Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Competence Framework

COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK
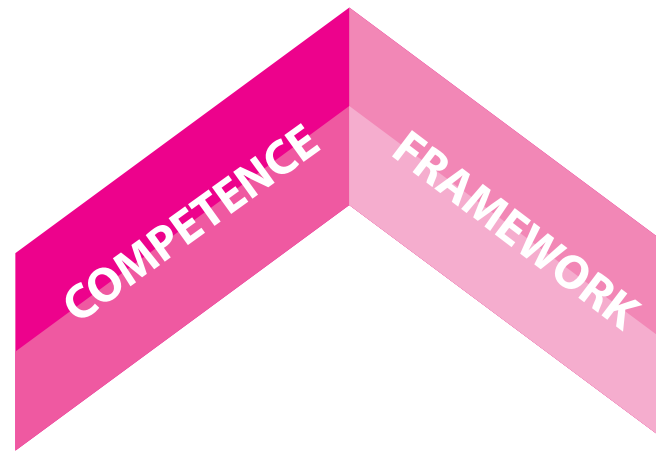
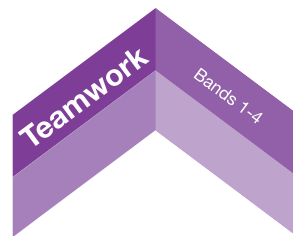**The competence Framework is applied at four different levels**

Band 1 Employees who work mainly in a practical or operational role e.g. leisure attendants, grounds maintenance/cleansing personnel.

Band 2 Employees who work in a mainly administrative or clerical role.

Band 3 Professional or officers who manage a team or function

Band 4 Directors, Assistant Directors and Service Managers (report to a Director)
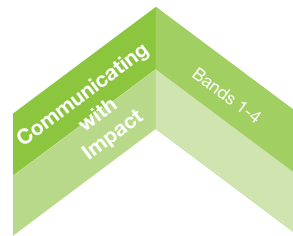
Customer Focus — Bands 1-4

- Establishes the needs of customers and strives to ensure these are met
- Builds partnerships for mutual benefit
- Instils high customer service in others and drives team to think in terms of customer impact
- Challenges poor customer service or lack of awareness in others
- Handles complaints positively – listens to the customer's concerns without defensiveness or self-justification, shows concern, takes steps to remedy and follow-up.
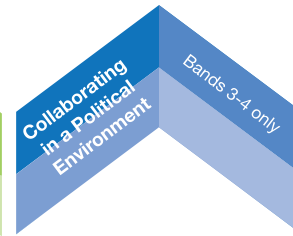
Service Excellence — Bands 1-4

- Seeks to continually improve services and processes that impact on customers
- Focuses on the achievement of objectives and plans ahead to ensure goals are achieved in terms of excellence in service delivery
- Seeks out and uses customer feedback to ensure customer needs are met and exceeded
- Instils service excellence in others and drives team to improve service
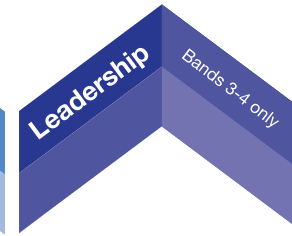
Teamwork — Bands 1-4

- Establishes effective working relationships with people at all levels through communication, consultation and interpersonal skills
- Demonstrates ability to quickly resolve conflict
- Works collaboratively with other teams and agencies both internal and external
- Adapts style and approach to achieve effective outcomes
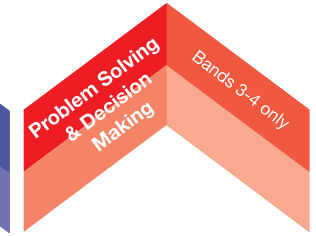
Communicating with Impact — Bands 1-4

- Demonstrates persuasive communication skills and confidence in conveying information internally and externally
- Responds and behaves positively and demonstrates resilience in communication
- Demonstrates effective communication skills, both orally and in writing
- Actively listens and uses a variety of methods to convey messages clearly and succinctly

Collaborating in a Political Environment — Bands 3-4 only

- Develops and manages effective networks by establishing common ground
- (Managers) Demonstrates an understanding of political factors at organisational, regional, national and where appropriate, international level in developing strategies
- Understands which issues are likely to be sensitive and the background political interests and agendas

Leadership — Bands 3-4 only

- Personally contributes to the organisations vision and goals
- Displays drive, determination and perseverance in achieving high quality results
- Develops a positive working environment, motivates and builds effective teams which achieve results whilst encouraging and supporting individuals
- Positively influences people and events

Problem Solving & Decision Making — Bands 3-4 only

- Gathers information from a range of sources.
- Analyses information to identify problems and issues.
- Makes effective decisions and recommendations based on resolution agreement
- Plans structures and prioritises work to achieve optimum results.

