

# How we work matters



WorkSmart | Skills



## Message from Ken...

The Council's ambitious for Fife. Despite falling budgets and increased pressure on our services, we're determined to keep improving lives. It's what every one of us is paid to do in some way.

We all have to take responsibility for our behaviour at work, and make sure we're playing our part in getting results for the people of Fife.

Our vision, values, plans and team structures are all linked. But they mean nothing without our actions. The council's reputation and, more importantly, how we deliver services are down to our employees. So, even though it's difficult with fewer colleagues and less money to go round, let's agree that together we **can do** it!

Ken Gourlay  
Chief Executive

# How we work at the Council

There are two parts to your job – **what** you do and **how** you do it. And they're both important.

Your job/role profile sets out what you do. It describes your main duties and responsibilities. This guide is about:

- how you do things
- how you treat others and expect to be treated
- what you say and how you say it.

All council employees are expected to:

- **Take ownership**
- **Focus on customers**
- **Work together**
- **Embrace technology & information**
- **Deliver results**

Depending on your job, some of these might be more important than others, but they'll all be relevant to you.

With around 18,000 council employees, it's important we all have the same understanding of how we're expected to work. So that everyone's clear, we've described three levels of these behaviours:

- **Essential**
- **Desirable**
- **Excellence (and a must for managers)**

We've provided examples to help bring these behaviours to life and explained what the three levels mean.



# Why this guide exists

We've spoken to lots of people in lots of jobs around the council about behaviour and this guide will:

- give the whole council one clear description of what's expected from our workforce
- help us act consistently showing colleagues and customers that we are one council
- support you at work by showing what you should expect from colleagues and managers
- help us recognise people who are doing a great job
- help identify training needs
- support career development
- help us recruit people with the right behaviours.

# Everyone's got a part to play

## All Employees

Everyone is responsible for their own behaviour and acting appropriately as they do their job.

## Managers

Fife Council line managers play a crucial role in promoting the behaviours expected of employees.

Specific responsibilities are:

- lead by example – demonstrate these behaviours
- ensure all employees have access to and fully understand this document
- ensure all employees understand that their behaviours at work are just as important as what they do and achieve in their job
- ensure behavioural development needs are fully explored during one to one meetings
- suggest and discuss development options to help improve performance
- use the relevant policy to address any incidents where employees are consistently behaving inappropriately

## Take ownership

Take responsibility for your performance, actions and solutions – don't pass blame. Be flexible, prepared to go the extra mile and respond positively to change.

<b>Essential</b> All employees are required to behave like this	<b>Desirable</b> You should aim to behave like this	<b>Excellence (a must for managers)</b> Role models, leaders and managers behave like this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be responsible for your behaviour and your actions</li> <li>• Look for ways to improve your own performance</li> <li>• Control your emotions and behaviour when things get difficult or stressful</li> <li>• Be aware of the impact your behaviour has on other people</li> <li>• Try to embrace changes the council has to make and adapt as quickly as possible</li> <li>• If you make a mistake, acknowledge it and take responsibility for correcting it</li> <li>• Take ownership of your own learning and development</li> <li>• If you can see something's not working, say so and help find the solution</li> <li>• Ask for help if you need it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for, and act on, feedback from colleagues, customers and partners</li> <li>• Help other people learn and develop</li> <li>• Challenge negative behaviour</li> <li>• Promote the benefits of changes - support and motivate others when things are changing</li> <li>• Suggest improvements to the way things are done</li> <li>• Make informed decisions and take informed risks - take responsibility for their impact</li> <li>• Recognise the success and achievements of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead by example – behave like a leader and role model should!</li> <li>• Discuss the importance of behaviour with your team</li> <li>• Help your team access learning and development</li> <li>• Develop talent and make workforce plans so that we can maintain services</li> <li>• Lead others through change – make sure people know what's expected of them</li> <li>• Encourage innovation and continuous improvement</li> <li>• Make performance management part of your team's everyday working</li> </ul>

## Focus on customers

Put customers at the heart of everything. Think and act locally but use standard council processes to make things easier for customers. Remember, your customers include people who use our services, council employees and other companies or agencies we work with.

<b>Essential</b> All employees are required to behave like this	<b>Desirable</b> You should aim to behave like this	<b>Excellence (a must for managers)</b> Role models, leaders and managers behave like this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care about excellent customer service</li> <li>• Understand who your customers are and what they need</li> <li>• Make sure customers are kept informed and not passed around unnecessarily</li> <li>• Be helpful and polite - respond promptly to queries or issues</li> <li>• Have a 'can do' attitude to give customers the service they need</li> <li>• Be open and honest</li> <li>• Be calm and professional, whatever happens</li> <li>• Adapt things to show you understand the diversity of our customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify customer needs and exceed their expectations</li> <li>• Look for ways to keep improving customer service</li> <li>• Make agreed improvements to customer service happen, and tell people about them</li> <li>• Consider things from the customer's view point</li> <li>• Highlight decisions or policies that just don't work</li> <li>• Take time to help colleagues, even when the pressure's on</li> <li>• Promote equality and diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set out the vision for excellent customer service and standards</li> <li>• Understand customer requirements and trends</li> <li>• Build customer needs into strategic improvement plans and priorities</li> <li>• Ensure customer feedback is captured consistently; use it to understand opinions and needs</li> <li>• Design services around customers but look for efficiency and value</li> <li>• Promote a 'can do' culture</li> <li>• Be open to making an exception for someone if it's sensible and defensible</li> <li>• Appreciate your team's efforts and change things that get in the way of good customer service</li> <li>• Evaluate practice and processes to ensure equality and diversity</li> </ul>

