Leicester City Council

Enabling our Best Work

Leading People Guide

Welcome to the Leading People Guide

The Leading People process has been developed to support leaders to enable staff to do their best work. It is centred around the Council's Vision and Values, the Leadership Qualities and the ethos of having Quality Conversations that put people at the centre of what we do and are focussed on achieving great outcomes.

We recognise the importance of great leadership and the positive impact this can have on driving people and organisational performance and have identified the key qualities that are expected of our leaders. These qualities along with the Council's vision and values, are the golden thread that run throughout the guide.

Enabling people requires the right behaviours and processes. This guide presents a model of engagement known as 'Quality Conversations' that are held regularly, put people at the centre of what we do, encourage feedback/recognition and have a focus on development and performance. This model is simple to use and replaces the existing PDR framework.

The Leadership Qualities provide a clear guide to the behaviours our people believe will enable them to do their best work.

Enabling our best work

Leadership Qualities

Leicester City Council's Leadership Qualities outline the behaviours we expect our leaders to demonstrate in the workplace. These behaviours are what our people say enables and inspires them to do their best work.

People Centred

Putting people at the centre of what we do

Takes time to understand individual's views and feelings and adapts their own behaviour and style as appropriate.

Shows respect for the views of others and gives recognition for their contributions; valuing diversity.

Achieve

Outcome focus

Agrees clear outcomes / objectives and holds the individual and team to account.

Involves team in creating a shared purpose to help them develop and achieve results.

Reflect
Making time to reflect, analyse and develop.

Encourages and enables team to reflect and act on evaluation and feedback

Creates a culture of continuous improvement: sees successes and setbacks as opportunities to learn and develop.

Inspire
Igniting creativity, supporting development and role modelling

Creates space and time for the team to be innovative and creative

Supports team development and encourages autonomy and freedom to enable team to do their best work
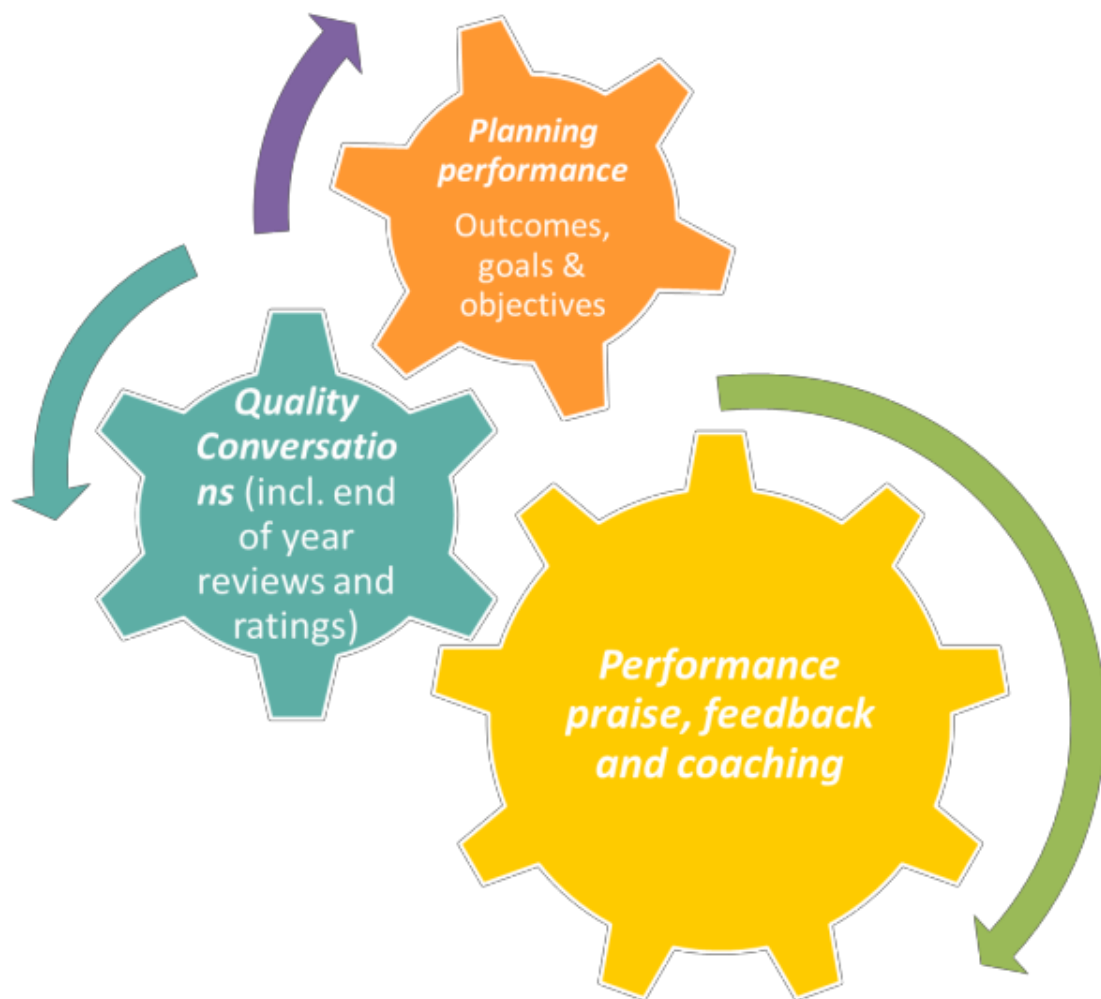
Connected
Building impactful relationships

