

# Management Competency Framework



Senior Managers  
Directors  
Chief Officers  
Divisional Managers  
Service Managers

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# Introduction

Blaenau Gwent's competency frameworks have been developed to support our ambitions to continually improve the services we provide to our customers. A group representing all Directorates within the Authority developed the frameworks and consultation took place with all department management teams to ensure the frameworks are appropriate and fit for purpose. This framework was revised in October 2009 by a group of senior managers, with the opportunity to comment offered to all members of our Senior Management Team.

The frameworks focus on attitudinal and behavioural competencies, rather than technical skills. This is because we traditionally have been able to address technical gaps in knowledge through established training and development activities. Behavioural and attitudinal development has not had the same intensity of attention, and the frameworks aim to address this, as it is a crucial aspect of continually improving the services we provide.

This particular framework applies to those responsible for a Directorate, a Division of a Directorate, or a number of services and who report directly to a Chief Officer/Director.

Below are answers to some of the questions you may have about the frameworks.

## **What is a Competency Framework?**

Competency frameworks are a method of describing the underpinning values that shape and define the culture of the Authority. They also provide clear focus to support the development of staff in order to deliver the best possible services.

The competencies within the frameworks have been substantially derived from the People Strategy, the Staff Opinion Survey, and consultation with senior managers, and are focused on ensuring we have the capacity to deliver the strategic objectives of the Authority and make Blaenau Gwent a better place to live and work.

There are two generic frameworks that the Authority will be using;

1. Management Competency Framework - this will apply to you if your job involves you supervising or managing other people, or you are in a technical or professional role in which you regularly operate at this level. The Management Competency Framework splits into 3 levels. The particular level that applies to you depends on the level of your management responsibilities.
2. Generic Competency Framework - this will apply to you if your job does not include supervisory or management responsibilities.

There are a number of competencies in each framework. Underneath each is a general description of the competency, followed by a list of attitudes/behaviours that would indicate competence in the relevant area. The list is not exhaustive but is designed to give a flavour of the approach that the Authority encourages in all staff that the framework applies to. There is also a negative statement at the end of each competency to indicate the sort of behaviour that is actively discouraged, as it works against the principle of continual improvement that the Authority is striving for.

## **Why do we need a competency framework?**

The competency framework serves several purposes, which together enable the Authority to improve and develop its staff and services:

1. Informs prospective recruits what is expected of them
2. Informs staff of the sort of attitudes and behaviours the Authority encourages when carrying out their duties
3. Informs staff of what they can expect from their managers
4. Shapes and defines a culture based around strong principles such as partnership, continuous improvement, constructive challenge, and being citizen centred
5. Supports staff at all levels in their development in order to maximise their potential

The headline competencies are closely linked to, and help contribute to, our strategic outcomes, as these are crucial to fulfilling our obligations to our customers.

## **How will they be used?**

Staff have received information about the frameworks and are encouraged to informally assess themselves against the framework that applies to them, with a view to developing their skills in all areas of the framework.

The frameworks are also a key part of our Performance Coaching Scheme (PRS) and our induction and recruitment processes.

The frameworks will be regularly reviewed and revised to ensure they reflect the needs of the organisation.

## **Definition of leader/manager**

The difference between a manager and leader is a frequently discussed issue. For the purposes of our competency framework it may be useful to define the difference as;

The management role is primarily functional, ensuring activities are undertaken effectively and efficiently to meet the objectives of the service and the organisation.

The leadership role is to act as the catalyst and motivator, to identify and communicate the overall direction and purpose of the service and to ensure colleagues are supported and developed to maximise their potential.

The competency framework contains elements from both disciplines but the majority of the framework is aimed at the development of the leadership role, which is why most of the requirements relate to individual behaviour, rather than technical attributes. Although the framework is entitled "Senior Manager" the framework is intended to focus on mainly leadership attributes.

## **Leading People**

Leads and motivates others to continually improve performance. Is approachable, supportive, and demonstrates integrity, fairness, and high personal and professional standards.

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader**

Provides inspirational leadership & is a role model to others

Encourages leadership in others where appropriate

Takes direct responsibility and is accountable for actions

Respects and values the contribution and ambition of others

Actively promotes equality and diversity

Challenges unacceptable behaviour/attitudes

Recognises and celebrates achievements

Defends colleagues against inappropriate criticism

Demonstrates and is an example of good work-life balance

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader does not**

Abdicate responsibility and contribute to the creation of a blame culture

## **Delivering the Vision**

Develops the vision & translates into clear ambitions, and sees the "big picture".

