and understands
- Modernising agenda, responsibility

Tasks

Working Strategically (ST11)

Provides strategic direction for the Council and service area to improve service provision; considers future challenges when planning; uses a broad range of accurate information as a basis for setting strategy.

- Drives strategic priorities
- Wider strategic imperatives – breadth of vision
- Emerging issues, implications
- Wider corporate issues

Managing Resources (ST13)

Manages resources efficiently and effectively in order to provide best possible value and service delivery.

- Creative, radical, different
- Delegates responsibility, robust plans
- Positive, anticipates
- Partnerships, joint commissioning

Achieving Results (ST4)

Achieves results by setting informed, stretching but achievable targets; plans and prioritises in order to meet deadlines and works to overcome problems.

- Logical, organised, informed, prioritises
- Continuous improvements, focus, reviews
- Adds value, effective, strong work-ethic
- Takes responsibility, balance with well-being

Culture and Values – The RCT Council Context

Focusing on Service Users (ST7)

Genuinely puts Service Users at the centre by being consultative, visible and trusted; aims to provide services that are accessible and make a difference for citizens.

- Genuine, consults, understands
- Visible, available, profile
- Diplomatic, proactive, improves
- Fair and accessible

Political Knowledge and Awareness (ST12)

Manages the political interface sensitively and effectively; has a good knowledge and understanding of political systems within and outside the Council.

- Clear, justified recommendations
- Fully informs, involves, positive
- Sensitive, aware, objective
- Knowledge and understanding
- Develops awareness, builds relationships

ST14. Developing and Motivating People

Promotes staff development; values, motivates and empowers team members; maximises the team's performance by recognising and using skills and strengths; promotes a culture of open, honest and constructive two-way feedback.

An excellent Council Strategic Manager:

An ineffective Council Strategic Manager:

ST14.1	Inspires others by being passionate and enthusiastic and having a positive 'action-focused' attitude.	Is mainly positive and enthusiastic.	Always sees the problem or the negative, moans or looks troubled, does not inspire people.
ST14.2	Identifies and makes the best use of the skills (including literacy and numeracy skills), knowledge and strengths of the team (managing performance / supervision / etc).	Is aware of, the knowledge and strengths in the team.	Does not acknowledge the skills, knowledge and strengths in the team.
ST14.3	Shares and celebrates all successes and openly recognises other people's contributions. Values people.	Usually celebrates successes.	Ignores successes and others' contributions; takes the credit for other people's work, does not show they value people.
ST14.4	Develops people for both the immediate and the longer term, and promotes a culture of continuous learning (Workforce Planning).	Develops a team for current needs.	Ignores the development needs of team members, or only considers it at appraisal time.
ST14.5	Empowers people by giving space, freedom, flexibility and trust, where appropriate.	Delegates single tasks or responsibilities within fairly rigid boundaries.	Does not 'let go' of control, believes only they have the right answers.
ST14.6	Is able to deliver difficult messages sensitively.	Shows some awareness of the emotional impact of communication.	Is insensitive when delivering difficult messages or overlooks the emotional impact of conversations.

ST14.7	Gives constructive, timely feedback (managing performance / supervision / etc).	Tackles issues when they become serious problems.	Avoids giving honest feedback, undermines other people's efforts, makes them feel incompetent.
ST14.8	Promotes proactive health messages and supports rehabilitation.	Promotes proactive health messages and supports rehabilitation inconsistently.	Does not promote proactive health messages or support rehabilitation.
ST14.9	Genuinely aims for their own 'personal best' performance by asking for and acting on feedback from others.	Occasionally asks for or acts on feedback.	Doesn't ask for feedback and/or receives feedback defensively.
ST14.10	Ensures that team members are made actively aware of the social and environmental impact of their role.	Provides some information to team members on the social and environmental impact of their role.	Does not provide team members with any information on the social and environmental impact of their role.

ST2. Working in Partnerships and Teams

Works effectively with people both inside and outside the organisation; proactively builds strong relationships in order to achieve goals.