## Work together

It doesn't matter which team or Service you work for, we all work for Fife Council and the public. Work with colleagues to set and achieve common goals. Make the most of colleagues' and partners' expertise and solutions.

<b>Essential</b> All employees are required to behave like this	<b>Desirable</b> You should aim to behave like this	<b>Excellence (a must for managers)</b> Role models, leaders and managers behave like this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage people to express their opinion - and listen to them!</li> <li>• Communicate with people in the most suitable way for them</li> <li>• Help your team meet its objectives</li> <li>• Treat colleagues with kindness and value differences</li> <li>• Take time to build good relationships with customers, colleagues and partners</li> <li>• Respect different ideas, perspectives and backgrounds</li> <li>• Share skills and knowledge - help others to help themselves</li> <li>• Celebrate team successes and be a positive team member</li> <li>• Don't blame another team for bad customer service – do what you can to help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep in touch with other Services and keep them informed of your plans</li> <li>• Identify people who are affected by your work and keep them involved</li> <li>• Break down barriers to good working relationships</li> <li>• Encourage colleagues to help each other</li> <li>• Start discussions about providing services jointly – and not just with the usual groups</li> <li>• Help colleagues and partners understand and achieve joint outcomes</li> <li>• Celebrate team successes and promote positivity</li> <li>• Talk to customers about what the council can do for them, not just what your Service provides</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as part of one council</li> <li>• Value difference to underpin positive relationships and support and maintain positive mental wellbeing</li> <li>• Show colleagues and customers what can be achieved by working together</li> <li>• Develop strategies and plans with partner organisations</li> <li>• Involve representative groups in strategy planning</li> <li>• Make sure opportunities for joint working are realised</li> <li>• Help communities and partners get fully involved in designing /providing services</li> <li>• Build local and national networks to deliver improvements</li> <li>• Celebrate team successes and create a positive team spirit</li> </ul>

## Embrace technology & information

Always try to work smarter. Use equipment, technology and information to communicate better, share information and express ideas.

<b>Essential</b> All employees are required to behave like this	<b>Desirable</b> You should aim to behave like this	<b>Excellence (a must for managers)</b> Role models, leaders and managers behave like this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate in simple and meaningful ways that everyone can understand</li> <li>• Use the correct information sources; record and retrieve data quickly, efficiently and systematically.</li> <li>• Make sure information you use and save is accurate and kept up to date</li> <li>• If something's confidential, make sure it stays that way</li> <li>• Look for new, simpler ways of working that give better results</li> <li>• Make the most of equipment, technology and information to do your job effectively and efficiently</li> <li>• Learn how to use new technology and tools – and keep using them</li> <li>• Be aware of any risk to sensitive or personal information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use information and objective evidence to draw logical conclusions</li> <li>• Share evaluation and analysis to help colleagues</li> <li>• Design appropriate ways to measure performance and deliver better results</li> <li>• Understand and highlight the impact changes have on people</li> <li>• Challenge existing ways of working; try to streamline and link processes</li> <li>• Embrace and champion new technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use business intelligence and new technologies to plan and make improvements</li> <li>• Develop key performance indicators that support efficiency and improvement</li> <li>• Encourage new ideas, collaboration and good practice</li> <li>• Keep your team up to date with information they need</li> <li>• Embrace and champion new technology – build the benefits into your work plans</li> <li>• Make sure your team have access to the tools they need</li> <li>• Identify future technology and information needs</li> </ul>

## Deliver results

Plan and deliver high quality work with a 'can do' attitude.