These three competencies apply to bands 3-4 only
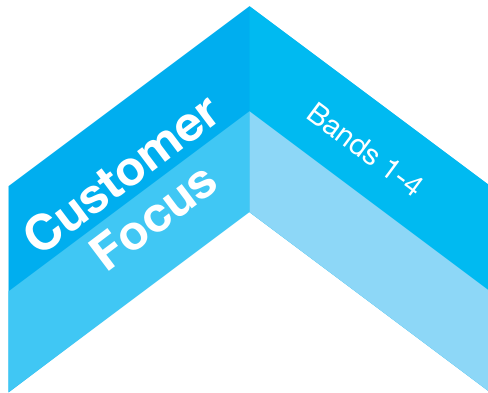
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Customer Focus — Bands 1-4

- Establishes the needs of customers and strives to ensure these are met
- Builds partnerships for mutual benefit
- Instils high customer service in others and drives team to think in terms of customer impact
- Challenges poor customer service or lack of awareness in others
- Handles complaints positively – listens to the customer's concerns without defensiveness or self-justification, shows concern, takes steps to remedy and follow-up.

BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
- Considers issues from the customer's point of view - Places the customer's needs as the key focus in all activities - Understands the expectation of the customer - Is courteous and friendly to customer and takes time to build relationships - Strives to deliver good service for the customer - Resolves minor customer issues at initial contact stage.	- Considers issues from the customers point of view - Is knowledgeable in their area and is able to deal with customer queries effectively - Strives to deliver good service for the customer - Communicates in a positive and accurate manner with customers keeping them informed - Is courteous and friendly to customer and takes time to build relationships - Listens to and responds to customers known or perceived needs and seeks direction where appropriate in a timely manner - Resolves minor customer issues at initial contact stage.	- Actively listens to customers to establish their needs - Sets standards of excellence for service delivery - Ensures that the delivery of customer needs is a priority for them and their team - Actively seeks and acts on customer feedback - Keep the customer informed and updated - Actively engages relevant customers and stakeholders	- Creates an environment in which innovative, efficient and effective ways to meet customers' service requirements are generated - Actively considers how every part of the organisation and its supply chain affects customer service - Manages any conflict between the organisations strategy and customer / service users - Develop the structures and procedures for effective customer service delivery - Seeks feedback and continuously reviews customer service in line with industry standards and best practice. - Builds relationships with stakeholders to deliver an excellent service. - Thinks forward about the nature of future potential customer demand / expectations and associated service needs. - Actively engages relevant customers and stakeholders

Service Excellence

Bands 1-4

- Seeks to continually improve services and processes that impact on customers
- Focuses on the achievement of objectives and plans ahead to ensure goals are achieved in terms of excellence in service delivery
- Seeks out and uses customer feedback to ensure customer needs are met and exceeded
- Instils service excellence in others and drives team to improve service

| BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
■ Follows agreed procedures and instructions for the service from the line manager/supervisor ■ Completes the allocated work programme within agreed time limits ■ Follows safe and healthy working practices ■ Puts forward ideas aimed at improving the delivery of the service ■ Participates in training activities as agreed in personal development plan ■ Puts training into practice ■ Engages with customers & other stakeholders, as the job requires, in a friendly and efficient way ■ Thinks ahead to anticipate and deal with issues ■ Identifies and calculates the level of risk in a situation ■ Demonstrates an ability to implement policy effectively	■ Knows and understands relevant goals for own role ■ Provides service excellence to internal/external contacts ■ Carries out all work in line with business and service plans to support the overall aims of the organisation ■ Approaches challenges with drive and enthusiasm ■ Strives for continuous improvement in own work and in managing own learning and development to enable best performance possible ■ Works to deliver and exceed the results expected ■ Uses initiative to get the job done, within acceptable boundaries ■ Shares knowledge with others ■ Understands the problems in order to make improvements ■ Thinks creatively about how a task can best be achieved & contributes ideas ■ Demonstrates an ability to implement policy effectively	■ Sets objectives and performance measures and monitors achievements of the service ■ Assesses benefits against cost in decisions and demonstrates an awareness of effective use of limited resources ■ Plans, implements and reviews customer/ stakeholder service delivery and reports outcomes ■ Obtains feedback on progress and acts on it, carrying out benchmarking and research into Best Practice ■ Challenges the status quo effectively ■ Encourages and demonstrates creativity and innovation to improve service delivery ■ Focuses on the "value add" to the customer ■ Shares knowledge & encourages other to take balanced risks & learn from their mistakes ■ Identifies and calculates the level of risk in a situation ■ Introduces processes that positively deliver improvements & added value for the customer	■ Develops the broad vision and direction ■ Sets priorities, targets and KPIs for each of the services for which s/he is responsible and encourages 'joined-up' thinking ■ Undertakes reviews of service delivery and ensures staff skills and organisation structures are fit for purpose ■ Thinks innovatively, benchmarks & researches new approaches to service delivery and new services & makes judgements about their relevance, costs & application to meet the needs of customers ■ Challenges and coaches others to implement new ways of working to achieve improvements ■ Builds relationships and ensures managers and other staff engage with customers / stakeholders constructively to improve service delivery ■ Secures resources to support improvements ■ Creates an environment in which innovative, efficient and effective ways to improve services are generated ■ Thinks forward about future service needs
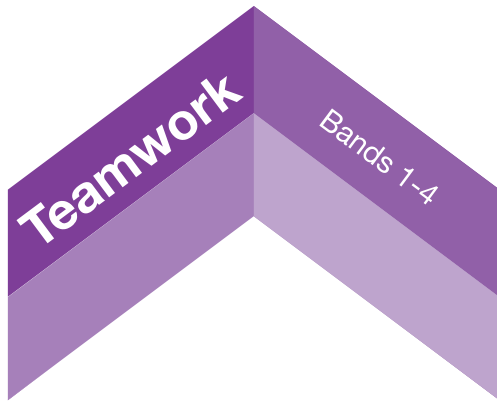
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Teamwork
Bands 1-4

