

8. Member Procedures

(a) Teignbridge District Councillor Role Definitions

All Members

Definition: A Member or Elected Member or Councillor is elected representative, elected by their local community to serve and represent them on Teignbridge District Council.

Role:

- To champion your ward.
- To be the interface between the public and the Council.
- To represent individual constituents and local organisations, undertaking casework and enquiries on their behalf.
- To represent the community, their ambitions and aspirations within the Council and other agencies.
- To campaign on local issues.
- To communicate to residents on behalf of the Council.

Duties:

- To be prepared for meetings, reading agendas and any reports in advance.
- To participate in Council and Committee meetings.
- To make decisions based on the best interest of the whole District.
- If appointed, to represent the Council on outside bodies and organisations.
- To liaise with any Town and Parish Councils in your ward and attend Town and Parish Council Meetings.
- To uphold the Council's Constitution, Codes of Conduct and Protocols that the Council may adopt and to act at all times with respect and the highest standards.

Expectations as a Councillor to the Council:

- To keep in touch with community issues and be accessible to constituents.
- To be able to engage with all groups within your Community.
- To contribute actively to the running of the Council.
- To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interests and Non-Registerable Interests as and when appropriate.

- To not make public information which is confidential or exempt or divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a Councillor or officer entitled to know it.
- To develop and maintain a general working knowledge of the Council and other organisations and services within the District.
- To develop good working relationships with Council officers.
- To prioritise and manage your own workload, managing conflicting demands on your time.
- To understand, challenge and interpret information.
- As data controllers in your own right, to maintain confidentiality in all relevant Council business and constituent casework.
- To communicate effectively with different audiences.
- To participate in training and development provided for Councillors.
- To feedback information to the other Councillors from representation on an outside body or from any relevant training.
- To find a substitute for a meeting for which substitution is permissible, when personal attendance is not possible and to brief the substitute on the meeting to be attended.

Rights and Expectations from the Council to Councillors:

- To access to such documents, information, land and buildings and resources of the Council as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions as is permissible by the law and in accordance with the Constitution.
- To receive an allowance for your role as per the Members Allowance Scheme.
- To expect support and guidance from Council's officers, particularly the Senior Leadership Team, Senior Management Team and the Democratic Services Team.
- Subject to procedural rules, to submit Notices of Motion and/or Questions to Council or Committee meetings.
- To participate in debates and ask questions in Council and Committee meetings.
- To question and challenge any reports or decisions but ensure these are constructive and not personal attacks.
- Subject to the Call in Procedure rules, to use the 'call-in' facility in respect of Executive or Executive Member decisions.
- Subject to the Planning Call in Procedure rules in your capacity as a Ward Councillor, to call in a planning application to the Planning Committee if there is an appropriate material planning consideration.
- To keep ward Members informed.
- To provide suitable training opportunities to assist Councillors in their role and carrying out their duties.

Leader of the Council

Definition: The Councillor elected at Full Council by other Councillors to provide political and strategic leadership of the Council.

Role and Duties in addition to those of all Members, and those of Executive Members.

Role:

- To provide overall strategic and political leadership of the Council, on behalf of all Councillors.
- To set the strategic direction of the Council.
- To act as the principal spokesperson of the Council and represent the Council at a national or local level, on outside bodies or in partnerships with other agencies.
- To ensure the effective working of the Executive and oversight of the delivery of services.
- To keep Members informed about issues affecting the Council.

Duties:

- To appoint a Deputy Leader of the Council.
- To appoint Members to the Executive and assign remits to Executive Members.
- To preside over meetings of the Executive and ensure the work of the Executive is carried out effectively.
- To lead and direct the work of other Executive Members to ensure the strategic direction of the Council is carried out.
- To work closely with other Executive Members to ensure close working relationships, the development of Council policies and the delivery of high-quality services.
- To work closely with the Managing Director and Senior Leadership Team to ensure close working relationships, the development of Council policies and the delivery of best value, high-quality services.
- To work with the Managing Director, Senior Leadership Team and other Executive Members to draw up a Forward Plan of decisions that the Executive is expected to take in the coming months.
- To liaise with the Group Leaders to ensure the effective and proper management of the Council's business in the best interests of local people.
- To lead on the development of the Council's policy framework in any defined area(s) of responsibility and make recommendations to the Executive as appropriate.
- To be responsible to the Council for the overall strategic direction of the Council and decisions taken by the Executive.

