

Part 8.1

Roles of Councillors and Office Holders

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This document sets out the roles and responsibilities of elected members generally and also in relation to any specific roles that they be appointed to. It is not intended as an exhaustive list but should be used to understand the basics of what key members roles entail

1. All Councillors

1.1 Responsibilities

- a) Be at the centre of community life:
 - Spend time out and about, learning about the communities that you represent, supporting your residents, working with local organisations (such as GPs, schools, police, local businesses, town and parish councils, and voluntary organisations) developing a shared understanding of local issues and ensuring that communities make the most of all the opportunities available to them.
 - Build good working relationships and earn the trust and respect of local partners, other members and council officers
 - Be an active member of local networks and partnerships, for example by acting as a school governor.
 - Communicate regularly with your community including communicating council policy and decisions.
- b) Contribute actively to the formation and scrutiny of the Council's policies, budgets, strategies and services.
- c) Represent effectively the whole community with a special duty to their constituents, including those who did not vote for him or her.
- d) Represent the Council on outside bodies as required.
- e) Participate constructively in the good governance of the Council.
- f) Fulfil the statutory and locally determined requirements of an elected Member of a local authority, including compliance with all relevant codes of conduct, regulations, protocols and procedures, and participation in those decisions and activities reserved for the full Council.

1.2 Key Tasks

- a) Attend and participate effectively as a Member of any committee to which the Councillor is appointed.
- b) Participate in the activities of any outside body to which the Councillor is appointed, providing two-way communication between the organisations, and reporting as required to the Council. To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's policies and practices in relation to that body and of the community's needs and aspirations.
- c) Participate in the scrutiny or performance review of the services of the Authority including where the Council so decides, the scrutiny of policies and budget, and their effectiveness in achieving the strategic objectives of the Council.
- d) Participate in any advisory group to which the Councillor is appointed, as convened by the Executive from time to time.
- e) Participate, as appropriate, in consultation with the community and with other organisations.
- f) Develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's services, management arrangements, organisation and activities, powers/duties, and constraints.
- g) Contribute constructively to open government and democratic renewal through active encouragement to the community to participate in the governance of the North Northamptonshire area.
- h) Maintain professional working relationships with all Members and Officers.
- i) Identify and participate in opportunities for further development and training as a Councillor and keep abreast of developments in national and local government.

2. Leader of the Council

2.1. Responsibilities

- a) Ensure efficient and effective services, where they are relevant to the needs of the community and the responsibility of the North Northamptonshire Council, in the short, medium and long term.
- b) Provide visible political leadership in relation to citizens, stakeholders and partners in the overall co-ordination of policies, strategies and service delivery affecting the locality.

- c) Lead the Executive in its work to develop the policy framework and budget and take overall political control of the Council within the agreed policy framework.
- d) Lead the development of local and regional strategic partnerships.
- e) Ensure the appropriate representation of the Council on key outside bodies.

2.2. Key Tasks

- a) Provide leadership to the Council and its political administration, and lead the presentation of the recommendations, plans, policies and decisions of the Executive and the Council.
- b) Represent the Council's political and strategic decision-making in the community and in discussions with regional, national and international organisations and others in order to pursue matters of interest to the Council and its communities and to keep the Council and the Executive informed accordingly.
- c) Appoint Members of the Executive and allocate Executive portfolios.
- d) Develop and maintain good working relations and effective channels of communication with the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee
- e) Ensure that Executive Advisory Panels promote cross party involvement in policy development and decision making
- f) Direct, manage and chair meetings of the Executive and to take responsibility, individually and/or collectively for any specific portfolio, including providing a political lead in proposing new policy, strategy, budget and service standards and reviews, as well as acting as spokesperson for the Council.
- g) Consider the development and training needs of the Executive and members generally and arrange for training sessions or suitable briefings as appropriate.
- h) Receive and act as appropriate upon representations from councillors, the public, organisations and senior officers.
- i) Perform annual appraisal of Head of Paid Service.

3. Additional Responsibilities and Tasks for Executive members

3.1 These role profiles should be read in conjunction with the role profile for all councillors.

3.2 All Executive Councillors with Portfolio

3.2.1 Responsibilities

- a) Take responsibility within the Executive on the basis of collective decision making and such individual delegation that may apply, for a portfolio of services or functions of the Council.
- b) Input into the Executive any information, intelligence or factors considered relevant to the issues under consideration by the Executive.
- c) Contribute actively through the portfolio and membership of the Executive to the formation, implementation, monitoring and scrutiny of the Council's policies, budgets, strategies and services.

