

MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

Role Title: Group Leader

Responsible to: Political Group

Contact with: Political group members, officers, Members of Parliament

Principal Accountabilities:

- (a) To establish and represent the views of the Group on issues of policy and priority, and develop group policies that are credible and could be implemented by the Council.
- (b) To lead an Opposition Group within the Council.
- (c) To manage the work of councillors within the Group, and the overall co-ordination of opposition spokespersons and the business of the Group.
- (d) To shadow and scrutinise the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet in their duties.
- (e) To act as the principal spokesperson for an Opposition Group of which he/she is leader and as a representative of the authority to external bodies and organisations as appropriate.
- (f) To comment on, challenge and review the Council's administration performance in the co-ordination and implementation of its policies and procedures.
- (g) To champion and participate in Councillor Development to ensure the smooth running of the Group and the personal development of its councillors.
- (h) To advise the Leader of the Council of the Group's position on issues relating to external relationships.
- (i) To represent the Group on relevant formal and informal working groups.
- (j) To maintain effective liaison with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- (k) To participate in the development of corporate strategies and policies.
- (l) To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

Leadership Skills

- Ability to provide political leadership of their Group and manage the tensions between the political demands and expectations of the Group, and the needs of the Council.
- Ability to hold Cabinet to account.
- Ambassadorial skills to be able to represent the Council both within and outside the Council including at regional and national level.
- Ability to discipline members of their political Group, when necessary.
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues with other Groups.

Team Working & Relationship Building

- Tact and diplomacy to be able to work across the full range of Council services, partners and political groups, to the benefit of the District.
- Ability to build effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. full Council, Overview and Scrutiny, and other political Groups.
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues across all Groups.

Knowledge

- Understanding of the roles of the Leader of the Council, Cabinet members and the Leader of an Opposition Group within the Council.
- Understanding of the legally defined role of certain senior officers.
- Detailed knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub-regional bodies and the role of the Council within them.
- Detailed understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development.
- Detailed knowledge of the challenges facing local government.
- Understanding of Council strategy, policies and operations.

Communication Skills

- Ability to facilitate effective communication within and across the Council and ensure the community is given the opportunity to engage in policy development of the opposition Group.
- Advanced skills in working with the media and an ability to identify when additional support from public relations specialists is required, to ensure the Council is positively represented.
- Advanced listening and questioning and negotiation skills.
- Advanced presentation and public speaking skills.

Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of the Group.

Other Skills and Abilities

- Ability to assimilate and analyse complex information.
- Research skills and policy development.

- Knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver and their relationship with the Council.
- Detailed understanding of the Council's Constitution, Code of Conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies.
- Detailed knowledge of community needs and their priorities for action.
- Understanding of the relationship between national politics and local political leadership.
- Understanding of the wider, national issues facing councillors and the practical implications for the councillors in their Group.

Date: October 2009

Note: This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.