

SECTION 10: COUNCILLOR ROLE DESCRIPTIONS – SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ROLES

Introduction

Councillors have a range of key roles and duties. All elected councillors have a responsibility for the good governance of the local authority, to act as community leaders and to be a link and a point of mediation between the local authority and the community.

The key roles and duties of all councillors are set out in Part 2, paragraph 2.2,

Some councillors hold a ‘special responsibility role’ for which an additional allowance is payable as set out in the Members Allowances Scheme in Part 6 of the Constitution.

(1) Leader of the Council

The responsibilities of the Leader of the Council are set out in Part 3, Section 3, paragraph 3.3 (Scheme of Delegation for Executive Matters)

The main roles of the Leader of the Council are to:

- provide overall political leadership for the Council in relation to the co-ordination and delivery of Council policies, strategies and services
- lead the Cabinet in its work to develop the policy framework and budget and to deliver services to the local community;
- lead the process of developing links and partnerships both inside and outside of the Borough with partners, stakeholders, citizens and other interested organisations; and
- to be the lead political spokesperson for the Council and represent the Council in the community and in negotiations with partners and other stakeholders.

(2) Cabinet Portfolio Holders

The role and powers of Cabinet Portfolio Holders are set out in Part 3, Section 3, paragraphs 3.7 to 3.9 (Scheme of Delegation for Executive Matters).

Cabinet Portfolio Holders assume responsibility and provide political leadership and accountability for a portfolio of services and functions of the Council delegated to the Cabinet. This includes, taking decisions on specific matters as set out in the Scheme of Delegation, acting as a lead and spokesperson inside and outside of the Council for the portfolio, and attending meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Policy and Project Advisory Board as required.

Collectively, through the Cabinet, Cabinet Portfolio Holders contribute to the development and implementation of the Council's priorities, budget and policy framework and services to the local community.

(3) Chairs of Committees – General

The key roles and responsibilities of Chairs of Committees are to:

- chair meetings of the Committee and provide leadership in its functions and working arrangements;
- where set out in the Scheme of Delegation, act as consultee in decisions delegated by the Committee;
- ensure that the work of the Committee is co-ordinated with other decision-making bodies and is in accordance within the policy framework;
- be responsible for presenting the Committee's proposals and decisions to the Council and the community;
- secure effective working relations between the Committee and the officers and the local community; and
- participate in relevant training and development events.

(4) Chair of Audit and Governance Committee

Responsibilities:

- To lead the committee in line with good governance principles
- To provide confident and effective chairing of meetings which encourages open discussion, full participation, and facilitates clear decision making
- To ensure discussion and challenge at meetings is apolitical, objective, and focussed at an appropriate strategic level
- To develop the Committee's profile and internal influence within the Council
- To understand the respective roles of Members, officer and external parties operating within the committee's area of responsibility
- To ensure that s/he has knowledge and understanding of the committee's areas of responsibilities and with an interest in financial and risk management, audit, accounting concepts and standards and the regulatory regime.

- To participate in the training and development programme required of Members of the Committee
- To ensure that the Committee's work is co-ordinated with other decision-making bodies and is in accordance with the policy framework
- Where set out in the Scheme of Delegation, to act as a consultee in decisions delegated by the Committee
- To be responsible for presenting the Committee's proposals and decisions to the Council and the community.

Further role requirements

- To canvass views from Committee Members in advance of meetings with the External Auditor and to help represent views at the meeting
- To develop an effective working relationship with Independent Members of the Committee and seek feedback from meeting participants
- The ability to challenge the Cabinet and senior managers when required

(5) Committee Member of the Audit and Governance Committee

- To ensure that s/he has knowledge and understanding of the committee's key areas of responsibility, with an interest in:
 - corporate governance,
 - financial and risk management,
 - internal and external audit activities and the regulatory framework
- Commitment to attend and participate in the training and development programme required of Members of the Committee
- To understand the respective roles of Members, officers and external parties operating within the committee's area of responsibility
- To participate effectively, openly and candidly in committee meetings with an objective, apolitical approach
- To promote and support good governance

