
Member Role Descriptions

Chairman of the County Council

In accordance with the constitutional arrangements of the County Council, the Local Government Act 2000 and all other relevant legislation, the Chairman of the County Council shall (in addition to their general duties as a member of the County Council):

1. Be the principal representative of the County Council, including on social and ceremonial occasions (except where a political representative is appropriate, in which case the Leader or another member of the Cabinet will represent the County Council).
2. Be the guardian of the business-making processes of the County Council in their role as Chairman of the Governance and Standards Committees, a role to be undertaken in a positive, constructive and non-partisan way.
3. Be responsible for the maintenance of high standards of probity and conduct and for promoting West Sussex County Council's reputation as an authority that works to the highest ethical and practical standards.
4. Chair meetings of the County Council and undertake relevant activities in support of effective chairmanship, including attendance at briefings and other preparatory meetings.
5. Chair the Standards Committee and lead and co-ordinating as necessary, the activities of the Standards Committee.
6. Take a formal preliminary role in considering complaints against members.
7. Chair the Governance Committee and oversee the Constitution of West Sussex County Council and, in consultation with group leaders, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Financial Officer and other Directors, ensure the maintenance and review of proper organisational standards.
8. Chair the appointments panels for the posts of Chief Executive and Directors.
9. Establish and maintain professional, effective and efficient working relationships with the Leader, the Executive, and minority groups and their leaders, assisting in the resolution of difficulties.
10. Establish and maintain a professional and efficient working relationship with the Chief Executive of the County Council as Head of the Paid Service for the purpose of the proper and effective discharge of County Council business.
11. Jointly with the Leader, and such other Cabinet Member as the Leader shall nominate, undertake an annual appraisal of the Chief Executive and provide relevant constructive and confidential feedback to him/her, if requested, or any Director reporting to the Chief Executive.

12. Be aware of any personal training and development needs and of those of the members of the Standards and Governance Committees.
13. Keep abreast of best national practice and new initiatives relating to local government so as to ensure the continuous improvement of the business-making processes and the raising of standards of probity and conduct.

Vice-Chairman of the Council

In accordance with the constitutional arrangements of the County Council, the Local Government Act 2000 and all other relevant legislation, the Vice-Chairman of the County Council shall (in addition to their general duties as a member of the County Council):

1. Support the Chairman in all the roles the Chairman performs.
2. Act on the Chairman's behalf and in the absence of the Chairman as a result of illness, holiday or other cause, or where the Chairman has a prejudicial interest disqualifying them from undertaking the duty in question.
3. Undertake such other roles, duties and responsibilities as may arise or be required by the Chairman from time to time.

Leader of the Council

In accordance with the constitutional arrangements of the County Council, the Local Government Act 2000 and all other relevant legislation, the Leader of the Council shall (in addition to undertaking their duties as a member of the County Council and as a Cabinet Member):

1. Have principal responsibility for the political and policy direction of the County Council.
2. Be the principal political spokesman on external matters.
3. Be an ambassador for and represent the County Council and the residents of West Sussex on relevant external bodies including the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership and the Local Government Association so as to promote and enhance the reputation and standing of West Sussex County Council.
4. Ensure that the residents of West Sussex are consulted and kept informed as necessary on their portfolio functions and responsibilities.
5. Provide visible political and corporate leadership to the Cabinet, cabinet members, the Chief Executive and directors.
6. Chair meetings of the Cabinet, oversee the preparation of business for its consideration and take responsibility for its work.
7. Make Executive decisions on the political and policy direction of the Council including the County Strategy and designated issues of a cross-cutting nature.
8. Undertake the functions and assume the responsibilities of any Cabinet Member who is absent through illness, has an interest in the matter under consideration or who is otherwise unable to act.
9. Establish and maintain professional, effective and efficient working relationships with the County Chairman, leaders of minority groups, chairmen of scrutiny committees, non-executive committees and with other member.
10. Report to the Cabinet and to the County Council, as necessary, on the progress of issues relevant to their portfolio functions and responsibilities and, in particular, respond to Leader's and Cabinet Members' Question Time at County Council.
11. Work in partnership individually and collectively with other cabinet members, the Chief Executive and directors to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of the County Strategy and the continuous improvement of all County Council services.
12. Provide such informal assistance (if any) as the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman of the Council may reasonably request from time to time in the proper and orderly discharge of business at County Council meetings.

