



Guide to Member Roles and Responsibilities

July 2019

Introduction

The Council's Constitution contains a number of references to the roles and responsibilities of Members; this guide seeks to present and provide clarity on what is expected of those roles and related responsibilities in one document, but does not form part of the Constitution.

The following profiles set out the roles and responsibilities for all Members, as well as the skills and knowledge needed to carry them out. The Ward Member profile represents an overall blueprint; special roles such as Leader of Council carry additional responsibilities require more in depth skills and knowledge. No Member or Member role has executive decision making powers.

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The Role of Ward Councillor

Leadership at Ward Level

- To lead and champion the interests of the local community and effectively represent the interests of their Ward and its constituents.
- To meet and liaise regularly with local interested parties and involve and consult them on key Council decisions.
- To support and promote citizenship locally and interest the community in participating in the governance of the area.
- To undertake case work for constituents and act as an advocate in resolving concerns or grievances.
- To communicate with local people and answer enquiries about decisions which affect them.
- To promote local involvement and engagement for example, through ward engagement meetings.
- To participate in local partnerships and the use Member ward grants to assist small scale ward projects and groups.
- To participate constructively in the good governance of the area.
- To use influence as an elected representative to develop links between groups and communities in the Ward and local area.

Representation

- To inform and participate in the debate at Full Council and committee meetings, contributing to the effectiveness of the Council, ensuring the views of local people are taken into account when decisions are made.
- To contribute to the formation and scrutiny of the Authority's policies, budget, strategies and service delivery.
- To contribute to the scrutiny of decision making and review of the policies and services of the Council.
- To represent the Authority to the community and the community to the Council
- To develop and maintain a knowledge of the Council and its services; developing working relationships with its officers and other Members.
- To participate in the activities of any political group of which the Councillor is a member.
- To represent the Council on outside bodies and to participate effectively in the appointed role, reporting back to Council on the activities of those bodies.

Other

- To fulfil the legal (in accordance with the Council Code of Conduct for Councillors) and local requirements placed on an elected Member by the Council's Constitution.
- To abide by the principles adopted by the Council within the Local Code of Governance.
- To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

Chairmen, Lead Members and Champions

Appointments are made to the following roles at the Annual Meeting of the Council. The Chairmen / Vice Chairmen and Lead Member roles closely involve the appointed Members in aiming to deliver the Council's Corporate Priorities.

Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen

- Chairman of Council and Vice-Chairman of Council
- *Leader and Deputy Leader of Council
- *Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Policy Committee
- Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee
- Chairman and Vice-Chairman Licensing Committee
- Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Planning Committee
- Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Select Committee
- Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Standards Committee

* The Leader of the Council chairs the Policy Committee and the Deputy Leader is Vice-Chairman.

Lead Members for Council Priorities

- Affordable Housing
- Enterprising Craven
- Financial Resilience (including Asset Management)
- Greener Craven
- Internal Services
- Resilient Communities

Member Champions

- Armed Forces
- Children and Younger People
- Equalities
- Older People
- Member Training and Development

Chairmen, Lead Members and Champions: Roles and Responsibilities

Chairman of Council

- To preside over meetings of Council ensuring the meeting is a
 - forum for debate of matters of concern to the local community; and
 - a place where Members hold policy committees, Chairmen and Lead Members to account.
- To promote public involvement in the activities of the Council.
- To be the conscience of the Council.
- To represent the Council at civic and ceremonial functions.

Vice-Chairman of Council

- To support the Chairman of Council and deputise in his or her absence at Council meetings, civic and ceremonial functions.

Leader of the Council

- To provide leadership to the Council, taking political responsibility for proposing and directing overall strategy and policy; ensuring the work of the Authority is conducted in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
- To chair the Policy Committee and to take responsibility for ensuring implementation of decisions made.
- To present a Leader's report to each Ordinary Meeting of Council.
- To undertake the role of community leader, building a vision for the area and leading the Council and its partners in delivery of that vision.
- To chair meetings of the Leadership Team* and maintain effective liaison with the Chairman of the Select Committee.
- To represent the authority, and be accountable for, discussions and negotiations with the community and with regional and national organisations; represent the Authority on those external bodies which Council has decided the appointment should go with the Office of Leader.
- To act as spokesperson for the authority in consultation with the leaders of other political groups and the Chief Executive as appropriate.
- To facilitate good communication so that people within and outside the authority are able to contribute constructively to the decision making processes of the Council.