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader**

Communicates a compelling view of the future

Ensure colleagues know how they contribute to the vision

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader does not**

Pay lip service to the vision

## **Delivering Improved Service Performance**

Is enthusiastic, ambitious, determined, and confident, ensuring high levels of personal and organisational achievement.

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader**

Is committed to continually improving performance of self and others

Sets high standards and keeps self and others focused on outcomes

Gives regular, constructive feedback on service/team/individual performance

Recognises and celebrates success

Challenges poor performance appropriately

Seeks learning opportunities from results

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader does not**

Fail to look for continuous improvement in all aspects

## **Empowering Our People**

Develops and encourages personal development to maximise potential and contribution. Creates an environment that promotes constructive challenge in order to continually improve performance.

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader**

Is a team player

Encourages and develops personal accountability in others

Works to identify training and development needs in others

Encourages others to think for themselves

Promotes risk-taking and supports appropriately

Listens, utilises and respects the skills, experience, and ambition of others at all levels

Promotes and demonstrates personal and professional learning and development in self and others

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader does not**

Fail to involve and consider the views and ideas of others

## **Communicating**

Keeps people well informed and communicates clearly and concisely. Listens carefully, evaluates other opinions and is able to influence successfully.

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader**

Creates and encourages two-way communication inside and outside the organisation

Uses appropriate and precise methods of communication

Has personal credibility with a variety of different groups and uses networks effectively

Listens to and considers the views of others

Checks own and others' understanding

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader does not**

Fail to consider the most effective way of communicating

## **Making Informed Decisions**

Effectively analyses, evaluates and interprets information.  
Demonstrates objective judgement and the willingness to make decisions in a rational and timely manner.

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader**

Is prepared to take action and be accountable

Regards problem solving as an improvement opportunity

Involves others in decision making

Steps back and takes a wider view

Uses evidence to challenge or support point of view

Considers implications of proposed decisions

Has the confidence to make ambitious, difficult, or unpopular decisions

Is able to justify and explain decisions

Demonstrates collective responsibility once a decision has been made

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader does not**

Make decisions without consultation or thinking through the consequences

## **Working in Partnership**

Develops and encourages effective partnerships across public, private, and voluntary sectors to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery for customers, based on shared outcomes.

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader**

Understands partnerships in the context of the "big picture"

Understands role & responsibilities of self & others

Promotes and is actively involved in multi-agency partnerships to continually improve services

Networks effectively internally and externally

Recognises, respects, and utilises the expertise of others

Proactively shares knowledge and information

Seeks out the most appropriate people to contribute to partnership working

Ensures agreed outcomes are delivered

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader does not**

Form partnerships for partnership's sake (because it's the thing to do)

## **Creating a Customer Focused Culture**

Drives and promotes an outward-facing culture that is genuinely customer focused. Seeks to continually improve the reputation of the Council and gain trust by effective engagement and involvement. Presents a positive image and ensures service standards meet or exceed expectations.

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader**

Recognises the importance of contributions from the community to setting and achieving the vision

Promotes and develops a continually improving customer focused culture

Develops initiatives to enable regular consultation and feedback from customers on the quality and appropriateness of service delivery

Engages with the community appropriately and respectfully

Is an ambassador for the organisation and the community it serves

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader does not**

Create services that meet organisational needs rather than the needs of customers

## **Working with Councillors**

Works effectively with Councillors and encourages mutually respectful two-way communication. Demonstrates awareness of the political context and works with Councillors to ensure the focus is on positive outcomes.

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader**

Contributes to assertive relationships that promote a culture where challenge is constructive and without blame or reticence.

Understands the political environment locally, regionally, and nationally

Positively respects and abides by the code of conduct and adheres to the principles of political restriction

Raises issues and constructively challenges in an appropriate and sensitive manner

Ensures colleagues understand the political dimension of their work

Provides timely, constructive, high quality professional advice to assist the political decision making process

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader does not**

Allow self or colleagues to be intimidated or fail to adhere to appropriate protocols when interacting with Councillors, including inappropriately influencing, or being influenced, to the detriment of the organisation

## **Pushing the Boundaries**

Is creative and innovative in generating solutions that bring tangible benefits and outcomes. Leads change effectively and is willing to take calculated risks. Creates an environment that allows constructive challenge in order to deliver improvements in all aspects of the Council's services.

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader**

Regularly and constructively challenges the status quo

Is positive about change and identifies potential benefits to the customer

Brings forward the innovative and creative potential of others

Considers different methods/approaches

Encourages others to implement new ideas

Recognises and encourages leadership throughout the team

Looks creatively inside and outside the organisation for new ideas and actively shares good practice

### **A Blaenau Gwent Leader is not**

Averse to the consideration of new, innovative and creative ideas