13. Jointly with the County Chairman, and such other Cabinet Member as the Leader shall nominate, undertake an annual appraisal of the Chief Executive and provide relevant constructive and confidential feedback to him/her, if requested, or any Director reporting to the Chief Executive.
14. In conjunction with the Deputy Leader, undertake annual reviews with members within his/her political group. These reviews shall consider performance in any roles assigned to such members by the County Council, its Cabinet, scrutiny committees or any other committee or by the Leader and shall so far as possible be undertaken in accordance with any means of measuring member performance and/or competencies as the County Council has agreed. If appropriate, identify with such members training and development events or programmes to assist them in meeting agreed performance targets and/or competencies, or in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as county councillors generally or in relation to specific items of work.
15. Keep abreast of best national practice and new initiatives relating to leading local government and community engagement.

Deputy Leader of the Council

In accordance with the constitutional arrangements of the County Council, the Local Government Act 2000 and all other relevant legislation, the Deputy Leader of the Council shall (in addition to their duties as a member of the County Council and as a Cabinet Member):

1. In the absence of the Leader of the Council, deputise for him/her and, in particular:
 - Chair meetings of the Cabinet and other relevant member/officer meetings.
 - Deal with any Executive or other matters normally carried out by the Leader including attending meetings with relevant government ministers/departments and other relevant organisations.
2. Provide appropriate leadership and direction in matters which the Leader of the Council is prevented from dealing with by virtue of any personal and prejudicial interests under the Code of Conduct, or as a result of illness or other unavoidable absence.
3. Support the Leader in the management of the relevant political group, including undertaking such annual reviews with group members as shall be agreed with the Leader, and assist the Leader fully in the identification and implementation of training events and programmes for group members, as appropriate.
4. Undertake such other additional duties and responsibilities as may arise or be required by the Leader from time to time or be specifically delegated to the post of the Deputy Leader of the Council by the Constitution, or by the County Council.

Cabinet Member

In accordance with the constitutional arrangements of the County Council, the Local Government Act 2000 and all other relevant legislation, a cabinet member shall (in addition to their general duties as a member of the County Council):

1. Act as the principal spokesman for their portfolio functions and responsibilities, and as the County Council's principal political representative in meetings with other members and other agencies which relate to those functions and responsibilities.
2. Ensure that members and the residents of West Sussex are consulted and kept informed, as necessary, on all matters relating to their portfolio functions and responsibilities.
3. Represent the County Council and the residents of West Sussex on relevant external bodies appropriate to their portfolio functions and responsibilities, so as to promote and enhance the reputation and standing of the County Council.
4. Provide visible political and corporate leadership in the area of their portfolio functions and responsibilities to the Cabinet, the Chief Executive and relevant director(s).
5. Contribute to the effective and efficient corporate leadership of the County Council through proactive engagement in the Cabinet and other forums as required and take collective and individual responsibility for the work of the Cabinet.
6. Establish and maintain professional, effective and efficient working relationships with chairmen of scrutiny committees, non-executive committees, spokesmen for minority groups and with other members.
7. Oversee any reports to Cabinet on their portfolio functions and responsibilities, in consultation with the relevant director.
8. Take Executive decisions on matters that fall within their portfolio, take responsibility for those decisions and keep other cabinet members informed of any matters that may impact, directly or indirectly, on their portfolio functions and responsibilities.
9. Be accountable for any budgets allocated to their portfolio functions and responsibilities.
10. Report to the Cabinet and to the County Council, as necessary, on the progress of issues relevant to their portfolio functions and responsibilities and, in particular, take part in Cabinet Member Question Time at County Council.
11. Provide such support and assistance to the Leader of the Council as they may require from time to time.
12. Work with the Leader, the Chief Executive and relevant directors to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of the West Sussex Plan and the

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continuous improvement of all services covered by their portfolio functions and responsibilities.

13. Liaise with the chairmen of scrutiny committees as required and appear as required at meetings of scrutiny committees.
14. Liaise and agree with the Leader regarding a suitable member for appointment as an adviser to the cabinet member (advisers to cabinet members are appointed by the Leader and should only be appointed when applicable), establish any limits or conditions on the ways in which any adviser to the cabinet member will operate and inform the Director of Law and Assurance accordingly. Ensure so far as reasonably practicable that any adviser appointed has a sufficient and manageable workload within any limits or conditions of operation which may have been established.
15. Keep abreast of best national practice and new initiatives relating to their portfolio functions and responsibilities.
16. Undertake such other roles and responsibilities as may arise or be required by the Leader of the Council, from time to time.

Advisers to Cabinet Members

The Leader may appoint advisers to cabinet members to provide support as required to the cabinet member in carrying out their responsibilities, subject to the limitations set out in the Constitution and such additional limitations or conditions as may be set by the Leader.

Advisers to cabinet members may not take decisions on behalf of the relevant cabinet member or take part in collective decisions by the Cabinet. They cannot be a member of the scrutiny committee that deals with the relevant cabinet member's portfolio but can attend and advise a scrutiny committee meeting on behalf of the cabinet member.