* Leadership team membership is comprised of the Leader and Deputy Leader of Council and Lead Members; the Chairman of the Select Committee attends as an observer.

Deputy Leader of the Council

- To assist the Leader of the Council in the formal processes and matters of leadership of the authority specifically set out in the profile for the former.
- To work with the Leader of the Council on the budget and policy development.
- To deputise for the Leader in his or her absence and undertake the above mentioned duties set out in the role profile for the Leader of the Council.
- To work with the Leader in ensuring that appropriate developmental steps are taken to equip him or her with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role of the Leader when called upon.

Chairman of Select (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee

- Leading, co-ordinating and promoting the overview and scrutiny function by:
 - ensuring effective co-ordination and progress of all work;
 - representing overview and scrutiny in Council;
 - seeking to ensure that the work of Select Committee is publicised and communicated to build understanding of its role both within and outside the Council;
 - maintaining effective liaison with the Chairman of the Leader of Council; and
 - attending meetings of the Leadership Team as an observer.
- Managing the work of the Committee to ensure effective scrutiny of services and policy development / review by:
 - Chairing meetings of the Select Committee;
 - Monitoring progress of scrutiny reviews, and ensuring that they are completed in reasonable time;
 - Liaising with officers supporting and reporting to the Committee; and
 - Ensuring that the Committee carries out the functions set out in the Constitution.

Chairman of Planning Committee

- To conduct site visits by the Committee and chair the Planning Committee in accordance with the agreed protocols and terms of reference.
- To foster and seek to maintain a disciplined approach by the Councillors involved having regard to high standards of behaviour and conduct including the protocol relating to planning procedures.
- To ensure that contributions by the public to meetings are facilitated and controlled in accordance with the agreed procedure.
- To represent the Council in all dealings with the public, media and other bodies in respect of the work of the Committee.

Chairman of Licensing Committee

- To chair the Licensing Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
- To foster and maintain a disciplined approach by the Councillors particularly within hearings conducted by the Licensing and Appeals involved having regard to high standards of behaviour and ethics.
- Where Councillor representation is required to represent the Council in all dealings with the public, media and other bodies in respect of the work of the Committee, with officer support as necessary.
- To be aware of legislation and local and national developments in respect of the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, taxi and private hire licensing and their implications.

Chairman of Standards Committee

- To chair the Standards Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
- To chair panels dealing with allegations of breach of the Council's Code of Conduct.
- To work with the Council's Monitoring Officer in promoting and supporting standards of behaviour and ethics among all Councillors on Craven District Council and Parish and Town Councils in the area.
- To represent the Council in all dealings with the public, media and other bodies in respect of the work of the Committee.
- To ensure that all matters referred to it are dealt with promptly and in accordance with adopted and national guidance and on an entirely apolitical basis.
- To present any reports or findings to the Council.

Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee

- To chair the Audit Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
- Where Councillor representation is required to represent the Council in all dealings with the public, media and other bodies in respect of the work of the Committee, with officer support as necessary.
- To be aware of legislation and local and national developments on auditing procedures and their implications.

Lead Members

- To provide a lead on the initiation of policy, decisions taken and maintaining / improving performance of services within their lead areas.
- To take the lead in ensuring that the areas for which they are responsible are delivered, holding regular meetings with relevant lead officers and encouraging continuous improvement.
- To act as a sounding board and critical friend for officers in their lead areas, working with them in the delivery of approved strategies and budgets.
- To meet the Leader and Deputy Leader of Council on a regular basis to monitor the situation and progress in each of their areas.
- To attend meetings of Leadership Team.
- To report regularly to Council on progress in each of their priority areas and on matters relevant to those areas; responding to questions raised or any issues arising relating to their respective roles.
- To play a key role in consultation on, and preparation of, the revenue and capital budgets.
- To act as an advocate within and outside the Authority for those services and functions within their lead areas.
- To consult, and ensure consultation takes place, with interested parties, ward and parish councillors in the development, implementation and review of policies.
- To inform and Members and Parishes on matters relevant to their wards and parishes.
- To promote and participate in training and Member development.
- On invitation to attend Select Committee to provide information on decisions taken or to assist the Committee in policy and service reviews.

