

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors**

This appendix sets out in detail the roles and responsibilities of Councillors generally, as well as specific roles and responsibilities. It is not an exhaustive list for each role and other duties may also be required.

### **1. Roles And Functions of All Councillors**

Councillors will participate constructively in the good government of the local authority area in the interests of all residents. They will contribute actively to the formation and review of the Authority's policies, budget, strategies, plans and service delivery.

Councillors will deal with constituents' enquiries and representations and will effectively represent the interests of the Ward for which they were elected and the views of constituents.

#### **Duties and responsibilities**

1. To fulfil the statutory and locally determined requirements of an elected Member of a Local Authority.
2. To participate effectively as a member of any meeting to which the Councillor is appointed, for example by regular attendance at meetings, ensuring that they are adequately briefed and prepared for the meeting, and examine and challenge issues as appropriate.
3. To participate in the activities of an outside body to which the Councillor is appointed and to provide update reports on the work of the relevant body to Bristol City Council as required.
4. To act as community champion for their ward and promote community cohesion. This will include being consulted about ward matters and participating in local decision-making arrangements. In addition, all Councillors should provide a voice and advice for local individuals and interest groups in their dealings with the Council and, where appropriate, to advise them on the pursuit of complaints.
5. To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Authority's services, management arrangements, powers/duties and constraints and to develop good working relationships with relevant Officers of the Authority.
6. To contribute constructively to open government and democratic participation by encouraging community engagement in the governance of the area.
7. To keep up to date with all developments affecting the Local authority area and the Council including Government policies and prospective legislation.
8. To promote and uphold high standards of ethical conduct by the Council's Members and officers.
9. To uphold the public sector equalities duties set out in the Equalities Act 2010.

### **2. Lord Mayor**

The role and function of the Lord Mayor is set out in Article 7 of the Council's Constitution. In addition, the Lord Mayor will have the following duties and responsibilities:

#### **Duties and Responsibilities**

1. To chair meetings of the Council and Downs Committee ensuring among other things that all points of view have a fair opportunity to be heard, that procedure rules are applied and observed, and that debate is guided towards clear and relevant decisions.

2. To represent the Council in the Local authority area and elsewhere on occasions where a civic representative is invited or otherwise required.
3. To participate in events, receptions, programmes and activities designed to recognise and encourage civic awareness in the community, where appropriate.
4. To attend and chair briefings for Council meetings, involving Leaders and Whips of the political groups and to be proactive in making proposals for the effective conduct of the agenda.
5. To host Council events of a non-party-political nature as required.
6. To promote good relationships between Councillors, between political groups and between Councillors and Officers.
7. To ensure that the Deputy Lord Mayor is kept informed of all relevant civic matters during their period of office.

### **3. Deputy Lord Mayor of Bristol**

The Deputy Lord Mayor will support the Lord Mayor in their role and in their absence undertake the duties within the role profile for the Lord Mayor.

### **4. Chair of a Regulatory Committee**

When the Council operates a Committee System, it will be necessary for the Council to establish Committees and for those Committees to elect a Chair and a Vice-chair. It is also necessary for each political group that is represented on a Committee to appoint a lead Member.

#### **Role and Responsibilities of the Chair of a Regulatory Committee**

1. Lead the work of the Committee and make sure it carries out its business effectively and efficiently, lawfully and within its terms of reference.
2. Chair meetings of the Committee impartially and in such a way as to facilitate open discussion, obtain valid contributions from members and produce sound decisions.
3. Assist the public and press in terms of their rights of access.
4. Ensure respectful engagement between the Committee, its officers, guests and the public and maintain ethical conduct throughout the meeting.
5. Lead an agenda setting meeting for the Committee in association with the Vice-Chair and Party Group Leads on the Committee.
6. Act as consultee and spokesperson for their Committee in instances of exercise of delegated authority by an officer, where that delegation is subject to being in consultation with the Chair of the Committee or where otherwise requested by a Chief Officer.
7. Have a working knowledge of the functions, policies, practices, procedures, services and budgets of the Committee which they chair.
8. Lead in the development of the work of the Committee which they chair in association with the Vice-Chair and Group Spokespersons, including the agenda management process, also taking into account the wider vision, such as corporate, cross-service and partnership issues.
9. Lead in the consideration and review of service delivery, policy development and in the implementation of policies approved by the Council where these relate to the Committee which they chair.
10. Be the Council's lead spokesperson in respect of the Committee's activities and act in liaison with the Leader and Deputy Leader in matters of Council policy.
11. Establish effective working relationships with the Party Group Leads on the Committee and with other Committee Chairs and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council.
12. Establish effective working relationships with the Chief Officers, and other key officers.

