

## SFJC22

# Maintain and develop effective working relationships in local government



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### Overview

Effective working relationships are key to the success of all organisations. In local government, the demands for professional relationships are even more important due to the political dimension in which staff work and the role they play in representing the council to the local community.

### Target Group

This unit is appropriate to the work of local government staff working, for example, in Committee Services, Democratic Services, Member Services, Scrutiny or other departments who have a leading role in working closely with elected members and members of the local community.

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#### Performance criteria

*You must be able to:*

- P1 show respect for the role that elected representatives, colleagues, team members and members of the public play in the democratic process
- P2 provide support to elected representatives, colleagues, team members and members of the public in their role in the democratic process, within the limits of your responsibility
- P3 fulfil requirements for openness and confidentiality
- P4 treat elected representatives, colleagues, team members and members of the public in a fair and equitable way, with due regard for diversity
- P5 follow agreed codes of conduct when there are attempts by elected representatives, team members or colleagues to influence the democratic process unfairly or abuse their position
- P6 communicate agreed policies, not personal or political standpoints
- P7 deal with conflict situations in calm and constructive manner and follow agreed procedures

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#### Knowledge and understanding

*You need to know and understand:*

- K1 the role played by elected representatives, colleagues and members of the public in a democracy
- K2 the importance of keeping colleagues and team members informed about your work and other issues that may affect them and how to do so
- K3 the importance of effective team working with colleagues and team members and how to achieve this
- K4 strengths and weaknesses of your colleagues and your own strengths and weaknesses and how to build on these in a team context
- K5 the importance of providing honest and helpful feedback to colleagues on their performance and how to do so constructively
- K6 how to identify and deal with conflict when it occurs
- K7 how to make opportunities to build your working relationship with colleagues and team members
- K8 the importance of keeping senior managers up-to-date with what you are doing and about any important developments and how to do so
- K9 the importance of dealing assertively with senior managers when there are pressures that may compromise your role, responsibilities and organisational standards
- K10 how to behave assertively but appropriately when dealing with senior managers
- K11 the importance of the role played by elected members in local democracy and why it is important to show respect for the role and the individual
- K12 why it is important not to show your own political affiliations and to prevent your own political views influencing your relationship with members
- K13 the types of political pressures that you may experience these and how to deal with them competently
- K14 situations in which political sensitivity may be important and how to demonstrate this
- K15 standards of confidentiality when dealing with elected members
- K16 how to make opportunities to build your working relationship with colleagues and team members
- K17 ways in which you can present a positive image of the council through your own appearance and behaviour
- K18 the types of support and information that members of the local community may need when they wish to participate in local democratic activities
- K19 different types of communication difficulties that you may encounter when dealing with members of the local community and how to overcome these

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- K20 issues of confidentiality and openness when dealing with the public and media – situations in which information must be given and situations in which information should be restricted
- K21 the limits of your own role and competence when it comes to solving problems on behalf of the public and press

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#### Additional Information

**This unit covers relationships with the following types of people:**

**Scope/range  
related to  
performance  
criteria**

- 1 elected representatives
- 2 colleagues inside your organisation
- 3 team members
- 4 colleagues from other organisations
- 5 members of the public

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#### Behaviours

#### You must show that you work in the following way

- 1 you show sensitivity to internal and external politics that impact on your area of work
- 2 you model behaviour that shows respect, helpfulness and co-operation
- 3 you show sensitivity to stakeholders' needs and interests and manage these effectively
- 4 you make time available to support others
- 5 you demonstrate a clear understanding of different 'customers' and their real and perceived needs
- 6 you comply with, and ensure others comply with, legal requirements, regulations, organisational policies and professional codes
- 7 you act to uphold individuals' rights
- 8 you identify and raise ethical concerns
- 9 you acknowledge when your own interests are in conflict with common goals
- 10 you make appropriate information and knowledge available promptly to those who need it and have a right to it

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### Links to other NOS

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| 1 | A51 Take effective decisions  |
| 2 | C11 Manage your own resources and professional development                                    |
| 3 | C32 Facilitate the implementation of local government legislation, regulations and procedures |

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