Member Champions

- To promote the areas for which they are champion by involving themselves in relevant issues and with relevant groups within the local community.
- To act as a sounding board and critical friend to lead members.
- To be the Council's public face in relation to their area of responsibility.
- To report to Council meetings at least once each municipal year.

Opposition Group Leader

- To lead an opposition group within the Council and manage the work of Councillors within that Group.
- To act as the principal spokesperson for the Opposition Group of which he/she is leader and manage the overall co-ordination of opposition spokespersons and the business of the Group.
- To shadow and scrutinise the Leader of the Council in their duties.
- To comment, challenge and review the Council's administration performance in the coordination and implementation of its policies and procedures.
- To establish and represent the views of the Group on issues of policy and priority.
- To develop credible opposition Group policies that could be implemented by the Council.
- To champion member development and manage the Group and to ensure the smooth running of the Group and the personal development of its members.
- To advise the Leader of the Council of the Group's position on issues relating to external relationships
- To represent the Group on relevant formal and informal working groups.
- To maintain effective liaison with the Chair of the Select Committee.
- Where appropriate act as an ambassador for the Council.
- To attend group leader meetings.

Member Core Skills and Knowledge

The following tables show the key skills and knowledge needed by all Members. Many Members will already have most of these, but as part of Personal Development, they are encouraged to seek training and support, to increase and improve these to contribute to setting high standards in Craven.

Member Core Skills	
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to lead and champion the interests of the local community.
Chairing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to chair a range of meetings and facilitate discussion.
Organisational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to manage casework, carry out basic administration. • Able to use information technology using Council systems e.g. email, accessing documents, agendas and minutes. • Able to interpret budgets and accounts.
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to manage conflict and mediate. • Able to influence and persuade. • Able to negotiate. • Able to challenge. • Able to manage wearing different 'hats' e.g. Parish, District and County – ensuring there is no conflict of interest.
Teamwork and Relationship Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to develop relationships with key officers. • Able to build effective relationships with all sections of the community to be able to represent their needs to the Council.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to deal with the media, whilst being able to identify when additional support from public relations specialists is required, to ensure the Council is positively represented. • Able to communicate with a range of audiences. • Active listening skills. • Presentation skills. • Public speaking.

Member Core Knowledge	
Council Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the structure, who the key contact officers are and service procedures.
Political Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the political decision making structures and understanding of how the Council works.
Rights and Responsibilities of Elected Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the Member Code of Conduct, ethics, standards and the role of the Standards Committee.
Regional and National Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of wider policies and their impact on the Council.
Council Priorities and Key Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding of the Council Priorities set out in the Council Plan and other key Council policies.
Legislative Framework and Quasi-Judicial Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of other legislation and policies to which Members must adhere e.g. data protection, equality legislation, freedom of information. • For Members who sit on quasi-judicial panels, knowledge of legislation and policy relating to planning, licensing, and appeals is required and an understanding of the principles and importance of making rational decisions.
Local Government finance and audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic understanding of local government finances and audit processes.
Complaints procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the Council's Complaints procedure.
Local Code of Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the Council's adopted Principles and Values.
Ward and District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding of the area covered, key issues, demographic make of the community, workplaces, housing and infrastructure.
North Yorkshire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the services provided by the County Council and contact details including local County Councillor.

Member Conduct

At all times Councillors are required to observe the Members Code of Conduct and Protocols set out in the Council's Constitution.

The principles of public life apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally. All public office-holders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The principles are as follows: -

Selflessness: Members should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity: Members must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity: Members must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability: Members are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness: Members should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty: Members should be truthful.

Leadership: Members should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever.

The Local Code of Governance

The Local Code of Governance provides the framework to help enable the Council to achieve its vision and priorities. The Code is designed to reflect the six core principles for good governance taken from The Good Governance Standard for Public Services (2004) developed by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services and sets out

- the core principles that the Council will adhere to for securing good governance;
- a summary of its arrangements for securing good governance through its Internal Control/Governance Framework; and
- the process for monitoring and maintaining the Code which forms part of the Council's policy framework.

The six core principles are as shown below, they are underpinned by a number of supporting principles and key requirements.

Principle 1 – Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.

Principle 2 – Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.

Principle 3 – Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

Principle 4 – Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.

Principle 5 – Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective.

Principle 6 – Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

All Members of Council are expected to have regard to and abide by these principles.

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