

1. Effectiveness in the Role

Competencies:

- a. Upholds the Values of the Council
- b. Performs duties and responsibilities in accordance with the “*Description of Gwynedd Council Members’ Role and Responsibilities*”
- c. Expresses ideas and information clearly, in a way which helps people understand
- ch. Evaluates arguments and makes decisions that balance public needs and local policy
- d. Acts as a critical friend by seeking opportunities for scrutiny and providing constructive feedback

An effective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Is clear about his/her role and responsibilities, and how these help the Council to deliver the best service to the residents of Gwynedd
- Is trustworthy and dependable, acting on his/her word
- Attends and participates in relevant meetings, having prepared in advance
- Accepts that he/she has to make difficult decisions
- Avoids unnecessary delays in reaching decisions
- Recognises the importance of good time keeping, is punctual and respects others’ time
- Seeks appropriate and sufficient information in order to be able to make decisions
- Evaluates arguments according to evidence, makes independent and impartial judgements
- Analyses and assimilates complex information quickly, taking account of the wider strategic context
- Is inquisitorial, asks for explanations and checks for implementation of recommendations
- Encourages others by being enthusiastic and positive
- Respects confidentiality
- Follows legal process, balancing public needs and local policy
- Monitors performance and intervenes as appropriate to ensure progress
- Looks for better ways of working, and is prepared to challenge and scrutinise them
- Is objective, rigorous and resilient in challenging process, decisions and people
- Acts as a critical friend, listens well (to all opinions), provides constructive feedback and acknowledges the success of others
- Is prepared to go beyond the confines of the role if a constituent or taxpayer asks about an issue outside the work of the Council (if appropriate)
- Is able to defuse difficult situations and reduce tensions

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An ineffective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Fails to attend relevant meetings
- Fails to read reports and documents before attending a meeting
- Avoids making difficult decisions
- Arrives late for meetings without informing someone and apologising
- Acts in a negative way in front of others
- Fails to declare personal interest and makes decisions for personal gain
- Fails to check facts or to consider all sides of a story
- Makes subjective and uninformed judgements
- Leaves the monitoring and the progress checks to others
- Makes decisions without consulting or considering broader regulations and developments
- Fails to recognise or address limits of own knowledge and expertise
- Fails to meet deadlines, leaves business unfinished and lacks balance between council work and other commitments
- Fails to prepare thoroughly or check facts, uses selective information and draws subjective or biased conclusions
- Becomes overly reliant on officers and tends to back down when challenged
- Fails to recognise or engage in scrutiny as part of his/her role
- Assimilates new information slowly, focuses on detail and fails to distinguish between information that is important, and the irrelevant and inaccurate details
- Adopts an adversarial style, and becomes aggressive and confrontational when challenged
- Prefers political ‘blood sports’ to working collaboratively for the good of the Council and abuses scrutiny processes for political gain
- Allows disagreements and arguments to become personal

2. Community Leadership

Competencies:

- a. Engages enthusiastically and empathetically with the community in order to learn and understand issues
- b. Acts upon issues of local concern
- c. Mediates fairly and constructively
- ch. Encourages trust by representing all sections of the community
- d. Manages expectations

An effective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Knows the community and understands its needs
- Is approachable, empathetic, understanding and encourages trust
- Is able to deal with a wide variety of issues and situations
- Is polite and demonstrates good manners
- Engages proactively with the community, canvasses opinion and seeks new ways of representing others
- Keeps up-to-date with the community and issues of local concern, drawing information and resources from a range of sources and people
- Sees both sides of every disagreement and mediates fairly
- Provides a voice for all sections of the community and develops partnerships inside the Council and with external organisations
- Is prepared to campaign with enthusiasm, courage and persistence on behalf of others
- Asks for feedback from the community to help him/her improve the service he/she provides
- Tries to solve problems rather than passing them on to someone else
- Takes pride in what he/she does, and wants to provide the best service possible
- Balances corporate responsibilities with representing the ward

