

# MEMBER SKILLS SURVEY



Name:

Email:

## Core Skill 1: Local Leadership

This refers to the need for councillors to engage with members of their community in order to learn about issues of local concern and help to facilitate a vision for the locality. It involves encouraging trust and respect between individuals and groups by mediating fairly and constructively between different organisations and sections of the community.

Being a member means engaging enthusiastically with the community and encouraging trust from all sections of the community. Yet keeping in close touch with the ward you represent can be challenging in terms of managing your time. It can also present conflicts of interest when you are making decisions which may positively or negatively affect your constituents.

Below are a series of statements about local leadership. Please indicate your level of confidence in the following areas:

<i>Please tick one box on each row</i>	<b>Very confident</b>	<b>Fairly confident</b>	<b>Not very confident</b>	<b>Not at all confident</b>
My ability to engage with all sections of the community to gain opinions which are truly representative of the community				
My ability to involve residents in the process of setting local priorities and contributing to delivery				
My ability to provide reliable information tailored to different audiences				
My ability to advocate for individuals and communities who need my help				
My ability to handle casework (surgeries) and public forums and handling open challenge				
My ability to work and communicate effectively with ward colleagues (including those in different parties) and build consensus				
My ability to mediate between different people of groups with conflicting needs and to broker a way forward				
My ability to communicate progress and feedback both positive and negative news				
My awareness of personal safety and the safety of others				

## Core Skill 2: Partnership Working

This aspect of the councillor role focuses on the need to build good relationships with others, both within the Council and more widely with a range of organisations. For partnership working, an ability to identify new partners and work collaboratively across organisational and geographical boundaries in a changing public sector landscape requires adeptness to achieve shared goals. It means councillors need to recognise and value different contributions, delegate or provide support as required, and to take a long-term view in developing partnerships.

Below are a series of statements about partnership working. Please indicate your level of confidence in the following areas:

<i>Please tick one box on each row</i>	<b>Very confident</b>	<b>Fairly confident</b>	<b>Not very confident</b>	<b>Not at all confident</b>
My knowledge of the different networks and community groups in my area				
My ability to form partnerships to deliver collaborative advantage (achieving outcomes the council could not on its own)				
My ability to identify quick wins needed to sustain longer term engagement				
My ability to resolve conflict and agree compromise				
My ability to build good relationships with other councillors in my political group				
My ability to foster strong partnerships with officers on leadership team				
My ability to exit unhelpful partnerships				
How well informed am I by good practice elsewhere?				

### Core Skill 3: Communication Skills

Members are expected to demonstrate excellent communication skills across many different settings, including the ability to listen sensitively and use appropriate language with different groups. Members must also communicate regularly and effectively with all parts of their community using a wide range of media channels. Making an impact and influencing at the right time/level are important aspects of this skill.

Below are a series of statements about communication skills. Please indicate your level of confidence in the following areas:

<i>Please tick one box on each row</i>	<b>Very confident</b>	<b>Fairly confident</b>	<b>Not very confident</b>	<b>Not at all confident</b>
My ability to communicate well with different groups, including those vulnerable and hard-to-reach				
My ability to know my own style and adapt my style to suit different audiences				
My ability to speak and write, using clear and appropriate language				
My ability to challenge officers and colleagues constructively and appropriately both in tone and content				
My ability to deliver difficult messages that people may not want to hear				
My confidence using new technologies (e.g. social media)				
My confidence speaking in public				
My confidence speaking to the media (on difficult issues)				

### Core Skill 4: Political Understanding

Members will have already developed finely honed political skills in order to communicate their values, promote a political vision, and encourage democratic processes and public engagement. However, working across group boundaries at times, yet still being able to maintain personal political integrity can be difficult.

