



Stroud District Council

Role Profiles for Councillors

This section explains what is expected of Councillors in undertaking their duties.

Role Profiles for Councillors

Chair Of Council

The role and function of the Chair is set out in Article 5 of this constitution. In addition, the Chair will have the following duties and responsibilities:

Duties and Responsibilities

- To chair meetings of the Council ensuring among other things that all points of view have a fair opportunity to be heard, that procedure rules are applied and observed, and that debate is guided towards clear and relevant decisions.
- To represent the Council in the District and elsewhere on occasions where a civic representative is invited or otherwise required.
- To participate in events, receptions, programmes and activities designed to recognise and encourage civic awareness in the community, where appropriate.
- To attend and chair briefings for Council meetings, involving leaders of the political groups and to be proactive in making proposals for the effective conduct of the agenda.
- To host Council events of a non-party-political nature as required.
- To promote good relationships between Councillors, between political groups and between Councillors and Officers.
- To oversee the spending of the Civic Fund for the benefit of the whole District.
- To ensure that the Vice-Chair is kept informed of all relevant civic matters and has a useful civic role during their period of office.
- To attend Chair Skills training as appropriate, usually at the start of the term of office.

Vice-Chair of Council

The Vice-Chair of Council will support the Chair of Council in their role and in their absence undertake the duties within the role profile for the Chair of Council.

Chair of a Committee

Appointment of Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs

- (a) The Annual Meeting of the Council will agree the appointment of members to committees and the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs to such committees as are provided for, unless the Council decides in any instance not to do so, in which case the chair is appointed at the first meeting of a committee in the municipal year.
- (b) The appointment of a Member as Chair of a Committee shall not take effect unless and until that Member has undergone such training as may be determined by the Council (in the absence of which shall be such training as may be determined by the Monitoring Officer).
- (c) The process of appointment is set out in the Council's Standing Orders.

Role and Function of Committee Chairs

The Chair of a Committee shall:

- (i) lead the work of the committee and make sure it carries out its business effectively and efficiently, lawfully and within its terms of reference;
- (ii) chair meetings of the committee impartially and in such a way as to facilitate open discussion, obtain valid contributions from members and produce sound decisions;
- (iii) assist the public and press in terms of their rights of access; and
- (iv) ensure respectful engagement between the committee, its officers, guests and the public and maintain ethical conduct throughout the meeting.
- (v) lead an agenda management process for the Committee in association with the Vice-Chair and Group Spokespersons; and
- (vi) act as consultee and spokesperson for their Committee in instances of exercise of delegated authority by an officer, where that delegation is subject to being in consultation with the Chair of the Committee or where otherwise requested by a Chief Officer.

Key Responsibilities of Committee Chairs

(a) The Chair of a Committee will undertake:

- (i) To have a working knowledge of the functions, policies, practices, procedures, services and budgets of the Committee which they chair.
- (ii) To lead in the development of the work of the Committee which they chair in association with the Vice-Chair and Group Spokespersons, including the agenda management process, also taking into account the wider vision, such as corporate, cross-service and partnership issues.
- (iii) To ensure that the Committee which they chair 'self scrutinises' to ensure that it continues to make sound decisions which are lawfully compliant and take account of all the relevant information
- (iv) To lead in consideration and review of service delivery, policy development and in the implementation of policies approved by the Council where these relate to the Committee which they chair.
- (v) To be the Council's lead spokesperson in respect of the Committee's activities and act in liaison with the Leader and Deputy Leader in matters of Council policy.
- (vi) To establish effective working relationships with the Group Spokespersons on the Committee and with other Committee Chairs and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council.
- (vii) To establish effective working relationships with the Chief Officers, and other key officers.
- (viii) To represent and pursue the interests of the Committee which they chair in the community and at regional and national levels.
- (viii) To ensure that meetings of the Committee which they chair are properly conducted and reports of proceedings are forwarded on as necessary, for example to full Council.
- (ix) To promote and uphold high standards of ethical conduct by the Council's Members and officers.