13. Represent and pursue the interests of the Committee which they chair in the community and at regional and national levels.
14. Ensure that meetings of the Committee which they chair are properly conducted and reports of proceedings are forwarded on as necessary, for example to full Council.

## **5. Role and Responsibilities of the Vice-chair of a Regulatory Committee**

The Vice Chair of a Committee will:

1. Have a working knowledge of the functions, policies, practices, procedures, services and budgets of the Committee.
2. Assist the Chair in carrying out their role and responsibilities as set out at above.
3. Undertake the responsibilities of the Chair in their absence.
4. Attend agenda setting meetings with the Chair and the Party Group Leads on the Committee.

## **6. Chair of a Policy Committee**

As the Council operates a Committee System, it is necessary for the Council to establish Committees. Full Council will appoint Chairs and a Vice-chairs of all Committees. It is also necessary for each political group that is represented on a Committee to have a Party Group Lead for that Committee.

### **Role and Responsibilities of the Chair of a Policy Committee**

*Responsibilities specific to the Policy Committee Chairs:*

1. Attend regular Policy Committee Chairs' briefings, in conjunction with the Vice Chair.
2. Provide political direction to officers, including on any urgent matters, in consultation with the Vice Chair and/or Party Leads as appropriate.
3. Sit on any relevant any outside bodies that relate to the Policy Committee's work area.
4. Act as the primary spokesperson for media inquiries relating to the Policy Committee's remit.
5. Liaise with key partners and stakeholders as appropriate (note, this may require a significant time commitment).
6. Understand and communicate policy and Council positions to residents and other stakeholders.
7. Recognise and contribute to issues which cut across portfolios or are issues of collective responsibility.
8. Work with other Policy Committee Chairs to lead policy and project development.
9. Represent and pursue the interests of the Committee which they chair in the community and at regional and national levels.

*Generic Chairs' Responsibilities:*

1. Lead the work of the Committee and make sure it carries out its business effectively and efficiently, lawfully and within its terms of reference.
2. Chair meetings of the Committee impartially and in such a way as to facilitate open discussion, obtain valid contributions from members and produce sound decisions.
3. Assist the public and press in terms of their rights of access.
4. Ensure respectful engagement between the Committee, its officers, guests and the public and maintain ethical conduct throughout the meeting.

5. Lead an agenda setting meeting for the Committee in association with the Vice-Chair and Party Group Leads on the Committee.
6. Act as consultee and spokesperson for their Committee in instances of exercise of delegated authority by an officer, where that delegation is subject to being in consultation with the Chair of the Committee or where otherwise requested by a Chief Officer.
7. Have a working knowledge of the functions, policies, practices, procedures, services and budgets of the Committee which they chair.
8. Lead in the development of the work of the Committee which they chair in association with the Vice-Chair and Group Spokespersons, including the agenda management process, also taking into account the wider vision, such as corporate, cross-service and partnership issues.
9. Lead in the consideration and review of service delivery, policy development and in the implementation of policies approved by the Council where these relate to the Committee which they chair.
10. Be the Council's lead spokesperson in respect of the Committee's activities and act in liaison with the Leader and Deputy Leader in matters of Council policy.
11. Establish effective working relationships with the Party Group Leads on the Committee and with other Committee Chairs and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council.
12. Establish effective working relationships with the Chief Officers, and other key officers.
13. Ensure that meetings of the Committee which they chair are properly conducted and reports of proceedings are forwarded on as necessary, for example to full Council.

## **7. Role and Responsibilities of the Vice-chair of a Regulatory Committee**

### *Responsibilities specific to the Vice Chair of a Policy Committee*

1. To attend regular briefings with the Chair of the Policy Committee.

### *Generic Vice Chair Responsibilities*

The Vice Chair of a Committee will:

1. Assist the Chair in carrying out their role and responsibilities as set out at above.
2. Have a working knowledge of the functions, policies, practices, procedures, services and budgets of the Committee.
3. Undertake the responsibilities of the Policy Committee Chair in their absence.
4. Attend agenda setting meetings with the Chair and the Party Group Leads on the Committee.

