

Annex 2.1 – Further Information on Councillors

1. Composition and eligibility

- 1.1. Composition: the council comprises all of the councillors elected by the voters of each ward in accordance with a scheme drawn up by the Local Government Commission for England and approved by the Secretary of State.
- 1.2. Eligibility: to be eligible to hold the office of councillor, one for the four criteria must be met:
 - i. Registered as an elector in the Borough
 - ii. Living in the Borough.
 - iii. Working in the Borough.
 - iv. Owning land in the Borough.

2. Election and terms of councillors

- 2.1. Election: the regular election of councillors will be held normally on the first Thursday in May (or whatever date is fixed by law) every four years (from 2003).
- 2.2. Terms: the terms of office of councillors will start on the fourth day after being elected, and will finish on the fourth day after the date of the next regular election.

3. Roles and functions of all councillors

- 3.1. Key roles that all councillors fulfil, to:
 - i. Collectively set the policy and strategic direction of the council, taking a Borough-wide view.
 - ii. Actively encourage engagement with their local communities and represent these communities; bringing their views into the council's decision-making process, where appropriate.
 - iii. Represent the interests of their ward and where necessary balance different interests.
 - iv. Deal with individual casework and act as an advocate for constituents with their particular concerns or grievances in so far as they relate to the functions and responsibilities of the council.
 - v. Be involved in decision-making.
 - vi. Be available to represent the council on other bodies.

- vii. Maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics, showing respect for fellow councillors, officers and the community (see [Constitution](#), Appendix 1).

4. Rights and duties

4.1. Councillors will:

- i. Have such rights of access to only such documents, information, land and buildings of the council as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions and in accordance with the law.
- ii. Not make public any information which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the council or divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a councillor or officer entitled to know it
- iii. Not issue an order for works to be carried out by or on behalf of the council and nor will they, unless specifically authorised to do so, claim any right to inspect or enter any land.

- 4.2. For these purposes, 'confidential' and 'exempt' information are defined in the Access to Information Rules (see [Council Operating Framework](#), Annex 4.4).

5. Role description

- 5.1. Councillors are volunteers and bring a wide variety of skills and experience to the role of councillor. Councillors receive an allowance to cover expenses ([Constitution](#), Section 7 and [Framework](#), Annex 2.3). The multi-councillor ward structure of the council provides the opportunity for individual councillors to specialise and use their particular skills and experience, working as part of a team for the benefit of the local community they represent, as well as the wider interest of the Borough as a whole.

5.2. Representing the local ward community

- i. Seeking, and listening to, the views of individuals, voluntary groups and businesses within the ward and representing local ward community views.
- ii. Balancing conflicting views and expectations to present a considered view to the council or other agencies which have an impact on that community.
- iii. Informing the local community about the work of the council and helping it to take an informed view of the options that may be before the council.

5.3. Representing individuals and groups

- 5.3.1. Whenever appropriate:

- i. Helping individuals, groups and businesses, to secure the appropriate services of the council.
- ii. Helping individuals and groups to articulate their needs and have their case or their complaint heard, and when appropriate, presenting their case for them.

5.4. Representing the whole community

- i. To take an overview of the needs and views of the whole community - residents, voluntary groups and businesses - together.
- ii. To balance long and short term needs and to promote the long term economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the Epsom and Ewell community as a whole.

5.5. Representing the Council

- i. Acting as an ambassador of the council in the wider community.
- ii. Where appointed to a particular position as the council's representative on other public or voluntary bodies, to represent and secure the council's policies through influence and formal partnership working in those bodies.
- iii. Building and maintaining relationships with the council's partners.

5.6. Committee role

- i. As a member of the Full Council, to set the corporate plan and to monitor the performance of its committees.
- ii. As a member of a council committee, sub-committee or panel, to monitor the provision of the council's services to the community, in accordance with the council's aims and objectives set out in its corporate plan.
- iii. To review the council's performance in the provision of its policies and services and identify opportunities to provide better value to the community.

6. Conduct

- 6.1. Councillors will at all times observe the Members' Code of Conduct ([Constitution](#), Appendix 1) and will have regard to other documents such as the codes of conduct for planning ([Framework](#), Annex 4.8) and licensing ([Framework](#), Annex 4.7) matters and the councillor / officer protocol ([Framework](#), Annex 2.4).

- 6.2. The council is required to maintain and update a Register of Interests of its councillors. The register is available for public inspection at the council's offices and on the council's website.

7. Allowances

- 7.1. Councillors will be entitled to receive allowances in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme ([Framework](#), Annex 2.3).

8. Champions

- 8.1. The main purpose of councillor champions is to:

- i. Promote the cause for which they are a champion.

- 8.2. Councillor champions achieve this through:

- i. Being outward-facing, enthusiastic, and focused on raising the profile of the area they champion.
- ii. Developing in-depth knowledge and understanding of the issue(s) they champion.
- iii. Using their in-depth knowledge to support the relevant committee Chair(s) and Vice Chair(s).
- iv. Represent their area both within and outside the council, in line with council policies.
- v. Engaging relevant stakeholders to include them in the council's work.
- vi. Acting as an advocate or spokesperson for the council's business and activities.
- vii. Providing positive support, and on occasions, constructive challenge to officers in driving forward the council agenda on relevant issues.
- viii. Acting as the council's representative on relevant external bodies where appointed to by the council.
- ix. Encouraging communications and positive action over the issue(s) they represent.

8.3. Role of councillor champions

- 8.3.1. All councillor champions must, in their role, work towards achieving the agreed priorities and policies adopted by the council. As such the councillor champion must (a) work with and communicate regularly with the relevant committee Chair, (b) produce an annual statement to the relevant policy committee.

8.3.2. A councillor champion cannot make decisions 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.

8.4. Conditions of being a councillor champion

8.4.1. A councillor champion can be any member of the council who is not a committee Chair.

8.4.2. If a councillor champion is a member of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, and it conducts a review of the area they champion, they must declare a non-pecuniary interest.

8.4.3. A councillor champion may be called to provide information to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, and would be expected to attend as requested.

8.5. Committee Chairs

8.5.1. The Chairs of committees will:

- i. Acknowledge the right of councillor champions to be consulted on matters relating to their area of interest.
- ii. Take full account of any views offered by the councillor champions prior to making decisions relating to their area of interest.
- iii. Co-operate with councillor champions in the formulation of action plans that have been developed with lead officers.
- iv. Consider nominating champions to represent the council at relevant conferences / seminars on the subject matter of the councillor's interest.

8.6. Allowances

8.6.1. Councillor champions are not entitled to receive Special Responsibility Allowances.

8.6.2. Any change to this position would require recommendation by an Independent Remuneration Panel and the approval of Full Council.

8.7. Appointment and Term

8.7.1. All councillor champions will be appointed, and have an allocated area of responsibility agreed, at the Annual Meeting of Full Council.

8.7.2. A councillor champion will normally be expected to serve for a minimum 2-year term.

- 8.7.3. In year changes and additions - where necessary, and after consultation with the Chair of the majority group and relevant policy committee Chair - to be appointed at the next available Full Council meeting.