Has regular quality conversations, speaks honestly and challenges constructively

Proactively develops positive trusting relationships within the team

Leicester City Council will operate with creativity and drive for the benefit of Leicester and its people
Be confident | Be clear | Be respectful | Be fair | Be accountable

Planning performance outcomes and goals

To perform to the best of their abilities, employees need to understand in clear terms what is expected of them. The most effective way to achieve this is for each employee to agree SMART objectives and outcomes with their line managers that are aligned to organisational, service or team goals.

The Leading People Framework encourages continuous performance management through the use of Quality Conversations which advocates an ongoing cycle of performance and development discussions and feedback.

As a leader, being outcome focused and person centred are key attributes when setting objectives. People respond well when their individual strengths are recognised and enhanced through clear and fair objective setting.

Leaders should inspire people to be confident in their role by exploring objectives that will lead to a greater sense of achievement and accountability.

Understanding outcomes, goals and performance objectives

Outcomes when clearly defined, provide lots of flexibility for people to achieve results in their own way. They can be used, with the team, to clarify what the end result needs to be and with people who can be self- directed and are motivated by finding their own way to the solution.
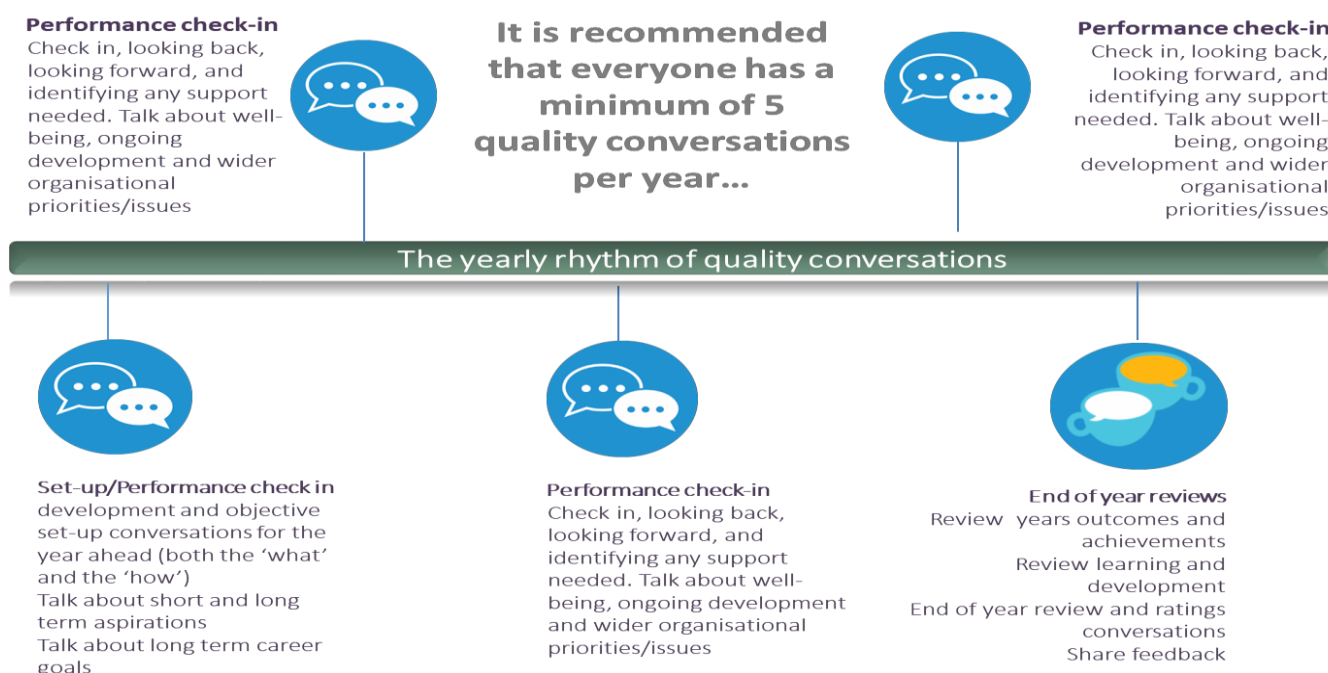
Goals define the expected results, clearly and tangibly, setting quarterly goals for the team. They are the aims for the service and teams. They test peoples limits and are motivating and inspiring.