- Establishes effective working relationships with people at all levels through communication, consultation and interpersonal skills
- Demonstrates ability to quickly resolve conflict
- Works collaboratively with other teams and agencies both internal and external to the organisation
- Adapts style and approach to achieve effective outcomes

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| BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
■ Works effectively with other team/squad members and employees from other departments ■ Maintains a positive outlook and is flexible to new approaches and ideas ■ Listens to and encourages others to suggest ideas to improve how the job is done ■ Learns from others' experience and approaches ■ Seeks to build effective working relationships with other team members ■ Respects others, does his/her share of the work	■ Supports team decisions ■ Keeps other team members informed and up to date about group processes, individual actions or influencing events ■ Maintains a positive outlook and shows flexibility to new approaches and ideas ■ Contributes positively by actively sharing information, listening and accepting others' points of view ■ Demonstrates that s/he genuinely values others' input and expertise and is willing to learn from others ■ Tries to understand others points of view ■ Persuasive in communicating their point of view	■ Recognises the importance of developing constructive working relationships with people at all levels ■ Challenges others in a constructive manner ■ Involves staff in decision making during planning, implementation and review ■ Actively listens to and encourages the views and ideas of others and shapes own views in response ■ Presents ideas and recommendations persuasively ■ Questions and probes to gain an understanding of others views ■ Facilitates dialogue between dissenting groups, handling conflict with objectivity ■ Works toward effective team working by sensitively challenging team members' views where appropriate ■ Works collaboratively with team and all stakeholders to achieve agreed outcomes ■ Ensures individuals are treated individually and valued for their differences	■ Works effectively with other senior managers to co-ordinate activities and maximise efforts ■ Undertakes communication and consultation exercises with staff, staff representatives, stakeholders and elected members ■ Involves managers and other staff in business planning and in work related decision making ■ Actively listens to the views and ideas of all and reflects this in responses and plans ■ Follows procedures to ensure disagreements and disputes are handled fairly and to the benefit of the organisation ■ Creates opportunities to make sure the team reaches its potential and to get the best from everyone. ■ Builds trust across the team through fairness, commitment, respect, consistency and openness. ■ Establishes a common vision to motivate others to work collaboratively ■ High level collaborative working with team members externally and internally across relevant project areas / agencies. ■ Ensures individuals are treated individually and valued for their differences
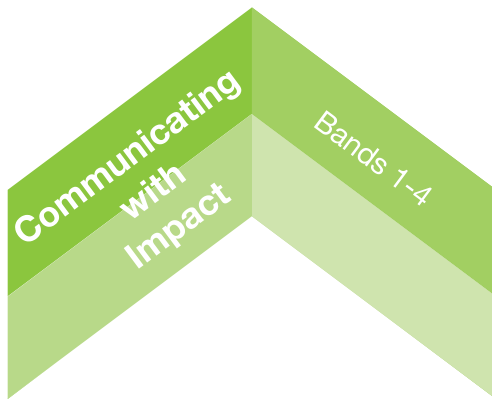
Communicating with Impact — Bands 1-4