Key attributes and skills

- Ability to weigh-up/sort complex evidence

- Ability to be objective, independent and impartial
- Ability to challenge supportively

(4) Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The key roles and responsibilities of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are to:

- lead the overview and scrutiny process effectively;
- chair meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and provide leadership and strategic direction in its working arrangements;
- develop the Committee's internal and external influence;
- be fully aware of the Cabinet Work Programme so that the Committee is able to consider relevant issues and carry out pre-decision scrutiny;
- be the formal link between the Committee and the Cabinet and ensure that any issues referred to the Committee by the Cabinet or Council are properly considered;
- in conjunction with the Lead Officer, lead the development of the Committee's work programme, and the co-ordination of the Committee's task and finish groups. Ensure progress is monitored and that tasks are progressing satisfactorily;
- ensure that clear terms of reference and timescales are set for task and finish groups appointed by the Committee;
- attend and chair Progress Group meetings;
- present the Committee's reports and recommendations to the Council, Cabinet or other decision-making body in respect of any work carried out by the Committee;
- develop and promote the role and impact of the Committee through effective working relationships with the Cabinet, other councillors and officers and the local community;
- develop stakeholder and partner involvement in the Committee's work;
- ensure that he/she has knowledge and understanding of the Council's responsibilities and processes related to work covered by the Committee;

- ensure that mechanisms to support the Committee are working effectively and that the requirements of the Committee are met;
- participate in relevant training and development events; and
- act as a consultee in urgent key decisions being considered by the Cabinet which have not been included in the Cabinet Work Programme.

(5) Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The key roles and responsibilities of the Vice-Chair(s) of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are to:

- assist the Chair in leading the overview and scrutiny process effectively;
- deputise for the Chair in their absence;
- assist the Chair in leading the development, management and monitoring of the Committee's work programme and the co-ordination of task and finish groups appointed by the Committee;
- be fully aware of the Cabinet Work Programme so that the Committee is able to consider relevant issues and carry out pre-decision scrutiny;
- attend Progress Group meetings with the Chair, representatives from the Committee and senior officers to assist agenda planning and enable discussion to inform effective scrutiny;
- chair task and finish groups appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- assist the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure that clear terms of reference and timescales are set for task and finish groups;
- present reports of task and finish groups to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- support the Chair in preparing and presenting reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Council and the Cabinet;
- assist the Chair to develop and promote the role and impact of the Committee through effective working relationships with the Cabinet, other councillors, officers and the local community;
- participate in relevant training and development events; and
- ensure that he/she has knowledge and understanding of the Council's responsibilities and processes related to work areas which are the subject of reviews by task and finish groups.

(6) Chair of Policy and Project Advisory Board

The key roles and responsibilities of the Chair of the Policy and Project Advisory Board are to:

- lead the work of the Policy and Project Advisory Board;
- chair meetings of the Policy and Project Advisory Board;
- Advise the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work of the Policy and Project Advisory Board, as required;
- in conjunction with the Lead Officer, lead the delivery of the Board's work programme and the co-ordination of the Board's Project Working Groups. Ensure progress is monitored and that tasks are progressing satisfactorily;
- ensure that clear terms of reference and timescales are set for each working group appointed by the Board;
- attend Progress Group meetings with senior officers and keep up to date on key issues in respect of council priorities, policies and projects;
- ensure that proposals for new or revised priorities or policies are well informed and that Council policies are widely understood and promoted positively;
- present Board reports and recommendations to the Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Council;
- participate in relevant training and development events;
- ensure that he/she has knowledge and understanding of the Council's responsibilities and processes related to the work covered by the Board; and
- promote the role of the Board through effective working relationships with the Cabinet, other councillors, officers and the local community.