An excellent Council Strategic Manager:

An ineffective Council Strategic Manager:

ST2.1	Builds lasting, positive & constructive relationships with a wide variety of people.	Has some positive relationships, but others that are more reactive or less functional.	Forms unconstructive relationships with people or prefers working in isolation. Takes a reactive approach to relationship building.
ST2.2	Constantly looks for opportunities to improve service provision through working with other service areas and beyond the Council.	Works with other service areas and external partners in a sporadic manner.	Is overly protective of own area to the detriment of the Council and Service Users.
ST2.3	Creates an environment where a free and open exchange of ideas and appropriate challenge is accepted and valued.	Contributes to an environment where there is some open exchange of views or challenge of others.	Creates a culture of little challenge or little open sharing of ideas.
ST2.4	Has a strong positive influence on joint decisions.	Has more impact in some situations than others.	Struggles to successfully influence joint decisions.
ST2.5	Always strives to understand and work through differences in agendas, needs and points of view.	Has some understanding of differences but can at times put their own agenda first.	Neither understands or attempts to overcome differences in agendas, needs and points of view.
ST2.6	Promotes and demonstrates an ethos of equality and diversity.	Complies with, but doesn't always fully embrace, equality and diversity issues.	Tolerates or demonstrates unethical and unequal behaviours.
ST2.7	Seeks to prevent or overcome conflict.	Avoids or doesn't seek to overcome conflict.	Exacerbates or produces conflict.
ST2.8	Advocates their own position but compromises when appropriate to move forward.	Wavers between being stubborn and working more constructively.	Sticks strongly to 'fighting their own corner' or always backs down.
ST2.9	Maintains the democratic accountability of the Council when making decisions with external partners.	Generally makes decisions with external partners considering the democratic accountability of the Council.	Makes decisions with external partners that run counter to the democratic aims of the Council.

ST3. Communicating Effectively

Communicates key issues clearly and effectively; promotes a culture of open, honest and transparent communication; adapts their communication style and approach as necessary.

An excellent Council Strategic Manager:

An ineffective Council Strategic Manager:

ST3.1	Demonstrates open, honest and regular communication with all those who might need it.	Communicates information when asked or when essential.	Retains information for 'power' or uses propaganda to achieve 'false' impressions.
ST3.2	Tailors their style and language to different groups of people e.g. customers, Councillors, staff.	Tailors their style and language to suit most groups.	Expects everyone to understand their own preferred style and language.
ST3.3	Communicates clearly and concisely.	Communicates reasonably clearly and succinctly.	Is unfocused and unclear and leaves others unsure of what was said or meant.
ST3.4	Thinks about and consistently uses the most appropriate form of communication e.g. Posters, questionnaires, forums.	Uses the quickest, or their own preferred (tried and tested) method of communication.	Uses inappropriate or limited forms of communication; or overly relies on one format e.g. email.
ST3.5	Listens to others and actively checks their understanding.	Usually listens and/or checks understanding.	Doesn't listen to others or check their own understanding.
ST3.6	Actively creates regular opportunities for open discussion.	Takes part in open discussions, when necessary.	Has to be prompted to share information and participate in open forums.
ST3.7	Communicates early to flag up potential 'surprises' in advance.	Shares relevant information as events unfold.	Withholds relevant communication or communicates too late.

ST10. Leading Change

Creates a culture of innovation and improvement; supports others to adapt to change and takes responsibility for responding to challenges creatively.

An excellent Council Strategic Manager:

An ineffective Council Strategic Manager:

ST10.1	Understands and embraces the need for change and responds positively to a modernising agenda.	Embrace change, when there is a clear need to do so.	Doesn't see the need to adapt, change or move forward.
ST10.2	Instigates and drives change.	Implements rather than initiates change.	Resists change.
ST10.3	Develops a creative approach to service delivery.	Builds on existing methods rather than showing innovation.	Is protective or overly attached to old ideas which are no longer useful.
ST10.4	Encourages and supports others, including staff & middle managers, to be innovative.	Generally uses ideas from staff and middle managers, or encourages and supports others to be innovative.	Is a barrier to innovative ideas. Only uses own ideas. Does not encourage or support innovation.
ST10.5	Understands others' barriers to change and supports people through change.	Seeks to understand peoples' barriers to change.	Imposes change on others without accounting for likely reactions.
ST10.6	Supports innovation with appropriate structures and frameworks.	Endeavours to balance innovation with appropriate structures and frameworks.	Does not implement structure to support innovative ideas.
ST10.7	Accepts responsibility and takes on the role of 'team captain'.	Manages through consensus and joint decision-making.	Lets others take responsibility and avoids personal accountability.

ST11. Working Strategically

Provides strategic direction for the Council and service area to improve service provision; considers future challenges when planning; uses a broad range of accurate information as a basis for setting strategy.

