

Purpose

The main purpose of this document is to provide an outline on role profiles and expectations when newly elected as a Councillor, which will be helpful for induction.

This is as part of a wider effort to change the way in which Birmingham City Council operates and is perceived internally and externally, and to ensure that contributions are more effective, generally, in local leadership within the community and also in partnership settings.

Links and background

- [Member & Officer Protocols](#)
- [Member Code of Conduct](#)
- Outward Looking Partnership Board
- Local Leadership Board
- Cross Party Meetings
- Outputs and research so far from benchmarking visit to Barnsley
- Output from Member & Officer workshops in Yardley and Erdington
- Outputs from stakeholder engagement and consultation in Yardley and Erdington
- Feedback from partners/partnerships about the roles of Councillors
- Learning from Core Cities about the roles of Members & Officers in partnerships
- Outputs from newly Elected Member workshops held on 25 February and 4 April 2016
- Draft guidance on the roles of Members & Officers in partnerships, which reflects the contents of “Protocol on Councillor and Officer Relations”
- Workshop materials from a variety of research sources, including feedback, stakeholder interviews and market place events
- Use of role description for local area chair 7 – 2016

Ensuring what’s produced is fit for purpose

Output from the above has informed this document, (which is a work in progress), and can be further developed. It is hoped there will be engagement and collaboration via future Members & Officer workshops to disseminate this information and plan how it can be embedded into business as usual, and Member Development.

Thank you to all who have contributed so far.

Councillor roles and responsibilities - Local Leadership and Partnership Working

	Casework – challenging service and system failure	Local Leadership – be a ward and community champion	Policy maker - changing the world
With/for communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the Council’s public interface • Be an ambassador of Birmingham City Council and of Birmingham the City • Engage with the people of Birmingham • Represent constituents and help with their enquiries, fairly and impartially • Navigate service and system complexity within the Council • Appropriately challenge officers/Cabinet Members where there is service or system failure • Encourage and educate good service usage • Analyse information and data in order to support / evidence community concerns • Undertake own research to deepen knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the Council’s public interface • Be an ambassador of Birmingham City Council and of Birmingham City • Navigate service and system complexity • Reflect the character and needs of the Ward • Effectively represent the interests of the ward and of individual constituents to the council • Serve the public interest and take decisions having regard to the interests of the whole local community • Promote the interests of the community to improve and sustain the social, economic and environmental well-being of the district • Contribute to and take part in consultations with the public and local organisations • Contribute to the good governance of the area and actively encourage citizen involvement in decision making • Develop open government by encouraging active community and individual participation in the governance of the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an ambassador of Birmingham City Council and of Birmingham City • Champion Birmingham and its people • Engage with the people of Birmingham • Effectively represent the interests of the ward and of individual constituents • Determine the policy of the Council providing political leadership • Represent local knowledge and intelligence in policy making • Influencing role to simplify system and complexity for citizens • Accountable to the electorate and work in their interests • Contribute to/participate in scrutiny committees • Represent the ward (and not the political party) in committing council resources to local issues and problems • Represent the council in full and citywide council meetings
With/for stakeholders and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately challenge officers/Cabinet Members where there is service or system failure • Help partners and stakeholders to navigate the complexity of the Council’s services and systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigate service and system complexity • Represent ward interests • Community communication and networks • Provide community intelligence • Community problem solving • Allocating devolved funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and draw on expertise and advice to help develop ideas and policies • Collaborate with others - work together for the best outcomes of the people of Birmingham • Promote the interests of the community to improve and sustain the social, economic and environmental well-being of the district by working with partners and stakeholders to do so

	Casework – challenging service and system failure	Local Leadership – be a ward and community champion	Policy maker - changing the world
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent the Council or the ward to outside bodies and ensure council funds and contributions benefit the council • Build relationships and networks • Facilitator and convenor • Represent stakeholders and partners to the council by providing a point of contact between partnerships and the council • If appointed to an outside body, provide two-way communication between the organisation and the council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to/participate in scrutiny committees
With/for officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold open and honest conversations • Challenge officers/Cabinet Members where there is service or system failure • Ensure that resources (including staff) are used productively and efficiently • Acknowledge good service and performance • Analyse information and data in order to support / evidence concerns • Undertake own research to deepen knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build contacts and relationships with local officers • Represent ward not political party in committing council resources to local issues and problems • Inform and influence ward plans and priorities • Share expertise and goals to achieve Ward outcomes • Work with officers to solve community problems • Provide community intelligence • Provide access to community networks and communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to/participate in scrutiny committees • Access and draw on expertise and advice • Strategic thinking of policies adopting a whole system approach • Understand the legal position of Council policies
With/for other members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with other members to identify trends and patterns in service or system failure • Work with area council members • Serve the public interest and take decisions having regard to the interest of the whole community area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby for changes to existing policies • Develop and present new policy ideas • To oversee the use of funds contributed by the district and if continued, membership of the organisation/partnerships benefits the council or the district as a whole • Participate in the governance and management of the council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the policy of the council and give it political leadership • Play a full role in the work of any inter-council committees or bodies to which appointed • Contribute to/participate in scrutiny committees • Lobby cabinet members to inform and influence council policy • Develop cross-party instruments or vehicles for change • Contribute to/participate in all-party working groups