Role and Responsibilities of Committee Vice-Chairs

The Vice Chair will:

- (a) assist the Chair in carrying out their role and responsibilities as set out at above; and
- (b) undertake the responsibilities of the Chair in their absence.

Terms of Reference Specific to Certain Chairs

A Strategy and Resources Chair will also:

- Be the Council Leader.
- Will have the lead role in co-ordinating the work of the Committees across the Council, liaising with other Committee chairs as needed to ensure the work of all Committees is undertaken in a holistic manner and having regard to the Corporate Plan.

B Communities, Environment and Housing Committee Chairs will also:

- Sit on the Strategy and Resources Committee.
- Will champion the function of their individual Committee but in doing so will recognise their part in the holistic purpose of the Strategy and Resources Committee as a body comprised of key leading members from across all functions of the Council.

C Development Control Committee Chair will also:

- Chair meetings of the Sites Inspection Panel.
- Maintain the non-party political status of Committee proceedings and meeting management.

D Community and Licensing Committee Chair will also:

- When sitting as a member of a Licensing Panel chair that panel hearing.
- Promote good relationships between the Council, the various licensing trade groups and communities within the District.
- Maintain the non-party political status of Committee proceedings and meeting management.

E Audit and Standards Committee Chair will also:

- Maintain the non-party political status of Committee proceedings and meeting management.

Leader of Council (Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee)

As the Council operates a Committee System, no formal legal powers and duties are vested in the Leader or Deputy Leader under the Local Government Act 1972 or the Local Government Act 2000. In practice, however, all local authorities need to appoint a councillor to hold the most significant elected Member role within the Council, to be seen as the political head of the Council and to provide a focal point for political leadership and strategic direction for the Council, both within the Authority but also to outside organisations, partners, governmental bodies and the community at large.

Likewise, there are several other roles that involve political leadership and representation of the Council, beyond civic or formal functions and the role of a councillor as Member of the Authority (which are described in Article 2 above) and are set out below.

Appointment of Leader and Deputy Leader

- (a) At the Annual Meeting of Council, it will appoint a Leader of the Council who shall act as Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee.
- (b) At the Annual Meeting of Council, it will appoint a Deputy Leader of the Council who shall act as Vice-Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee.
- (c) Once appointed, the Leader and the Deputy Leader will hold office until the next Annual Meeting unless they: -
 - (i) resigns from the office
 - (ii) is no longer a member of the Council or
 - (iii) is removed from office by resolution of the Council
- (d) The process of appointment is set out in the Council's Standing Orders

Role and Function of the Leader

- (a) The Leader shall be:
 - (i) the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee.
 - (ii) entitled to attend all meetings of the Council's functional committees in an ex officio capacity.
- (b) The Leader will:
 - (i) provide a focal point for political leadership and strategic direction for the Council.
 - (ii) represent the interests of the Council in circumstances where that is necessary; and
 - (iii) ensure effective Corporate Governance and ethical conduct throughout the Council.

Key Responsibilities of the Leader

The Leader will:

- (a) Be the political (rather than ceremonial) leader of the Council, for the benefit of all the District's communities - its residents, taxpayers, businesses, public bodies and other public authorities.
- (b) Represent and pursue the interests of the Council in the community and at international, national and regional levels.
- (c) Be the key contact for outside organisations (including Central Government, Local Authority Associations and Council partners), and internally for the Council's Chief Officers.
- (d) Be the representative voice of the Council, for example, in its dealings with Central Government, other Local Authorities and their Associations, and positively promote the Council as a whole to the media.