An excellent Council Strategic Manager:

An ineffective Council Strategic Manager:

ST11.1	Drives strategic priorities based on real need, grounded on well-informed evaluation of data.	Takes a limited range of information into account when considering strategy.	Does not understand or use information in the most appropriate way to inform strategy.
ST11.2	Sets a strategy that combines departmental strategy, the corporate vision and wider strategic imperatives (e.g. Welsh Government).	Sets strategy led by service imperatives.	Makes arbitrary strategic decisions.
ST11.3	Is aware of, and acts on, emerging issues, trends and implications for their service and the Council.	Shows awareness of emerging issues and trends and their implications.	Is led by what seems most important for their own department.
ST11.4	Contributes positively to the development of policy.	Has some influence in the development of policy.	Does not contribute to policy or contributes negatively to development of policy.
ST11.5	Has clear knowledge of the connections between services and wider corporate issues.	Sees the connection between their area and some other service areas, or some corporate issues.	Only sees issues from the point of view of their own department/section.
ST11.6	Appreciates why decisions have been made and sees them in the wider context.	Questions decisions and usually appreciate wider considerations.	Accepts decisions unequivocally.
ST11.7	Ensures that staff understand their role in delivering the strategy.	Ensures that immediate staff understand, but this might not be consistent throughout their whole area.	Does not ensure their staff understand how what they do contributes.

ST11.8	Challenges service delivery to ensure a more sustainable future to improve peoples' quality of life and the quality of the environment.	Occasionally challenges service delivery and pays some regard to a more sustainable future to improve peoples quality of life and the quality of the environment.	Does not challenge service delivery.
ST11.9	Ensures that social and environmental concerns are included in the overall business strategy.	Demonstrates some regard for social and environmental concerns when preparing overall business strategy.	Does not ensure that social and environmental concerns are included in the overall business strategy.
ST11.10	Understands the broader context in which the Council operates in particular the social and environmental impacts that Council has on society.	Demonstrates a some understanding of the broader context in which the Council operates.	Does not demonstrate an understanding of the broader context in which the Council operates.

ST13. Managing Resources

Manages resources efficiently and effectively in order to provide best possible value and service delivery.

An excellent Council Strategic Manager:

An ineffective Council Strategic Manager:

ST13.1	Develops creative and radically different approaches to maintain high quality delivery with fewer resources (Workforce Planning).	Works hard to maximise available resources.	Sees limitations in ability to deliver due to perceived lack of resources.
ST13.2	Finds efficiency savings without compromising service delivery (Workforce Planning).	Has found some efficiency savings, with a limited impact on service delivery.	Makes no attempt to make savings or cuts corners and makes savings that damage service delivery.
ST13.3	Is positive about what can be achieved with existing resources (Workforce Planning).	Usually attempts to resolve resource issues in a positive way.	Moans about lack of resources and uses this as an excuse not to try.
ST13.4	Anticipates future budget trends early and seeks to make necessary adjustments (Workforce Planning).	Considers short to medium term budget trends.	Does not anticipate future budget trends until it is too late.
ST13.5	Delegates budgetary responsibility to business units and provides appropriate support.	Provides some support for some budget delegation.	Maintains close control of budgets.
ST13.6	Produces robust business plans using sound commercial criteria.	Produces basic business plans with some supporting commercial criteria.	Produces poor business plans not based on commercial criteria.
ST13.7	Constantly looks for ways to attract money through partnerships and joint commissioning.	Works well within existing joint commissioning frameworks.	Sees Council budgets as only source of funding.
ST13.8	Successfully manages budgets, understands, uses and analyses numerically presented information.	Manages budgets reasonably well and knows who to turn to for help with data.	Avoids working through budgets or data unless pressed to, or does it with errors or omissions.
ST13.9	Ensures that resources are managed with consideration to the environment and strives to reduce wastage.	Shows some consideration to reducing wastage and damage to the environment.	Does not manage resources with sufficient consideration to the environment or wastage.

ST4. Achieving Results

Achieves results by setting informed, stretching but achievable targets; plans and prioritises in order to meet deadlines and works to overcome problems.