Performance objectives are the individual objectives which set out the specific steps, processes and timescales for achieving the individual and teams goals.

Quality Conversations

At the heart of the Leading People Framework, are regular and meaningful quality conversations. Having regular quality conversations is a chance to connect equally with all team members, so everyone has a chance to have their say in a safe place. It is also a great way to learn first-hand about how they are progressing and an opportunity to address any issues early on.

The Quality Conversations Framework recommends a minimum of 5 conversations per annum with one being an End of Year conversation. Keeping a record of what has been agreed provides a reference point for subsequent discussions.

Performance check-in
Check in, looking back, looking forward, and identifying any support needed. Talk about well-being, ongoing development and wider organisational priorities/issues

It is recommended that everyone has a minimum of 5 quality conversations per year...

Performance check-in
Check in, looking back, looking forward, and identifying any support needed. Talk about well-being, ongoing development and wider organisational priorities/issues

The yearly rhythm of quality conversations

Set-up/Performance check in
development and objective set-up conversations for the year ahead (both the 'what' and the 'how')
Talk about short and long term aspirations
Talk about long term career goals

Performance check-in
Check in, looking back, looking forward, and identifying any support needed. Talk about well-being, ongoing development and wider organisational priorities/issues

End of year reviews
Review years outcomes and achievements
Review learning and development
End of year review and ratings conversations
Share feedback

Essential skills for Quality Conversations

Listening skills - listening is an essential skill for people centred managers, understanding people's thoughts and feelings about their performance within the context of the team and the organisation.

Questioning skills - asking the right questions at the right time can be critical in ensuring that you have all the information you need from your conversations and when to (and when not to) use them.

Self awareness - good communication skills require a high level of self-awareness which means seeing ourselves clearly. Understanding who we are and how others see us. Understanding our own personal style of communicating will go a long way towards more fulfilled and stronger relationships.

Encouraging honesty and trust - straight talk and open conversations (without repercussions and fear of punishment) need to be the norm for innovative, transformative conversations. Employees need to trust that their ideas and feelings will be heard—and that they will get support, attention and proper vetting once the ideas are put on the table.

Praise feedback and performance coaching

People like to know that their contribution has been noticed and meaningfully appreciated. This requires a person centred response that respects the views of the person and is delivered in a clear and considered manner.

Most people are uncomfortable with feedback as it has negative connotations. Feedback, delivered in the right way, can aid growth and development and help to build trust.

Praise is simple, yet powerful. It does not call for grand gestures but an acknowledgement of effort. The benefits can be hugely rewarding.

Here are ways of giving feedback that if used everyday can boost peoples confidence and their performance.

Praising – recognising and praising people for doing good work builds confidence and encourages them to continue doing so. It can be rewarding and can help people to recognise their own good performance.

Re-directs - gets people back on track when they're struggling to achieve a goal or task. Like 'praisings', the ultimate goal is to have people be able to re-direct their own behaviour. Remember that speaking honestly and challenging constructively are part of being a connected Leader.

Appreciation – to recognise and appreciate people by making people feel valued through meaningful gestures such as celebrating both personal and professional milestones.

Strengths based feedback - involves identifying strengths, providing positive feedback on how employees are using their strengths to exhibit desirable behaviours and achieve beneficial results, and asking them to maintain or improve their behaviours or results by making continued or more intensive use of their strengths.

Performance coaching

Coaching is about unlocking potential.