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An ineffective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Behaves discourteously e.g. by ignoring people or showing a lack of interest
- Behaves aggressively
- Fails to engage in community activities, and wait to be approached before volunteering
- Makes it difficult for others to contact him/her
- Keeps a low public profile and is not easily recognised by members of the community
- Fails to focus equally on community groups or issues
- Lacks detailed understanding of local issues and needs
- Takes an unrealistic stance about what can be achieved, and does not deliver on promises
- Fobs people off, however irrelevant the query
- Acts impatiently with others
- Acts defensively when dealing with complaints
- Uses the media / press for personal vindictiveness
- Avoids taking responsibility for his/her role as an Elected Member

3. Communication

Competencies:

- a. Shares and listens to information, opinions and ideas
- b. Communicates effectively verbally and in writing
- c. Understands the motivational power and importance of good communication
- ch. Selects and uses communication methods and media appropriate to a range of audiences
- d. Possesses effective interpersonal communication skills
- dd. Understands the dangers of working from assumptions
- e. Appreciates the feelings of others and understands the importance of inclusion and consultation
- f. Speaks clearly and confidently in public

An effective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Uses a range of methods to communicate clearly and confidently with others at all levels, and gives his/her point of view when appropriate
- Presents and shares information clearly and concisely
- Adapts the content, style and tone of communication to suit the audience and situation
- Empathises with the feelings raised when handling emotional situations, while maintaining focus on problems and solutions
- Encourages contact and discussion of issues with others by being approachable
- Asks probing questions to clarify understanding, challenge assumptions and encourage participation, and encourages others to do the same
- Seeks to consult with, listen to and encourage ideas from others, actively valuing contributions
- Communicates confidential and sensitive issues in an appropriate manner, raising difficult issues without damaging working relationships
- Presents arguments in a concise, meaningful and easily accessible way
- Communicates regularly with the community e.g. via newsletters, phone calls and local media
- Speaks clearly and confidently in public, uses accessible language and avoids jargon or 'council-speak'
- Provides regular feedback, keeps people informed and manages expectation
- Ensures politeness in all forms of correspondence

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An ineffective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Fails to contribute in meetings
- Fails to consider the communication needs of the audience
- Discourages others from contributing
- Uses jargon that is unclear to others
- Is unable to make himself/herself heard and understood when speaking in public
- Interrupts, appears not to listen and uses inappropriate or insensitive language (e.g. shouting, being rude or abusive)
- Fails to listen to others' views, and presents rigid and inflexible arguments
- Uses information dishonestly to discredit others and is unwilling or unable to deliver unpopular messages
- Presents subjective and confused arguments using poor language and style

4. Working in Partnership

Competency:

- a. Works with others to achieve results and develop good working relationships

An effective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Understands the purpose and aim of the partnership, and works towards that, respecting any guidelines that are set for the partnership
- Establishes effective working relationships with the public, other Members, officers and various organisations
- Encourages others to express their opinions, and is willing to listen to them
- Can identify how his/her own actions affects others, and makes an effort to work in a way that is constructive
- Represents Gwynedd Council effectively in external partnerships
- Shares information and good practice
- Achieves goals by co-ordinating others, maintaining task focus and persisting in the face of setbacks
- Works for the benefit of the partnership rather than for personal agenda/gain
- Makes others feel valued, trusted and included, recognises and is inclusive of people from different backgrounds
- Is patient, and takes a long-term view in developing networks and partnerships
- Maintains calm and focus when criticised or under pressure, and is willing to admit mistakes

4. Working in Partnership

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An ineffective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Intimidates or ridicules people
- Behaves obstructively
- Blames other people when things go wrong
- Ignores or excludes others
- Says they will help, and then doesn't
- Uses status and position to exert control or impose solutions
- Fails to involve people in decisions
- Shows an inability to work across political divide
- Acts alone rather than seeking help or working as part of a team
- Uses divisive tactics to upset relationships, council policies and decisions
- Becomes defensive when criticised
- Avoids admitting to being wrong
- Views partners as a threat or unhelpful