An excellent Council Strategic Manager:

An ineffective Council Strategic Manager:

ST4.1	Understands the implications of performance metrics in a broader context.	Understands some of the implications or context of performance metrics.	Does not understand what performance metrics mean and their broader implications.
ST4.2	Has a logical, organised and informed approach to planning.	Shows reasonable levels of planning.	Takes an ad hoc or reactive approach to planning.
ST4.3	Prioritises to get the best out of the available time.	Prioritises reasonably well.	Is overwhelmed by demands or does just enough to achieve deadlines.
ST4.4	Is able to make tough decisions.	Can sometimes avoid difficult decisions.	Is indecisive or avoids difficult decisions.
ST4.5	Stays tightly focused on timescales and meets deadlines.	Is usually focused on timescales and normally meets deadlines.	Often misses deadlines or allows things to drift.
ST4.6	Focuses on stretching targets that can be achieved.	Focuses most on what is readily achievable.	Loses interest and focus in achieving outcomes.
ST4.7	Understands how all parties are contributing to outcomes.	Has some awareness of how others are contributing.	Assumes other people are contributing but does not actively check or manage delivery.
ST4.8	Reviews outcomes in order to make improvements and learn from mistakes.	Reviews outcomes but does not always fully implement improvements.	Reports the same mistakes. Does not act on lessons learnt.
ST4.9	Balances achieving results with care for their own health and well-being.	Becomes stressed occasionally in the pursuit of achieving results but is usually able to manage.	Allows themselves to become stressed and overworked in order to achieve results.
ST4.10	Consistently shows consideration for and commitment to other people's health, safety and well-being including mental health.	Shows some / variable thought and commitment to other people's health, safety & well-being including mental health.	Avoids responsibility for or has an adverse impact on other people's health, safety and well-being including mental health.

ST7. Focusing on Service Users

Genuinely puts Service Users at the centre by being consultative, visible and trusted; aims to provide services that are accessible and make a difference for citizens.

An excellent Council Strategic Manager:

An ineffective Council Strategic Manager:

ST7.1	Consults with Service Users to determine what they want from the Council and to understand what really matters.	Consults and usually uses this information to guide practice.	Does not consider Service Users to be relevant or makes assumptions about Service Users' needs.
ST7.2	Is a visible presence and make themselves available to Service Users.	Could be more approachable and available to Service Users.	Does not actively seek interactions with Service Users.
ST7.3	Has well developed policies and processes for engaging Service Users.	Engages with Service Users in an adhoc way.	Doesn't engage Service Users in a systematic way.
ST7.4	Ensures services are accessible and are provided equitably.	Could do more to provide truly accessible and equitable services.	Does not consider whether services are fair or accessible.
ST7.5	Genuinely and consistently aims to make a difference to the individual citizen.	Only sees good service delivery in terms of meeting basic outcomes.	Makes no link between everyday work and the impact on Service Users.
ST7.6	Raises the profile and image of the Council and service by publicising successes to the wider community.	Underestimates the value of publicising successes.	Has a negative impact on the profile and image of the Council and service.
ST7.7	Actively seeks and utilises information from front-line staff to improve services.	Does not fully utilise information from people 'on the ground'.	Ignores information from people 'on the ground'.
ST7.8	Uses a wide range of innovative consultation tools in order to maximise engagement.	Would benefit from using a wider range of consultation tools.	Engagement with Service Users is blocked by the consultation tools used.

ST12. Political Knowledge & Awareness

Manages the political interface sensitively and effectively; has a good knowledge and understanding of political systems within and outside the Council.

An excellent Council Strategic Manager:

An ineffective Council Strategic Manager:

ST12.1	Understands how political decisions are made.	Has a basic understanding of how political decisions are made.	Lacks interest in political processes or does not fully understand how political decisions are made.
ST12.2	Is aware of political sensitivities but maintains non-political objectivity.	Has a limited awareness of political sensitivities, occasionally considering the wider impact of decisions and actions.	Is politically insensitive, decisions and actions have a potentially damaging impact.
ST12.3	Helps politicians to see the wider strategic picture when making decisions.	Helps politicians to see just the immediate connections and consequences of their decisions.	Allows politicians to make decisions based only on ward issues.
ST12.4	Take opportunities to build stronger relationships with politicians and share information.	Focuses on just the task in hand when dealing with politicians.	Allows interactions with politicians to become sidetracked by other issues and does not try to make good use of the time with them.
ST12.5	Involves politicians at an early stage to gain support.	Could involve politicians earlier or more consistently.	Involves politicians at the last possible moment.
ST12.6	Makes clear, well - justified recommendations.	Leaves elected Members to make decisions by supplying information only.	Provides inadequate or impenetrable information to elected Members.
ST12.7	Makes other people aware of political sensitivities and develops others' political understanding.	Provides advice for specific interventions, but doesn't raise awareness of wider issues.	Ignores the potential for naïve mistakes.
ST12.8	Works to maintain positive relationships with politicians.	Maintains functional relationships with politicians.	Upsets or antagonises politicians.
ST12.9	Has a local and national political knowledge and awareness.	Has a moderate understanding of local and national political issues.	Actively disengages from political issues.