It is human nature to want to help others, especially if time is pressing. However, people flourish, and are more motivated to succeed, when they are encouraged to solve their own problems and achieve their goals.

Coaching is a method that can be used to support people to achieve their goals through questioning and exploration. Coaching can be delivered as part of a formal programme, however, it can also be easily incorporated into conversations. In its simplest form, the use of 'open' questions, encourages people to unpick their thoughts and question their practise. This is important as people may hold beliefs that limit their performance.

Identifying development needs

Here is a structured way to identify and plan people's development needs

1	2	3
Identify all the skills, knowledge and behaviours the team require to be able to complete their task (as below)	Discuss with team members and identify their individual strengths and development gaps - getting them to assess their own ability.	Use this to build the objectives and review progress throughout the year

Skill set	Personal assessment (moderate/week/strong)	Development
Technical skills		
Measuring cleaning materials safely	Weak	Complete the e-learning programme and use it to provide a briefing session to the rest of the team on what was learned
Knowledge		
Standards of cleaning COSSH	Strong	Use knowledge to help and advise others in the team. Develop a checklist for the team to use
People skills / behaviours		
Customer service skills (for public areas)	Moderate	Shadow a colleague, demonstrate skills learnt and sign off – only 100% satisfaction will do!

End of year reviews and performance ratings

Understanding and recognising performance is essential to both individual and organisational growth.
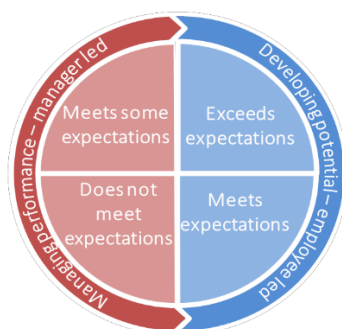
As a leader, you'll be expected to work with people to rate their performance. This should take place during the end of year review conversation using the End of Year Conversation form.

The grid below provides a guide to ratings.

Ratings	
Exceeds expectations	Demonstrates performance significantly above the expected standards
Meets expectations	Consistent performance and achieving all standards
Meets some expectations	Performance does not meet all the acceptable standards
Does not meet expectations	Performance does not meet the acceptable standards

Regardless of rating, a development plan is essential to encourage people to explore new opportunities and ways of working. This is embedded into the quality conversation framework.

Developing performance and potential

Depending on how someone is performing, there are many different development options to consider:

Been in role for some time and not Meeting all expectations? Or, new to role or promoted recently?

- use Learning Pool to ensure all essential training completed
- provide exposure to challenging projects as appropriate to allow demonstration of accelerated delivery
- provide early exposure to positive role models and allow access to a mentor/ coach

Meeting expectations?

- look for opportunities to provide lateral progression to broaden experience, increase motivation and stretch individual as appropriate
- understand personal drivers to help motivate and retain
- consider mentor or coach
- ensure great PDP in place
- consider any professional development required
- consider any opportunities for secondments to key projects or assignments
- 360 degree feedback/other self awareness exercises. Consider a coach or mentor

Not meeting expectations?

- give re-directive feedback
- establish reason for underperformance
- take steps to actively coach, manage and review performance with specific timescales for change
- consider any training and development required to improve performance

Exceeding expectations?

- 360 degree feedback/other self awareness exercises
- consider a coach or mentor
- stretch individual as appropriate
- look for lateral or vertical progression

Developing potential

A leader's role is to recognise potential and encourage development and growth. The quality conversations framework provides opportunities to explore and capture performance and aspirations.

People who are meeting, or exceeding expectations, need to feel inspired, challenged and motivated to maintain good levels of engagement in their work.

It is important to respect what matters to them, in terms of goals, as recognising and developing potential can lead to improved retention.

We need to be creative with the opportunities that can be offered by exploring alternative ways of learning such as shadowing, project work, secondments.

Performance monitoring and reporting

Effective organisational and people performance relies on timely alignment of interventions and support to meet changing business needs. Achieving alignment requires an understanding of how well we are doing and what else needs to happen to sustain performance levels and to continue enabling our best work.

To understand how well we are performing, the Leading People performance management process will be monitored annually to identify where new solutions and further support is needed.

The Leading People process will be measured to identify and understand:

- ❏ The impact of the Leading People performance management process on team/service delivery

- ❏ Development needs and the gap between the learning and development provision and the essential skills required by the business.

- ❏ Our talent pool and how we can develop our people to deliver current and future services

- ❏ Knowledge and skills that exist within the business and harness them to coach others