(7) Vice-Chair of Policy and Project Advisory Board

The key roles and responsibilities of the Vice-Chair of the Policy and Advisory Board are to:

- assist the Chair in leading the work of the Policy and Project Advisory Board;
- deputise for the Chair in thier absence;

- chair working groups appointed by the Board;
- ensure working groups appointed by the Board have clear terms of reference and timescales;
- lead on projects which are part of the Board's programme of work;
- present reports to the Board on behalf of working groups or projects he/she is leading;
- assist the Chair in leading the development, management and monitoring of the Board's work programme and the co-ordination of task and finish groups appointed by the Board;
- attend Progress Group meetings with senior officers and keep up to date on key issues in respect of council priorities, policies and projects;
- participate in relevant training and development events;
- ensure that he/she has knowledge and understanding of the Council's responsibilities and processes related to work areas which are the subject of working groups or special projects; and
- promote the role of the Board through effective working relationships with the Cabinet, other councillors, officers and the local community.

INDEPENDENT MEMBER ROLES

(8) Independent Member (Audit)

Co-opted Non-Voting Member of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Responsible to: Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and Internal Audit Manager

Liaison with: Elected Members of the Audit and Governance Committee, Section 151 Officer, Internal Auditors, any other relevant Members and officers and the External Auditors of Rushmoor Borough Council.

Responsibilities

1. To engage fully in collective consideration of all corporate governance and audit matters before the Committee, taking into account a full range of relevant factors, including legislation and supporting regulation (e.g. the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015), professional guidance (e.g. that issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) or the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA)), and the advice of the Council's Section 151 Officer and Audit Manager.
2. To participate fully in the discharge of all audit functions, as set out in the Committee's terms of reference and the constitution.
3. To promote the concept of proportionate, effective risk management and internal control throughout the organisation; and to champion the work of Internal Audit, External Audit and Risk Management.
4. To participate in periodic review of the overall effectiveness of the committee with regards to audit matters, and of its terms of reference.

Audit Independent Person – Skills and Competencies

1. Demonstrates up-to-date knowledge, skill and a depth of experience in the fields of audit, accounting, risk management, corporate governance, and performance management.
2. Operates consistently and without bias.
3. Is an effective role model; supports appropriate behaviours and challenges opinions and advice where appropriate, separating major issues from minor ones.
4. Contributes proactive, proportionate and independent thought, and also collaboration with officers to temper the opinions of Committee Members.
5. Works sensitively with people inside and outside the Committee / Council.

6. Listens to and balances advice.

Must have no personal, legal or contractual relationship with the Council (including employees or Members or former staff), or any other relationship/activity which might represent a conflict of interest.

(9) Independent Person (Standards)

(Statutory position arising from the Localism Act 2011 - Not Committee Member)

Responsible to: The Council

Liaison with: Monitoring Officer, Deputy Monitoring Officers, Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee, Officers and Members of the Council and key stakeholders within the community.

1. To assist the Council in promoting high standards of conduct by elected and co-opted members of Rushmoor Borough Council and in particular to uphold the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council and the seven principles of public office, namely selflessness, honesty, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness and leadership.
2. To be consulted by the Council through the Monitoring Officer as part of an initial assessment of a complaint that a councillor has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct, before a decision is taken as to whether to carry out an investigation or that other action should be taken e.g., informal resolution.
3. To be consulted by the Council through the Monitoring Officer and/or via a Standards Hearing before it makes a finding as to whether a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct or decides on action to be taken in respect of that member.
4. To be available to attend meetings of a Standards Hearing Panel appointed by the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee.
5. To be available for consultation by any elected member, who is the subject of a standards complaint.
6. To develop a sound understanding of the ethical framework as it operates within Rushmoor Borough Council.
7. To participate in training events to develop skills, knowledge and experience and in networks developed for Independent Persons operating outside the Borough Council's area.

8. To attend training events organised and promoted by the Council's Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee.
9. To act as advocate and ambassador for the Council in promoting ethical behaviour.