

Our Leadership Behaviours

Introduction

We introduced [our behaviour framework](#) in April 2017 after engaging with staff.

At the same time, we revised our approach to performance management and supported Tier 4 managers with a targeted leadership development programme. We then introduced rated personal development plans (PDPs) to assess performance of Tier 1 to 4 managers (Chief Executive to Assistant Director direct reports).

In 2022 the Executive Leadership Team committed to reviewing behaviours for leaders to ensure they are:

- targeted
- measurable
- fit with our leadership aspirations

How we use our leadership behaviours

Our leadership behaviours set clear expectations about what our council wants and needs from its leaders.

A truly high-performing leader will demonstrate all these behaviours and they can be used in supervision and performance and development plan (PDP) conversations to guide the continuing development of our leaders.

Our leaders' performance is rated in mid-year and end of year PDP reviews. We provide a rating for what is delivered (objectives) and how work is delivered.

The leadership behaviours should be used alongside other measures such as staff survey and 360-degree feedback to inform the rating on how work is delivered.

How our leadership behaviours are developed

Our leadership behaviours have been developed using:

- the latest academic research on the skills and attributes of high performing leaders
- a review of what markers of 'excellence' other organisations use for their leaders
- conversations with directorate management teams (DMTs)
- input from the leadership network, our top 100 senior leaders

Our three leadership behaviours

Ambitious with their work

Leaders who are ambitious with their work:

- focus on delivering great services now
- prepare and shape their teams and service delivery for the future
- have ambition broader than their own personal area of work
- contribute to wider organisational goals and priorities, seeing these as essential to their work
- demand high performance of themselves and their team
- model and encourage others to aim high
- create inclusive cultures where people can be their best
- challenge others when needed, using difference within the service to innovate and improve delivery
- are willing to take on challenges with drive and determination

How to demonstrate this behaviour

We expect to see someone who:

- envisions what is possible
- challenges poor behaviour
- thinks strategically
- has a passion for learning
- is adaptable
- leads the way
- creates a fairer and more inclusive workplace
- is driven
- takes on challenges

True to their word

These leaders are trustworthy. Others know that they will always follow through if they say they will deliver on something.

This stands true for what they promise to their managers, their peers, and their teams.

They:

- don't let things slip, with themselves or those they are responsible for

- speak up quickly if they realise they've over-committed and won't be able to deliver in time or to the agreed standard
- aren't afraid of having honest conversations about what is realistic
- influence and negotiate what is reasonable and possible with stakeholders

How to demonstrate this behaviour

We expect to see someone who:

- delivers with integrity and care
- is trustworthy
- ensures delivery
- follows through
- is honest and realistic
- speaks up quickly if over-committed or won't be able to deliver to time or agreed standard

Emotional intelligence

The emotionally intelligent leader skilfully manages their own emotions.

They:

- are authentic and aware of their own resilience and triggers, knowing what's going on for them in the moment and handling difficult internal emotions without negatively impacting others
- use their emotions to connect with and relate to others effectively
- can influence and manage politics (small p and big P)
- understand what's going on for the other person, build relationships and find allies
- lead compassionately and openly, creating a space where learning from mistakes and feedback are encouraged
- are aware of their own privilege and fragility
- create belonging and a culture of valuing others
- embrace complexity and non-binary thinking
- are culturally sensitive, aware, and responsive

Emotionally intelligent leaders understand and account for unique differences in expression and outputs due to:

- neurodiversity
- visible and non-visible disabilities
- language, cultural or other differences

They proactively seek to understand before seeking to be understood while actively self-educating around disabilities, difference, and intersectionality. They enable, empower, coach, and build up those around them.

How to demonstrate this behaviour

We expect to see someone who:

- navigates politics
- is aware of own privilege and fragility
- takes care of resilience
- is brave
- empowers others
- creates belonging and inclusion
- inspires
- encourages feedback to be given and sought
- listens to and values others

They must also:

- lead compassionately
- build relationships and connects
- be collaborative internally and externally
- understand and account for neurodiversity, visible and non-visible disabilities, and language, cultural or other differences