Deputy Leader of the Council

Definition: The Councillor appointed by the Leader of the Council to act as their Deputy.

Role and Duties in addition to those of all Members, and those of Executive Members.

Role:

- To serve in the Executive.
- To deputise for the Leader as and when required.

Duties:

- To assist, support and work with the Leader of the Council in delivering their responsibilities to the Executive and the Council.
- To act as the Vice Chair of the Executive Committee meetings.
- To deputise for the Leader of the Council in their absence from Executive meetings.
- To lead on the development of the Council's policy framework in any defined area(s) of responsibility and make recommendations to the Executive as appropriate.
- To carry out such other duties as delegated by the Leader of the Council.

Executive Member

Definition: Councillors appointed by the Leader of the Council to serve in the Executive and are given specific areas of responsibility.

Role and Duties in addition to those of all Members.

Role:

- To serve in the Executive.
- Act as the Executive Member for particular areas of responsibility as determined by the Leader of the Council.
- To act as champion for the portfolio concerned within a strategic context.

Duties:

- To participate effectively as an Executive Member at Executive Meetings taking joint responsibility for all actions and be collectively accountable to decisions.
- To take Executive Member Decisions within the agreed procedural, constitutional and legal rules and ensure those are reported formally.
- To act as the spokesperson and advocate for the Council in respect of any areas of responsibility assigned to them by the Leader of the Council.
- To lead the development of the Council's policy framework within their areas of responsibility and make recommendations to the Leader of the Council.
- To provide guidance to the Leader of the Council and other Executive Members on the management and implementation of functions in relation to activities within their areas of responsibility.
- To represent the Council politically at national and local level, on outside organisations or in partnership with other agencies.
- To work closely with the Managing Director, Senior Leadership Team and Officers to ensure close working relationships and the delivery of best value, high-quality services.
- To lead on the presentation of reports at Executive or other Council meetings in relation to their portfolio.
- To work with and engage with other Councillors in respect of future decisions, especially if they are ward specific decisions to ensure meaningful engagement and awareness of other Councillors in advance of decisions being taken.
- To adhere to the Shadow Executive Member Protocol in respect of working with any Shadow Executive Members.
- If required, to deputise for the Leader of the Council and/or the Deputy Leader.

Chair of the Council

Definition: The Councillor elected by the Council at the Annual Meeting to serve as the civic and ceremonial leader of the Council.

Role and Duties in addition to those of all Members.

Role:

- To be the Civic Head of the Council.
- To uphold the democratic and moral values of the Council.
- To represent the Council at civic and ceremonial functions.
- To uphold and promote the Constitution.

Duties:

In respect of chairing Full Council meetings:

- To preside over meetings of Full Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the community, ensuring that all Members have an opportunity to make a relevant contribution and that the objectives of the meeting are fulfilled.
- To ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for debate of matters of concern to the local community.
- To interpret the Constitution where necessary and provide rulings on how to proceed with the business of the meeting.

In respect of their Civic Role:

- To be the Civic Leader of the Council, representing the Council at civic and ceremonial events.
- To be the principal ambassador of the District.

Other duties:

- To be consulted on any matter in relation to which consultation with the Chair of the Council is required under the Constitution.

Vice Chair of the Council

Definition: The Councillor elected by the Council at the Annual Meeting to serve as the deputy civic and ceremonial leader of the Council.

Role and Duties in addition to those of all Members.

Role:

- To support the Chair of the Council as the civic and ceremonial Head of the Council.

Duties:

- To act as the Vice Chair of Full Council meetings.
- To deputise for the Chair of the Council in their absence, and act according to the role of Chair of the Council.