Indicators and Understandings for Councillors - the how

<p>Councillor indicators and understandings – the way we work</p>	<p>Demonstrate the council’s values:</p> <p>We put Citizens First</p> <p>We are True to our Word</p> <p>We act Courageously</p> <p>We Achieve Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest time and effort to build respect and effective relationships with officers and other members • Work with officers to resolve issues together • Understand the role of members and the role of officers • Understand the demands on officers and services • Be curious about problems, issues and solutions • Ask questions before making assumptions • Hold open and honest conversations • Constructively and appropriately challenge to officer advice or actions • Communicate respectfully with officers • Understanding of whole council systems, services and processes which are relevant to the most common complaints/enquiries • Be open to constructive challenge from officers • Prioritise conversations with officers to develop working relationships • Use reporting processes provided for councillors only where required to 	<p>Demonstrate the council’s values:</p> <p>We put Citizens First</p> <p>We are True to our Word</p> <p>We act Courageously</p> <p>We Achieve Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with all members to understand consensus issues • Work with other members, sometimes on cross-party basis, to lobby for service delivery changes • Invest time and effort to build relationships with officers and other members • Understanding of council systems, services and processes which are most relevant to the Ward • Understand and reflect the character and needs of the area • Be prepared to try doing different things to solve problems, using evidence to inform the approach to be taken • Be prepared to try new things and take risks, especially where there is supporting evidence to do so • Work with officers to resolve issues together • Understand the demands on officers and services • Communicate respectfully with officers • Be curious about problems, issues and solutions to identify where there 	<p>Demonstrate the council’s values:</p> <p>We put Citizens First</p> <p>We are True to our Word</p> <p>We act Courageously</p> <p>We Achieve Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with all members to understand consensus issues • Work with other members, sometimes on cross-party basis to lobby for policy changes • Invest time and effort to build relationships with officers and other members • Understanding of whole council systems, services and processes • Understand and reflect the character and needs of the area • Look beyond Birmingham for good ideas and solutions • Be open to constructive challenge from officers and members
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop more self-sufficient approaches which require less officer support and resource 	<p>may be bigger problems or issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions before making assumptions • Constructive ‘challenge’ to officer advice or action • Be open to constructive challenge from officers and members • Prioritise feedback to officers and hold conversations to develop working relationships, e.g. also update on progress • Meet residents and where possible hold meetings on site to see the issues 	
Working with other members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abide by Members Code of Conduct and Protocols • Shared spaces for all parties • Disseminate policy information regularly to all members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abide by Members Code of Conduct and Protocols • Shared spaces for all parties in Districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abide by Members Code of Conduct • Shared spaces for all parties in city centre buildings • Scrutiny committee roles/participation • Creation and maintenance of all-party working groups on shared priorities and issues – developing these on a smaller scale, test basis, operating as task and finish groups
Officer roles and behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abide by Officer Protocols • Respect and value the public accountability role of members • Respect and value the officer accountability role to members • Invest time and effort to build respect and relationships with members • Address councillors as people not necessarily as councillors • Work with members to resolve issues together • Be open to constructive challenge from members • Constructive ‘challenge’ and advice to members • Communicate respectfully with members • Prioritise feedback to members and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abide by Officer Protocols • Be receptive to expertise, support and advice • Work with members to resolve issues together • Respect and value the public accountability role of members • One officer point of contact for each Ward to act as a navigator • Open to challenge and scrutiny • Invest time and effort to build respect and relationships with members • Respect and value the officer accountability role to members • Provide challenge and feedback to members • Include members in the development of Ward plans and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abide by Officer Protocols • Provide expertise and advice • Open to challenge and scrutiny • Provide challenge and feedback to members • Invest time and effort to build respect and relationships with members

	<p>hold conversations to develop working relationships, e.g. also to update on progress</p>	<p>priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate respectfully with officers • Prioritise feedback to officers and hold conversations to develop working relationships, e.g. also update on progress 	
Member development and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction to include meet and greet of local officers • Pack to include key information about council policies, contact lists and enquiry processes • Regular feedback from officers • Hold marketplace events for officers to meet members and vice versa • Accessing the council's IT systems, including Outlook and People Solutions to identify the right information and contacts • Better promotion of the BCCouncillorsEnquiries reporting e-mail address 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More relevant training options • Induction to include meet and greet of local officers • Induction to include key information about council policies • Regular feedback from officers • Hold market place events for officers to meet members and vice versa • Accessing the council's IT systems, including Outlook and People Solutions to identify the right information and contacts • Sharing of good practice and approaches towards Neighbourhood Challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More relevant training options – which members can request via their groups • Induction to include key information about council policies • Regular feedback from officers • Clear routes to challenge/feedback are needed
IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a more efficient case management system for members • On-line referral of issues, equivalent to “pink-slip” online system which can check and filter queries/enquiries to the right places and for the right purposes • Easier and more effective IT access, including internet access in city centre buildings • Attend training provided • Learn how to create a reference number and log queries • Awareness and understand of archiving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared information and improved IT system • Easier and more effective IT access, including internet access in ward or district buildings • Access to shared drives, e.g. Sharepoint for use by members, officers and partners 	

Other support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council model supports members • Shared spaces with officers • Fact sheets and contact sheets • More visibility of member (and officer) pictures and profiles in city centre buildings • Defined and whole council implemented “resolution process” for members to inform escalation of unresolved issues or failures • Access to officer and department names and numbers – shared information • Drop-in or meet and greet sessions in the city centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council model supports members • More visibility of member (and officer) pictures and profiles in ward or district buildings • Shared spaces with officers • Defined and whole council implemented “resolution process” for members to inform escalation of unresolved issues or failures • Access to officer and department names and numbers – shared information • Drop-in or meet and greet sessions in wards or districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared spaces with officers in the city centre • More visibility of member (and officer) pictures and profiles in city centre buildings • Drop-in or meet and greet sessions in the city centre • Invitations to “Thinktalks” or other lecture type events with officers, at a more convenient time for members to attend
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