- Demonstrates persuasive communication skills and confidence in conveying information internally and externally
- Responds and behaves positively and demonstrates resilience in communication
- Demonstrates effective communication skills, both orally and in writing
- Actively listens and uses a variety of methods to convey messages clearly and succinctly

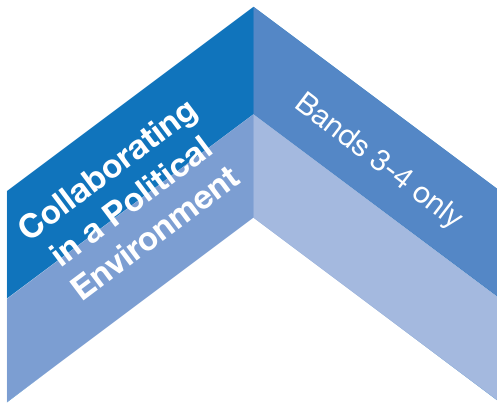| BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
- Communicates effectively with other team/squad members and employees from other departments - Is polite and courteous in all dealings with other employees, the public and those from other organisations	- Shares information in an open and honest way - Communicates in a way that is accurate, timely and easy to understand - Makes suggestions and contributes ideas when required - Listens well and seeks clarification and understanding, avoiding jumping to conclusions or making assumptions - Chooses the most appropriate method of communication for the situation, seeking to avoid using one fixed style or approach - Speaks to all in a polite, friendly and respectful manner to ensure mutual understanding - Good level of knowledge regarding service provision.	- Gives feedback on performance, recognises and values achievements - Uses a style of communication appropriate to the audience and the situation - Identifies the needs and priorities of the audience and tailors presentations to their needs, using an appropriate style - Organises and sifts information into constituent parts - Presents information oral & written in a clear, confident and concise manner to the public and colleagues - Presents information to others in a way that promotes understanding and checks to ensure understanding - Keeps staff, staff representatives, customers & stakeholders informed on relevant issues	- Sets up regular communication and feedback systems to meet the needs of the organisation, stakeholders and staff - Engages in timely, two way communication and responds to issues raised by staff, staff representatives, elected members and stakeholders quickly and appropriately - Gives constructive feedback that adds value and improves performance - Communicates their point of view clearly and succinctly - Adapts their communication in response to others and the situation - Structures their communication logically and in a format that suits others' needs - Responds promptly and proportionately

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Collaborating in a Political Environment

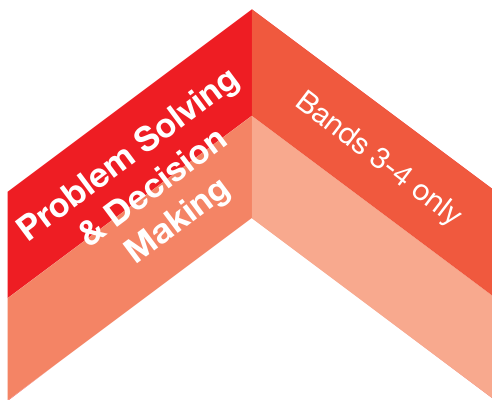**Bands 3-4 only**

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- Develops and manages effective networks by establishing common ground
- (Managers) Demonstrates an understanding of political factors at organisational, regional, national and where appropriate, international level in developing strategies
- Understands which issues are likely to be sensitive and the background political interests and agendas

BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
		■ Establishes good relationships with relevant stakeholders e.g. staff, politicians, unions and external agencies. ■ Facilitates effective partnership working with a wide range of external stakeholders ■ Establishes common goals for working together ■ Facilitates collaborative working across internal and external boundaries ■ Engenders the trust and respect of Elected Members and others ■ Effectively manages the Member / Officer interface with a high degree of probity and integrity ■ Develops and maintains an appropriate network across team and/or organisational boundaries ■ Shares information & knowledge across departmental, political and organisational boundaries ■ Consults with stakeholders	■ Networks externally to understand what is going on ■ Establishes good relationships with relevant stakeholders e.g. staff, politicians, unions, external agencies, central government European and International stakeholders ■ Facilitates effective partnership working with a wide range of stakeholders outside the organisational ■ Works across functional areas and boundaries to achieve corporate objectives ■ Looks for opportunities to share or maximise resources ■ Communicates with key stakeholders to gain their buy in, in advance of formal discussions ■ Identifies common ground to move conflict forward ■ Resolves difficult conflict situations effectively and sensitively at early stages ■ Keeps relevant parties informed of progress and issues ■ Considers the political impact of actions ■ Understands the political process and the role of Councillors and makes sure their team understands too ■ Remains professional and impartial when dealing with elected members ■ Builds credibility with elected members by successfully advising and supporting them
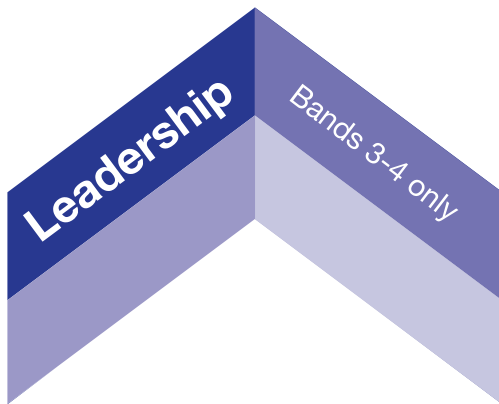
Leadership | **Bands 3-4 only**