A role profile shall be set for each appointed adviser, detailing the scope and range of responsibilities allocated to them. This and the amount of time and workload expected of the role shall be used to determine whether the member is to be entitled to a special responsibility allowance and at what level. This shall be made clear at appointment and the process is set out below:

- The role profile shall be written by the cabinet member in consultation with the relevant director and approved by the Leader. If the Leader wishes to appoint an adviser, the role profile will be written in consultation with the Chief Executive.
- If confirmed at appointment, a special responsibility allowance will be paid to the adviser at a rate according to the duties set out in the role profile. For time limited roles this will be on a pro rata basis. The Director of Law and Assurance will advise on the assessment of the special responsibility allowance to be paid.
- The Leader, in consultation with the cabinet member, will review the work of the adviser from time to time and may change or terminate the appointment at any time.

The role of adviser to a cabinet member may include the following:

1. Assisting the cabinet member in maintaining effective and efficient working relationships with scrutiny committees, minority groups, and with other members.
2. Chairing Executive task and finish groups for the cabinet member.
3. Providing political soundings to the cabinet member on matters related to the portfolio and being consulted by the cabinet member in relation to any matters relating to the portfolio.
4. Liaising as appropriate with members appointed to outside bodies related to the cabinet member's portfolio.
5. Assisting the cabinet member with maintaining effective links with officers.
6. Keeping the cabinet member and director fully updated on matters allocated to the adviser and assisting with briefing other cabinet members on such matters.
7. Attending internal and external meetings on behalf of the cabinet member, giving presentations and answering questions as appropriate.

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8. Keeping abreast of the local or national context of matters related to the scope of the portfolio and being aware of good practice and new initiatives relating to the cabinet member's portfolio.

For further details on the criteria for allocating a special responsibility allowance, please see the [recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel](#), agreed by the County Council in December 2020.

Leader of a Minority Group

In accordance with the constitutional arrangements of the County Council, the Local Government Act 2000 and all other relevant legislation, the Leader of a Minority Group shall (in addition to their general duties as a member of the County Council):

1. Lead their Group in a positive, pro-active manner with a view to securing meaningful engagement for the Group in the political processes of the County Council and that the Group and its individual members contribute fully to the good governance of the county.
2. Work to secure effective cross-party dialogue and co-operative working with other political Groups so far as this is consistent with the agreed political objectives of the Group.
3. Act as the conduit for communication, consultation, and/or representation to and from the Group in respect of those matters where it is appropriate that such communication, consultation and/or representation should be made to or from the Group members collectively.
4. Work to secure positive Group discipline and the acceptance of the concept of collective responsibility for Group decisions by individual members of the Group where appropriate. Seek to ensure so far as reasonably practicable that, when any Group member(s) is/are engaged on official business (individually or collectively) their behaviour and conduct is at all times in accordance with the County Council's Code of Conduct for members together with such other relevant guidance and protocols as may be promulgated by government and/or agreed by the County Council from time to time so as to promote a positive image of the County Council and its membership.
5. Ensure that members of the Group are aware of the need to secure efficient and effective working relationships, based on mutual co-operation and respect, with any officer with whom such member may need to deal, either individually or on Group business.
6. Undertake annual reviews with members within their political group. Such reviews shall consider performance in any roles assigned to such members by the County Council, scrutiny committees or any other Committee and shall so far as possible be undertaken in accordance with any means of measuring member performance and/or competencies as the County Council has agreed. If appropriate, identify with such members training and development events or programmes to assist them in meeting agreed performance targets and/or competencies, or in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as county councillors generally or in relation to specific items of work.
7. Participate in the Appointment Committee for the posts of Chief Executive and Directors.

Chairman of a Scrutiny Committee

In accordance with the constitutional arrangements of the County Council, the Local Government Act 2000 and all other relevant legislation, the Chairman of a scrutiny committee shall (in addition to their general duties as a member of the County Council):