<b>Essential</b> All employees are required to behave like this	<b>Desirable</b> You should aim to behave like this	<b>Excellence (a must for managers)</b> Role models, leaders and managers behave like this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work towards results set out in The Council Plan</li> <li>• Understand how your work contributes to public service and what success means in your job</li> <li>• Manage your time, plans and tasks to meet deadlines and targets</li> <li>• Don't give up when things get tough – try to find a solution</li> <li>• Come up with ideas to help solve problems and make services better</li> <li>• Act according to council standards and values</li> <li>• Comply with any rules and regulations that govern your area of work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan your objectives, measure your progress and adjust plans when you have to</li> <li>• Motivate others and help them meet realistic deadlines and targets</li> <li>• Plan the most efficient and effective use of resources</li> <li>• Manage competing pressures – prioritise things that deliver the most benefit</li> <li>• Recognise good performance and take time to thank others</li> <li>• Resolve disagreements quickly and professionally</li> <li>• Learn from problems and plan improvements</li> <li>• Be honest when things don't go to plan and fix the issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement strategies that deliver tangible results as set out in the Council Plan.</li> <li>• Deal with poor performance</li> <li>• Give individuals and teams ownership of and responsibility for results</li> <li>• Develop long term plans to help make sure services are as effective as they can be</li> <li>• Give people feedback on their performance and motivate them to strive for excellence</li> <li>• Recognise and nurture talent - develop potential through training, mentoring and coaching</li> <li>• Monitor performance against objectives to ensure we deliver promised results</li> </ul>

Here are some real examples that show how employees' actions make a difference.

### How 'Delivering Results' benefits Fife

Project teams from ICT and Education delivered increased bandwidth to our schools whilst saving Fife Council £666,000 in revenue.

### How 'Taking Ownership' benefits Fife

Our colleagues in the Local Offices are taking ownership by finding solutions to customer's queries. If they do not know the answer, they will actively seek out a contact that can help.

### How 'Focussing on Customers' benefits Fife

Development of the council tax online account, text pay and online forms demonstrate how we are making it easier for our customers to engage with us.

Our colleagues in Environmental Health EPPS investigated a customer complaint about a foul smell of fumes that was coming from a nearby factory. After thorough investigation, the matter was resolved and the customer was delighted with the efficient response from the Service.

### How 'Embracing Technology & Information' benefits Fife

We have implemented new smartphone and tablet technology to groups of workers to improve productivity and ensure council staff can spend more time with customers and less time filling forms.

### How 'Working Together' benefits Fife

Throughout the council, we are demonstrating cross team working, and pulling together as a service or function, to ensure excellent service is delivered to our customers at all times.

Building Services have worked together with the introduction of mobile working across their function realising team benefits year on year of £1.2m. This was partly achieved by work scheduling combined with mobile working thereby reducing paperwork and increasing productivity of the workforce, while at the same time delivering improved customer service.

# Making it real

Outlined below are the key areas where it is important to highlight how we work.

## Recruitment and Selection

We will recruit people with the right attitude. Applicants will be interviewed and appointed based on their experience, skills, and qualifications as well as **how** they work.

For more detailed guidance see:

- [RS01 Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)
- [RS32 How We Work Matters Interview Guide](#)

## Induction

We will ensure that all new employees understand how we work at the council. We will give all new employees a copy of this framework and make sure they understand the way they're expected to behave as a council employee.

For more detailed guidance see:

- [IN11 Induction Guidelines](#).

## Talking Points/1 to 1 Meetings/Supervision Meetings

You and your manager will meet regularly to discuss your work objectives and performance. Discussions will now also include how you work and you will be given feedback.

## Learning and Development Opportunities

Learning materials and training will promote the type of behaviour expected of council employees. Where appropriate, development activities will reinforce valued ways of working.

The expected behaviours can help employees prioritise their learning and development needs.

For more detailed guidance see <http://fish.fife/learning>

## **Career Development and Talent Management**

If you aspire to progress your career within the council, demonstrating the desirable and excellence behaviours will be part of the criteria on which you are assessed for progression.

The council seeks to attract, identify, develop and retain talented employees who can make a difference to our performance through their contribution. Demonstrating the right behaviours is key to this process.

## **Improving Performance**

How you work will make a difference to the performance of the council. This guide provides examples of behaviour to help employees and managers highlight good practice and identify areas where improvements can be made. For further information see:

- [PM01 Improving Performance Policy](#)
- [PM11 Improving Performance Procedure](#)

## **Employee Recognition**

It is important to give recognition and feedback when excellent examples of behaviour are displayed, this will help to embed behaviours and promote culture change.

## **Customer Care**

One of the council's values is to be customer focussed. Your attitude and behaviour has an impact on customer service and the council's reputation. For more information see:

- [Customer Service](#) pages on [fish.fife/customer](http://fish.fife/customer) focus
- [Customer Charter](#)
- [Customer Charter – A Staff Guide](#)
- [Customer Focus Guides](#)
- [Comments and Complaints Procedure](#)

## Technology and Information

It is important to consider appropriate behaviour when using technology and communicating and sharing information. For further information see:

- [CC13 Appropriate Use of Technology Guidelines](#)
- [CC14 Social Media Guidelines](#)
- [Data Protection](#)
- [Information Security](#)
- [Information Sharing in Fife](#)
- [Records Management](#)
- [Reuse of public sector information](#)

Produced by Fife Council Human Resources Service  
01 October 2014: Issue number 1.0  
31 January 2019: Issue number 1.1  
25 November 2019: Issue number 1.2

OD12