- Personally contributes to the organisations vision and goals
- Displays drive, determination and perseverance in achieving high quality results
- Develops a positive working environment, motivates and builds effective teams which achieve results whilst encouraging and supporting individuals
- Positively influences people and events

BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
		- Develops an effective operational plan to support the vision for the service - Drafts service/ business plans and contributes to Directorate/ Business Plans - Leads by example, empowers others and is accessible and visible to the team - Provides direction as appropriate to the team - Identifies, plans, delivers and evaluates team and individual learning and development needs - Empowers others to build expertise - Shares (service) objectives and positively persuades and influences others to become committed to them - Acts to ensure equality and fairness - Uses a coaching approach to give staff opportunities to develop - Deals positively with ambiguity, explores and evaluates the feasibility of options taking ownership to come to a logical conclusion - Strikes an effective balance between speed of decision making and the value of consultation	- Leads the development and implementation of corporate vision and policy at a strategic level - Establishes a common vision to motivate others to work collaboratively - Evaluates the impact of initiatives, actions and staff training in terms of the costs, benefits and lessons for the future - Understands who the stakeholders are and what their positions are in order to influence them - Considers the pros and cons of strategic issues in advance of reaching a decision. - Sets up and administers monitoring and governance arrangements at all levels of service delivery - Delegates decision making authority to those at or closest to frontline service delivery, consistent with governance requirements - Defines the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed by those who report to them and ensures there is equal access for staff to get the required learning and development - Encourages others to take ownership for change in their area of responsibility. - Ensures they are visible to staff in times of change and welcomes opportunities to engage and bring them on board - Anticipates and manages the emotional resistance to change - Encourages the coaching rather than managing of staff at all levels - Delegates work effectively

Problem Solving & Decision Making

Bands 3-4 only

- Gathers information from a range of sources.
- Analyses information to identify problems and issues.
- Makes effective decisions and recommendations based on resolution agreement
- Plans structures and prioritises work to achieve optimum results.

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BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
		- Gathers and analyses relevant information and evidence - Identifies the root causes of a problem - Considers the financial issues astutely – understands ways and means of increasing revenue and reducing costs, without affecting core services - Deals positively with ambiguity when not all information is available to aid decision-making - Provides a range of options - Explores and evaluates the feasibility of options - Considers the political environment in assessing options - Keeps an open mind - Identifies and manages risks - Tackles the causes rather than the symptoms - Takes ownership of the problems to ensure satisfactory solutions - Consults with others to share ideas - Considers the pros and cons to come to a logical conclusion - Strikes an effective balance between speed of decision making and the value of consultation - Ensures a clear decision is reached - Demonstrates a good understanding of governance issues within the Local government context and factors these into their decisions - Prioritises workload effectively - Monitors progress against objectives and takes appropriate actions to deliver results - Uses appropriate tools and techniques to plan work effectively - Balances needs of self with those of others when tackling competing demands - Identifies potential problems and develops contingency plans to prevent or mitigate them	- Can make tough decisions and considers both the short and long term implications by taking into account a comprehensive range of issues - Considers the financial issues astutely – understands ways and means of increasing revenue and reducing costs, without affecting core services - Makes tough decisions - Manages resources effectively to maximise benefits - Anticipates problems and takes action to avoid or manage these - Takes account of a comprehensive range of issues - Considers the pros and cons of strategic issues in advance of reaching a decision - Gives balanced consideration to how others think and feel about issues - Considers both the short and long term implications of a decision - Accurately assesses and manages corporate risk - Delegates decision making authority to those at or closest to frontline service delivery, consistent with governance requirements - Comfortable making decisions that involve "considered" risk - Demonstrates a good understanding of corporate governance issues in their decision making - Holds themselves accountable for delivering their departments objectives & business plans - Achieves a rigorous balance in managing their time across key activities