Committee Chair

Definition: The Councillor elected at the Annual Council meeting to Chair a particular Committee for the municipal year.

Role and Duties in addition to those of all Members.

Role:

- To provide leadership and direction for the Committee to ensure that the Committee transacts its business effectively.
- Ensure that the Committee takes balanced decisions based on all relevant evidence, always with impartiality, transparency and fairness.

Duties:

- To preside over meetings and manage the business of the Committee, ensuring that all Committee members have an opportunity to make a relevant contribution and that the objectives of the meeting are fulfilled.
- To preside over meetings in accordance with their terms of reference and the Council's Constitution and meeting procedural rules.
- Promote the role of the Committee both within and outside the Council.
- Represent the Council and the Committee on relevant external bodies as required.
- Guide Members through those functions delegate by the Council to the Committee.
- To manage the business of the Committee and be available for and take part in consultation on matters of business between meetings.
- To undertake the necessary preparation prior to Committee meetings to lead the Committee effectively including familiarising yourself with the agenda, reports and attending any pre-meetings.
- Ensure, where appropriate, that there is full consultation with and participation by all interested parties on issues to be considered by the Committee.
- Ensure that Committee decisions are properly recorded with full justifications.
- To build good working relations with and liaise and consult with relevant Officers wherever appropriate on the business of the Committee.
- To define and manage appropriate Member and Officer conduct at the meeting.
- To attend any relevant training for the role and to liaise with officers as to the training and development requirements for Committee members.
- To have an understanding and be aware of legislation, guidance and best practice that impacts on the Council, especially in the areas for which they have responsibility.

Group Leader

Definition: The Councillor chosen by their respective Political Group to act as their Group Leader.

Role and Duties in addition to those of all Members.

Role:

- To provide strong, fair and visible leadership and direction to the Group within the Council.
- To promote high standards amongst the Members of their political Group and adherence to the Code of Conduct and Member/Officer Relations protocol.
- To promote the culture of good governance of the Council.

Duties:

- To lead the group and facilitate the development of the strategic priorities for the Group.
- To represent the Group as its spokesperson in Council and Council Meetings.
- To act as a spokesperson for the Group and as a representative of the Council to external bodies and organisations as appropriate.
- To represent the interests of the Group in any discussions with the Leader of the Council, other Group Leaders and Senior Leadership Team.
- To be the Group's principal consultee on Council business in general and establish and represent the views of the Group on issues of policy and probity.
- To communicate between Members of the Group and the Council.
- To work with the other Group Leaders and the Senior Leadership Team on relevant corporate matters.
- To support the learning, development, health and wellbeing needs of all Members of the Group.
- To be responsible for the appointment of Group Members to seats on Committees in accordance with the Council's political balance apportionments.
- To be responsible for the appointment of Shadow Executive Members and their remits in accordance with the Shadow Executive Member Protocol.
- To support the Monitoring Officer, where appropriate, in any resolution of disputes where consultation with the Group Leader is required by the Council's Code of Conduct complaint process.
- To apply the rulings of the Standards/Code of Conduct process to Members of the Group.

Shadow Executive Member

Definition: Councillors appointed by their Group Leader to ‘shadow’ an Executive Member.

Role and Duties in addition to those of all Members.

Role:

- To provide an effective political counter-balance to the Executive Member(s) in which they shadow.

Duties:

- To lead the development of policy and strategy on behalf of the Group.
- To act as the Group’s Lead Spokesperson for their remit and area(s) of responsibility.
- To keep other Members of the Group informed and appraised of relevant information within their area of responsibility.
- To contribute affectively to the formation of the Council’s policies, budget and strategies and service delivery for their area of responsibility.
- To have a clear understanding and knowledge of their area of responsibility.
- To establish a good working relationship with the Executive Member(s) they shadow and Senior Officers of the Council.
- To adhere to the Shadow Executive Member Protocol in respect of working with Executive Members.
- To undertake specific tasks and responsibilities as requested by the Leader of the Group.