- (e) Promote the long-term financial, business and economic stability of the Council and the District.
- (f) Meet regularly to progress the Council's objectives with Committee Chairs, the Chief Officers, Group Leaders, partner organisations, stakeholders, community representatives, government representatives, local Members of Parliament, etc.
- (g) Promote high standards of corporate governance and ethical conduct throughout the Council including working with all political groups to seek to achieve, where possible, cross party co-operation.
- (h) Promote and maintain professional working relationships and mutual respect between all Members and officers.
- (i) Work across the Council, particularly with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of its Committees and Sub-Committees, and to be responsible for the development and implementation of the Council's strategic vision for the future, policy framework, budgets and other strategies.

Role and Function of the Deputy Leader

- (a) The Deputy Leader shall be the Vice-Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee
- (b) The Deputy Leader will:
 - (i) assist the Leader of the Council in representing the Council to its residents, stakeholders, and partners and in providing political leadership for the Council and the District.
 - (ii) assist the Leader in carrying out the key responsibilities associated with the role of Leader (as set out above);
 - (iii) work with the Leader and Committee Chairs on budget and policy development; and
 - (iv) undertake the responsibilities of the Leader in their absence.

Political Group Leader

Political groups, and the leader (and any deputy group leader) of a political group, have a formal role under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 in respect of political balance of committees and appointments of the Council.

The Council acknowledges the key leadership role played by the leaders of all political groups on the Council and the importance of their commitment to cross-party working.

Role and responsibilities of Political Group Leaders are:

- (a) To provide the leadership of a political group.
- (b) To be the principal political spokesperson for the political group.
- (c) To nominate members of their Group to serve on Committees, Working Groups, outside bodies, etc.
- (d) To be a representative voice in dealings with government agencies, local authority associations etc.

- (e) To encourage the highest standards of conduct by members of the group and to work with the Monitoring Officer to resolve complaints informally where appropriate.
- (f) To appoint group spokespersons and allocate other responsibilities to group members as appropriate.
- (g) To assist in ensuring appropriate levels of attendance are maintained by group members.
- (h) To encourage a culture of learning and development among members, including the active participation of group members in briefings, seminars and other learning and development processes.
- (i) To maintain effective liaison with the other group leaders, including being a member of an informal Group Leaders' meeting, attending Group Leaders' briefings and so forth.
- (j) To establish and maintain effective working relationships with the Chief Officers and other senior officers and to meet regularly them in order to keep fully apprised of relevant service issues.

Member Champions

Member Champions are elected Members who act as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business or a particular interest within the community, they have evolved in the Council as a result of national initiatives and approval at Council. The primary responsibility of each Member Champion is to encourage communication and positive action over the issue they represent.

Members who are appointed as a Member Champion are required to act within the parameters of the Member Champion Protocol set out in this Constitution.

Roles And Functions of All Councillors

Councillors will participate constructively in the good government of the District in the interests of all residents. They will contribute actively to the formation and review of the Authority's policies, budget, strategies, plans and service delivery.

Councillors will deal with constituents' enquiries and representations and will effectively represent the interests of the Ward for which they were elected and the views of constituents.

Terms of Reference

- To fulfil the statutory and locally determined requirements of an elected Member of a Local Authority.
- To participate effectively as a member of any meeting to which the Councillor is appointed, for example by regular attendance at meetings and ensuring that they are adequately briefed and prepared for the meeting.
- To participate in the activities of an outside body to which the Councillor is appointed and to report those activities to Council on an annual basis.
- To act as community champion for their ward. To provide a voice and advice for local individuals and interest groups in their dealings with the Council and, where appropriate, to advise them on the pursuit of complaints.
- To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Authority's services, management arrangements, powers/duties and constraints and to develop good working relationships with relevant Officers of the Authority.

- To develop and maintain good working relationships with the local Town or Parish Council and with local County Councillors and to promote the Town and Parish Charter.
- To contribute constructively to open government and democratic participation by encouraging community engagement in the governance of the area.
- To keep up to date with all developments affecting the District and the Council including Government policies and prospective legislation.
- Attend meetings of Parish Councils within the ward, as appropriate.