5. Political Awareness

Competencies:

- a. Recognises the wider community and the aims of the Council in serving the public
- b. Focuses on the community and service users
- c. Adapts to change
- ch. Works effectively in a variety of situations
- d. Seeks out partnerships to improve delivery
- dd. Understands and operates effectively within Council and National political frameworks
- e. Is aware of the issues that effect service delivery at an organisational, local and national level
- f. Open to best practice and keeps in touch with how other organisations are delivering services to assist performance
- ff. Works across group boundaries without compromising values or ethics

An effective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Respects the right of others to have different political views and opinions
- Understands what the council is trying to achieve, and his/her part in 'Improving Gwynedd'
- Shows honesty and integrity
- Has a positive approach to democratic change, and is prepared to adapt
- Promotes, and works in accordance with the equality and diversity policy
- Displays a positive and confident attitude when representing the Council
- Understands how his/her actions and the actions of other Members affect wider Council objectives and services
- Is aware of working procedures and practices within the Council
- Is aware of what is possible in the local and national climate, and current local and national priorities
- Helps develop cohesion within the group and contributes to healthy communication between the group and the Council
- Acts ethically, and communicates political values through canvassing, electoral campaigning and by identifying new ways of engaging the public
- Is committed to developing own political intelligence and understanding of local and national political landscape
- Works across group boundaries without compromising political values
- Understands when party politics and policies are relevant (and when they are not e.g. Planning issues)
- Is aware of Council procedures, standing orders and the rules of debate; and abides by them

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An ineffective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Says “This is the way we always did it”
- Disregards equality and diversity issues
- Displays a negative attitude about the Council in general
- Communicates negatively with the press (or through other media) without following Council processes first
- Demonstrates inconsistent political values
- Lacks integrity and tends to say what others want to hear
- Has poor knowledge of group manifesto, values and objectives
- Puts personal motivations first, and acts in a parochial way
- Lacks understanding of how central government policy impacts on local issues and Council functioning

6. Self Management

Competencies:

- a. Pro-active
- b. Accepts responsibility for his/her actions
- c. Possesses high levels of self awareness
- ch. Takes responsibility for personal performance
- d. Effective team member
- dd. Organised
- e. Exercises integrity
- f. Is emotionally resilient and aware
- ff. Prioritises tasks and makes effective use of time
- g. Able to use Information Technology effectively in the role

An effective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Prioritises and manages own workload in a way that makes the most effective use of time
- Is organised with regards to administration of documents (paper and electronic)
- Adopts a professional and ethical approach to work and working relationships
- Stays focused and impartial, and maintains commitment even when under pressure
- Takes responsibility for personal development, identifies his/her own strengths and weaknesses, and takes advantage of the training offered by the Council
- Deals with work related pressures and stress well, keeping in good health and asking for help when needed
- Takes the time to think about his/her role and performance, and asks for constructive feedback from others
- Looks for advice and ways of improving own performance, from other Members and individuals in other areas and organisations
- Admits mistakes, learns from them, and takes responsibility for what he/she does
- Uses Information Technology effectively to find and share information relevant to the role
- Takes pride in completing what the electorate and officers expect of him/her to the highest standard
- Is innovative and prepared to think ‘outside the box’

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An ineffective Gwynedd Council Member:

- Promises things they know they can't deliver
- Fails to prepare for meetings
- Works in a disorganised way
- Becomes unreliable under pressure
- Resists offers of help and advice
- Becomes defensive or confrontational in response to challenge or criticism
- Displays an unwillingness to develop new skills
- Blames others for problems and mistakes
- Leaves things to the last minute and then makes tasks urgent for someone else
- Passes the buck
- Allows personal interests or opinions to interfere with their work
- Fails to learn from his/her own mistakes
- Avoids using Information Technology