3.2.2 Key Tasks

- a) Participate in the Executive and to implement agreed policies by taking responsibility individually and/or collectively for any portfolio allocated by the Leader of the Council, including proposing new policy, strategy, programming, budget and service standards, and leading performance review.
- b) Develop a clear understanding and in-depth knowledge of the respective portfolio, the scope and range of the relevant services for which he/she is responsible and an awareness of current agreed policies and budgetary implications in respect of those services.
- c) Consult and communicate with all members, council officers, key partners and the community as appropriate to ensure policies, strategies, budgets and decisions are well informed and that Council policies are widely understood and positively promoted.
- d) Ensure that the Council is briefed at the appropriate time on significant issues within the respective portfolio – i.e. those which have financial or other major resource implications, or which will result in a change to established policy.
- e) Act as spokesperson for the Council and answer and account to the Council and the community on matters within the portfolio.
- f) Work closely with the Chief Executive and senior officers responsible for the services within the portfolio and the relevant Scrutiny Committee Chair.

- g) Direct, manage and chair meetings of the Executive Advisory Panels and ensure that a cross party approach is employed to support the Councils hybrid governance arrangements.
- h) Work with officers on the implementation of agreed plans, policies and programmes within the portfolio and inform the Executive of progress and performance.
- i) Participate in scrutiny or performance reviews of services as requested by the relevant Scrutiny Committee.
- j) Represent the Council and the Executive in the community and elsewhere as required by the Leader.

4. Additional Responsibilities and Tasks for Non-Executive Councillors

4.1 Chair of the Council

4.1.1. Responsibilities

- a) Uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution and to interpret the Constitution when necessary.
- b) Preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of councillors and the interests of the community.
- c) Ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for council members to debate matters of concern to the local community and the place at which members are able to hold the Executive to account.
- d) Promote public involvement in the Council's activities.
- e) Be the conscience of the Council, and act impartially.
- f) Attend such civic and ceremonial functions as the Council and/or he/she determines appropriate and take precedence at formal occasions.
- g) Ensure that the dignity of the office and Council is maintained at all times.

4.1.2 Key Tasks

- a) Chair all meetings of the full Council.
- b) Chair major consultation meetings organised by the Council, as appropriate.
- c) Set the standard of conduct to be expected from all Councillors.

- d) Help represent the Council in the community and in discussions with regional, national and international organisations and others.
- e) Attend functions appropriate to the position of Chair of the Council.
- f) Act as host to visiting Royalty, civic dignitaries and other important visitors.
- g) Meet with relevant officers to ensure the receipt of appropriate advice to enable effective decisions.

4.2 Scrutiny Chairs

4.21 Responsibilities

- a) To promote the integral role and contribution of scrutiny within the authority's wider improvement planning and reporting arrangements
- b) To lead joint scrutiny activities with other authorities or organisations when required and ensure that scrutiny upholds its statutory duties
- c) To champion and promote the role of Scrutiny to the public, helping the public better understand and, crucially, contribute to and engage with the scrutiny process.
- d) To promote the role of Scrutiny to partner bodies, helping them to understand and engage with the Scrutiny function.
- e) To demonstrate an objective and evidence-based approach to overview and scrutiny ensuring that scrutiny inquiries are methodologically sound and incorporate a wide range of evidence and perspectives
- f) To follow-up scrutiny recommendations, evaluate the impact and added value of overview and scrutiny activity and identify areas for improvement
- g) Work closely with scrutiny support staff to drive continual improvements in scrutiny
- h) Assist in publicising the work of the scrutiny committee

4.22 Key Tasks

- a) To provide confident and effective management of the committee
- b) Managing and develop a balanced work programme for the committee which includes investigative scrutiny, holding the Executive to account, and performance monitoring
- c) To ensure the programme takes account of relevant factors such as: the work programmes of the executive and other committees, strategic priorities

and risks, audit and regulatory reports and recommendations, single-integrated plan and partners strategic priorities and relevant community issues

- d) To report on progress against the work programme to Council, and others as appropriate
- e) To ensure that task and finish/Panels have clear terms of reference and deliver the required outcomes.

End of Roles of Councillors and Office Holders

January 2022