## **8. Role and Responsibilities of Party Group Leads on Committees**

Party Group Leads on a Committee will:

1. Have a working knowledge of the functions, policies, practices, procedures, services and budgets of the Committee.
2. Assist the Chair and the Vice-chair in the development of the work of the Committee.
3. Attend agenda setting meetings with the Chair and the Vice-chair of the Committee.

## **9. Leader of the Council**

When the Council operates a Committee System, no formal legal powers and duties are vested in the Leader or Deputy Leader under the Local Government Act 1972 or the Local Government Act 2000. In practice, however, all local authorities need to appoint a Councillor to hold the most significant elected Member role within the Council, to be seen as the political head of the Council and to provide a focal point for political leadership and strategic direction, both within the Authority but also to outside organisations, partners, governmental bodies and the community at large.

### **Role and Responsibilities of the Leader of the Council**

The Leader of the Council will:

1. Be the political (rather than ceremonial) leader of the Council, for the benefit of all the Local authority area's communities - its residents, taxpayers, businesses, public bodies and other public authorities.
2. Represent and pursue the interests of the Council in the community and at international, national and regional levels.
3. Be the key contact for outside organisations (including Central Government, Local Authority Associations and Council partners), and internally for the Council's Chief Officers.
4. Be the representative voice of the Council, for example, in its dealings with Central Government, other Local Authorities and their Associations, and positively promote the Council as a whole to the media.
5. Promote the long-term financial, business and economic stability of the Council and the Local authority area.
6. Meet regularly to progress the Council's objectives with Committee Chairs, the Chief Officers, Group Leaders, partner organisations, stakeholders, community representatives, government representatives, local Members of Parliament, etc.
7. To chair meetings of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee.
8. Promote high standards of corporate governance and ethical conduct throughout the Council including working with all political groups to seek to achieve, where possible, cross party co-operation.
9. Promote and maintain professional working relationships and mutual respect between all Members and officers.
10. Work across the Council, particularly with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of its Committees and Sub-Committees, and to be responsible for the development and implementation of the Council's strategic vision for the future, policy framework, budgets and other strategies.

### **Role and Responsibilities of the Deputy Leader**

The Deputy Leader will:

1. Assist the Leader of the Council in representing the Council to its residents, stakeholders, and partners and in providing political leadership for the Council and the Local authority area.
2. Assist the Leader in carrying out the key responsibilities associated with the role of Leader (as set out above).
3. Work with the Leader and Committee Chairs on budget and policy development.
4. Undertake the responsibilities of the Leader in their absence.

## **10. Political Group Leaders**

Political groups, and the leader (and any deputy group leader) of a political group, have a formal role under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 in respect of political balance of Committees and appointments of the Council.

### **Role and responsibilities of Political Group Leaders**

1. To provide the leadership of a political group.
2. To be the principal political spokesperson for the political group.
3. To nominate members of their Group to serve on Committees, Working Groups, outside bodies, etc.
4. To be a representative voice in dealings with government agencies, local authority associations etc.
5. To encourage the highest standards of conduct by members of the group and to work with the Monitoring Officer to resolve complaints informally where appropriate.
6. To appoint group spokespersons and allocate other responsibilities to group members as appropriate.
7. To assist in ensuring appropriate levels of attendance are maintained by group members.
8. To encourage a culture of learning and development among members, including the active participation of group members in briefings, seminars and other learning and development processes.
9. To maintain effective liaison with the other group leaders, including being a member of an informal Group Leaders' meeting, attending Group Leaders' briefings and so forth.
10. To establish and maintain effective working relationships with the Chief Officers and other senior officers and to meet regularly with them in order to keep fully apprised of relevant service issues.

## **11. Political Group Whip**

Political Groups rely on a Political Group Whip to support the Political Group Leader in the effective management of the political group and its relationship with other political groups on the Council.

### **Role and Responsibilities of a Political Group Whip**

1. To support the Political Group Leader in the effective management of the political group.
2. To contribute to the effective management of Council business.
3. To support Council officers in co-ordinating logistical matters for Council meetings and other events.
4. Support the Political Group Leader to encourage the highest standards of conduct by members of the group and to work with the Monitoring Officer to resolve complaints informally where appropriate.
5. To provide pastoral support to members of the political group and to raise confidentially any well-being matters with Council officers.
6. To attend regular Whips meetings.