Below are a series of statements about political understanding. Please indicate your level of confidence the following areas:

<i>Please tick one box on each row</i>	<b>Very confident</b>	<b>Fairly confident</b>	<b>Not very confident</b>	<b>Not at all confident</b>
My ability to build confidence in the council and role of councillors				
My ability to articulate my values which are reflected in what I do				
My ability to work effectively in other political environments (e.g. outside the council)				
My ability to develop wider political awareness (e.g. at regional and national level)				
My ability to engage and work well with people who hold different views and values				
My ability to work constructively across party groups				

## Core Skill 5: Scrutiny, Monitoring and Challenge

Scrutiny, monitoring and challenge is an important day-to-day aspect of the councillor role and scrutiny and overview will hold the Executive to account. Members need to be able to identify opportunities for scrutiny inside and outside the council, and by providing constructive challenge and feedback to others. To be effective in this role, members need to analyse information quickly and present arguments that are concise, meaningful and easily understood.

Below are a series of statements about scrutiny, monitoring and challenge. Please indicate your level of knowledge:

<i>Please tick one box on each row</i>	<b>Very confident</b>	<b>Fairly confident</b>	<b>Not very confident</b>	<b>Not at all confident</b>
My ability to enable and respond to critical friend challenge as well as scrutiny and external authorities and agencies				
My ability and commitment to lead an effective scrutiny process on behalf of the public				
My ability to analyse complex data and information, particularly on finance issues				
My ability to monitor performance to ensure progress; question by exception; and explore anomalies				
My ability to be fair, objective and rigorous when challenging processes or people				
My ability to engage constructively in with the council's scrutiny process to ensure it influences decisions				
My ability to be open to new ideas and approaches from other places				
My ability to base judgements on evidence				

**Core Skill 6: Ethics, Regulation and Standards**

This skill set relates to the more judicial aspects of the role that require Members to understand their legal responsibilities and follow protocol when evaluating arguments and making decisions.

Below are a series of statements about ethics, regulation and standards. Please indicate your level of confidence in the following areas:

<i>Please tick one box on each row</i>	<b>Very confident</b>	<b>Fairly confident</b>	<b>Not very confident</b>	<b>Not at all confident</b>
My knowledge and ability to act upon, the legal requirements and responsibilities of the council				
My understanding of, and ability to act upon, the relevant equalities legislation and how they relate to my role				
My understanding of, and ability to act upon, my different statutory role (e.g. planning, licensing)				
My understanding of, and ability to act upon responsibilities to vulnerable groups (e.g. complex needs or mental health)				
My ability to keep up-to-date with relevant legal processes/protocols linked to my role				
My understanding of, and ability to act upon, the Code of Conduct and how it applies to my role				

## Enhanced Skill 7: Managing Performance

As more and more council business has become data rich, members are increasingly expected to understand complex information in order to manage performance so that the objectives are achieved and outcomes delivered for residents. Encouraging scrutiny, monitoring performance and responding positively to feedback and ideas is also important.

Below are a series of statements about managing performance. Please indicate your level of confidence in the following areas:

<i>Please tick one box on each row</i>	<b>Very confident</b>	<b>Fairly confident</b>	<b>Not very confident</b>	<b>Not at all confident</b>
My ability to devise an understandable strategy with tangible targets and outcomes				
My ability to contribute and agree performance systems, targets and critical measures or indicators				
My ability to input to a jointly-agreed agenda of strategic and service priorities				
My ability to regularly and systematically examine on performance data, usually on an exception basis				
My ability to instigate remedial or corrective action to get back on track if needed				
Agreeing a 'felt fair' budget setting process which identifies who, how and when different parties are involved				
My understanding of risk assessment and mitigation				

## Confidence

**Overall, taking into consideration all your responses, to what extent do you feel confident in your role as a member?**

To a great extent	
To a moderate extent	
To a small extent	
Not at all	
Don't know	

## Further Training

**Please use this box to tell us about any training or support that you would like to receive as part of the Member Development Programme in relation to:**

Local leadership	
Partnership working	
Communication skills	
Political understanding	
Scrutiny, monitoring and challenge	
Ethics, Regulation & Standards	
Managing performance	
Other – please describe	

Thank you very much for your responses