

## **Defining and Developing Sustainable Leadership**

### **A case study among municipal unit managers within education and culture**

Sustainable leadership is a contextual term that can be defined in many ways. The purpose of this study is to examine what the term sustainable leadership means to municipal unit managers within education and culture in a certain case organization. This is done by asking them to define the term sustainable leadership and by asking them about their biggest challenges and their need of support. Sustainable leadership is a focus area within the division for education and culture in the case organization during this year, and three sessions regarding this theme will be held with all unit managers. The purpose of this study is to provide background material and knowledge about the current situation, so that the content of these sessions can be planned to answer to the needs of the unit managers as well as possible.



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The theoretical framework of this study focuses on leadership, leadership challenges and the complex task of being a municipal manager, before moving on to sustainable leadership. Different definitions of the term are discussed, before moving on to focusing more closely on dimensions of sustainable leadership that are more relevant for the target group of this study. The importance of sustainable leadership on both the personal level (leading oneself) and the organizational level (leading others) is discussed.

The research was conducted through an online survey, that was sent to all the unit managers within the target group. The participation rate was 79 %, which provided a good picture regarding the current situation. Based on the results of the survey, in combination with the theoretical framework, the author has made suggestions regarding the content of the education sessions, so that they will bring as much value as possible to the unit managers and support them in leading both themselves and the co-workers in a sustainable way.