

Chapter 2 – Members of the Council

2.1 Composition and eligibility

2.1.1 **Composition.** The Council will consist of 50 elected Members. One or more Members will be elected by the voters of each ward in accordance with a scheme drawn up by the Electoral Commission and approved by the Secretary of State.

2.1.2 **Eligibility.** To be eligible to stand as a councillor a person must be registered to vote in the district, or live or work there. More specifically, they must either:

- (a) be a local government elector for the area of the council; or
- (b) have during the whole of the twelve months preceding the day on which he or she is nominated as a candidate occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the area of the council; or
- (c) have as his or her principal or only place of work in the twelve months preceding the day on which he or she is nominated as a candidate premises in the area of the council; or
- (d) have resided in the area of the council during the whole of the twelve months preceding the day on which he or she is nominated as a candidate.

2.1.3 A person is disqualified for election if they:

- (a) hold a paid office under the council or a politically restricted post as defined under the provisions of the Local Government Housing Act 1989; or
- (b) are bankrupt; or
- (c) have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) of not less than three

months, without the option of a fine, during the five years preceding the election; or

- (d) are disqualified under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal practices.

2.2 Election and terms of Members

The regular election of Members under this Constitution will be held on the first Thursday in May every four years beginning in 2019. The terms of office of Members will start on the fourth day after being elected and will finish on the fourth day after the date of the next regular election.

2.3 Roles and functions of all Members

2.3.1 All Members will:

- (a) collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions;
- (b) represent their communities and bring their views into the council's decision-making process, that is, become the advocate of and for their communities;
- (c) deal with individual casework and act as an advocate for constituents in resolving particular concerns or grievances;
- (d) balance different interests identified within the ward and represent the ward as a whole;
- (e) be involved in decision-making;
- (f) participate in the governance of the council;
- (g) be available to represent the council on other bodies; and
- (h) maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics.

Rights and duties

- 2.3.2 Members will have rights of access to 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.
- 2.3.3 Members will not make public information which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the council or divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a Member or officer entitled to know it.
- 2.3.4 For these purposes, “confidential” and “exempt” information are defined in the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution.

2.4 Conduct

Members will at all times observe the Members’ Code of Conduct and the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations set out in Part 5 of this Constitution.

2.5 Allowances

Members will be entitled to receive allowances in accordance with the Members’ Allowances Scheme set out in Part 6 of this Constitution.