

Local Protocol – Member Champions Contents

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Member Champions

1. Introduction

1.1 Member champions are elected members who act as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business. The main responsibility of each member champion is to encourage communication and positive action over the issue they represent.

2. Appointment of Member Champions

2.1 The **Leader/Full Council** is responsible for appointing member champions. Any member of the Council may be member champion, including the Leader. The first Council Champions are being suggested as:

- (a) Armed Forces
- (b) Trees
- (c) City Centre
- (d) Dementia

2.2 Member champions will be appointed on annual basis following the local elections that take place. However, an appointment may be made during the year to any new position that is established or to a position where there is a vacancy. The appointments made by the Leader must be communicated in writing to the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer

2.3 Any appointment should have due regard to the suitability for the role and relevant national and local guidance.

2.4 A member champion may be removed from office at any time by the **Leader/Full Council** by written notice to the Chief Executive. The reasons for removal will need to set out the reasons for the request of dismissal.

2.5 Any member champion may resign from office by giving written notice to the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer.

3. Role of Member Champions

3.1 All member champions will have a job description setting out their respective roles. These will be developed in consultation with the Leader and the champion concerned. Examples of possible roles for champions that may be appropriate to include in a job description are set out in Annex 1 to this protocol.

4. The Parameters of the Member Champion Role

4.1 All member champions must act reasonably in their role and recognise and work effectively within the political management and working arrangements adopted by the Council.

4.2 A champion cannot make decisions (unless the champion is a Cabinet Member with delegated authority) and must not commit the Council in any way or in a manner that could be interpreted as being contrary to established policy and practice. They may, however, confirm a position as stated in a published policy.

5. Cabinet Members – Working Relationship

5.1 The first point of liaison on all relevant issues for the Member Champion will be through the Cabinet Member/Leader.

5.2 Cabinet Members will normally:

- (a) acknowledge the right of champions to be consulted on matters relating to their area of interest;
- (b) take full account of any views offered by champions prior to any decision taken (by a Cabinet member with delegated authority) on matters within their area of interest;
- (c) co-operate with champions in the formulation of any action plans they have agreed with the relevant Cabinet Member; and
- (d) in liaison with the Leader consider nominating the relevant champion to represent the Council at a relevant conference/seminar on the subject matter of the champions interest.

6. Accountability

6.1 At the beginning of each municipal year, each member champion may agree with the relevant Cabinet member and officers a programme of activity, with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) targets, taking into account the Council's priorities.

6.2 The Member Champion will report into their Cabinet Member regularly and in consultation with them into the Member's bulletin on at least an annual basis to keep the Council updated on their work.

7. Training

7.1 All member champions will normally have the opportunity to attend appropriate training courses contained in the Council's Member Development Programme.

8. Attendance at Seminars and Conferences

8.1 The attendance by member champions at conferences/seminars relevant to their roles will only be approved following consultation with the Leader in consultation with the Monitoring Officer. When approved, expenses may be claimed.

9. Allowances

9.1 None of the member champions are entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for carrying out their role.

10. Interests

10.1 Member Champions are reminded to ensure any interests they may have are declared at all appropriate points.

Annex 1 – Job Role Member Champions

What are Member Champions?

Member Champions exist to provide a voice on the Council or to ensure particular issues are kept at the forefront of council business. The member champions will have no decision making responsibilities and/or powers.

Member Champions are elected members who in addition to their other council responsibilities make sure that the issue or group that they are championing are taken into account and/or promoted. They will be in place for a term of 1 year from the date of appointment.

What do they do?

Typically, the Member Champion will:

- Make sure that their area of interest is taken into account or promoted when liaising with the Executive, relevant Scrutiny Committees and key officers.
- Raise the profile of the area and make the authority aware of good practice.
- Engage with external bodies who work in the area
- Engage with other officers and members in relation to the role.
- Engage with community groups with an interest/stake in the area
- Report findings to the Cabinet, relevant Scrutiny Committee or Full Council as appropriate.