1. Be the leading member responsible for 'overview and scrutiny' for the County Council on all matters covered by the terms of reference of the relevant scrutiny committee.
2. Insofar as this is necessary to enable the scrutiny committee to fully perform its role in an efficient and effective manner, ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, appropriate public consultation and that any public views expressed on any matter are always fully considered and given appropriate weight in the scrutiny process. Ensure full and effective liaison with partnership agencies with reference to those matters.
3. Chair, lead and co-ordinate, as necessary, the activities of the scrutiny committee in co-operation with the relevant multi-party business planning groups and assemble a programme of work (including task and finish group work) targeted to review and develop policies and to secure the improvement of relevant services.
4. Add value to the Council by ensuring the effective and efficient discharge of the scrutiny functions of the Council and by assisting the Executive with the development of any policies and procedures or with overview of the same.
5. Scrutinise the Executive as a 'critical friend' so as to protect and safeguard the best interests of the residents of West Sussex. In the case of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee, maintain an equivalent relationship with NHS partners and respond to consultation on key Health Service developments in West Sussex.
6. Establish and maintain professional, effective and efficient working relationships with the leaders of all the political groups, the Executive, including, in particular, any cabinet member(s) whose portfolio functions and responsibilities fall wholly or partially within the terms of reference of their scrutiny committee and with other members.
7. Attend, as necessary, any meetings of the Cabinet on behalf of their scrutiny committee and provide feedback from such meetings to the committee.
8. Liaise with the Leader of the Council, relevant cabinet members, the Chief Executive and directors, as required, in relation to the findings and recommendations of the scrutiny committee (including its task and finish groups). Monitor the outcomes of the scrutiny committee's recommendations and ensure that reports are made to the scrutiny committee as and when necessary.
9. Likewise, liaise with all appropriate members and officers in relation to the call-in of Executive decisions by the scrutiny committee and ensure that this is carried out in conformity with the Constitution.

10. Promote the work and independence of the scrutiny processes within the context of the policies and budgets of the Council.
11. Undertake the scrutiny function in a positive, constructive and non-partisan manner to enhance the working and reputation of the County Council.
12. Keep abreast of best national practice and new initiatives relating to local government and scrutiny so as to support the continuous improvement of Council services, especially those which fall within the terms of reference of their scrutiny committee.

Vice-Chairman of a Scrutiny Committee

In accordance with the constitutional arrangements of the County Council, the Local Government Act 2000 and all other relevant legislation, the Vice-Chairman of a Scrutiny Committee shall (in addition to their general duties as a member of the County Council):

1. Support the Chairman in all their roles, and, in particular, assist the Chairman by undertaking such work and/or role in connection with pre-agenda meetings of the Scrutiny Committee as the Chairman may reasonably request.
2. Deputise for the Chairman as necessary and appropriate in the discharge of the functions of the Committee when requested by the Chairman or in their absence as a result of illness, holiday or other cause, or where the Chairman has a prejudicial interest disqualifying him or her from undertaking the duty in question.

Chairman of a Non-Executive Committee

In accordance with the constitutional arrangements of the County Council, the Local Government Act 2000 and all other relevant legislation, the Chairman of a non-Executive committee shall (in addition to their general duties as a member of the County Council):

1. Provide visible leadership within the terms of reference for the non-Executive committee which they chair.
2. Chair, lead and co-ordinate, as necessary, the activities of their non-Executive committee with a view to ensuring the smooth running of meetings and effective decision-making. Satisfy him or herself that officers have in place proper arrangements for the timely production of agenda and associated papers for meetings.
3. [Establish and maintain professional, effective and efficient working relationships with the Executive, group leaders, the chairmen of scrutiny committees and other non-Executive committees and with other members.]

Note: Applicable to committees concerned with internal Council working (Governance, Regulation, Audit and Accounts and Standards) rather than Committees with external interface (Planning and Rights of Way).

4. Develop effective working arrangements with officers, especially those responsible for functions within the terms of reference of their non-Executive committee. Liaison with external partners, where appropriate.
5. [So far as practicable, work to achieve a respected image in the community for their non-Executive committee and to enhance the general image and reputation of West Sussex County Council within that community]

Note: As for 3 above, but this paragraph is more relevant to external facing committees than those concerned with internal working.

6. Add value to the Council by ensuring the effective and efficient discharge of their non-Executive committee's functions.
7. So far as appropriate to the nature of the non-Executive committee, promote the work of their non-Executive committee within the context of the budgets and policies of the Council.
8. Keep abreast of best practice and new initiatives relating to local government and the functions of the committee so as to support, as far as appropriate and possible, the continuous improvement of Council services, especially those which fall within the terms of reference of their non-Executive committee.

Member of the Fostering Panel

The role of members on fostering panels is to consider and give advice on applications under the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and national minimum standards.

In West Sussex there are currently four fostering panels:

1. South West Fostering Panel
2. South East Fostering Panel
3. North Fostering Panel
4. Additional Fostering Panel

The County Council appoints up to four councillors to sit on the fostering panels (including one to each Panel).

Members are expected to:

- Attend regular Panel meetings (each Panel meets at least once a month), to consider and provide recommendations on fostering applications.
- Allow time to prepare for each Panel meeting, including reading through the papers provided.
- Attend regular training provided to all Panel members to enable them to carry out their role effectively.

For new members, full training is provided ahead of attending the first Fostering Panel, which will include an enhanced DBS check.

It is desirable for members to have personal or professional experience in social work, fostering, adoption or children's services.