

**Member Role Profiles**

**May 2020**

This booklet contains the Role Profiles and key skills for member positions. Responsibilities, knowledge, skills as well as learning and time required for different member roles are covered, including those for all Ward councillors.

You can use the Member Role Profiles like job descriptions to help you decide which position/s you would like to stand for. The Profiles can help you assess your skills and where you may want to develop.

Member Development will provide the support and training you may need in order to gain skills and knowledge for your current and future roles as well as keeping you up to date with changes in legislation and best practice.

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**Key Skills for All Councillors**

* Communication Skills: Communicate clearly in written & spoken forms, listen sensitively, use appropriate language and avoids ‘council speak’.

Examples: Speaks confidently at a variety of public events. Creates opportunities to communicate with different sectors, including vulnerable and hard to reach groups.

* Local Leadership: Engage with the community, canvass opinion and act on issues of local concern. Mediate fairly and constructively between people and groups with conflicting needs, represent **all** sections of the community, working with others to develop and champion a shared local vision.

Examples: Champions others’ needs and gets involved in engagement activities such as door knocking, fun-days, walkabouts and street surgeries.

* Partnership Working: Build and shape key partnerships at local, regional and national levels. Make people from all backgrounds feel valued, trusted and included (for example, says ‘thank you’).

Examples: Achieves shared goals by maintaining focus and mobilising others. Develops good relationships with colleagues, officers, community groups and other organisations and helps others build partnerships.

* Scrutiny & Challenge: Identify areas suitable for scrutiny and ensures that the community is involved in the scrutiny process. Act as a critical friend by providing constructive feedback.

Examples: Engages in scrutiny as an everyday part of councillor role. Asks challenging but constructive questions. Is objective, rigorous and fair.

* Political Understanding: Demonstrate consistency in views and values through decisions and actions. Look for ways to promote democracy and increase public engagement. Able to work effectively in range of political environments including outside the Council.

Examples: Clearly communicates political values through canvassing and campaigning. Can work with people with different views and values.

* Regulating & Monitoring: Use evidence to evaluate arguments and make judgments. Follow legal process and balance public needs and local policy. Monitor own and others’ performance and intervene when necessary to ensure progress.

Examples: Chairs meetings effectively, follows protocol to make sure all views are explored and process kept on track. Seeks feedback for self and looks for opportunities to learn.

# The Role of a Councillor

These are the roles all councillors undertake.

**Purpose**

1. To represent constituents and ward interests in her/his dealings with the Council.

2. To sit on a range of member level bodies, including Council meetings, reaching informed and balanced decisions.

1. To provide community leadership and promote active citizenship.

**Key Tasks**

1. To represent individual constituents and local organisations, attending surgeries, undertaking casework and enquiries on their behalf and serving all fairly and equally.

2. To represent ward interests by engaging and liaising with key stakeholders in the community including residents’ associations, local businesses, community organisations, police and health authorities.

3. To be a channel of communication to the community on council strategies, policies, services and procedures through attendance at community meetings and any outside bodies on which they represent the Council.

1. To participate in member level meetings, reaching and making informed and balanced decisions and overseeing performance.

5. To be involved in reviewing the Council’s budget, policies, service delivery and strategies through the overview and scrutiny process when not a member of the Cabinet. To also carry out this role in relation to scrutinising partners.

6. To promote and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of council and other public services.

7. To provide community leadership and promote active citizenship.

8. To adhere to the various codes of conduct and protocols relating to election as a councillor.

9. To refer any ‘intractable issues’ to Select Committees through the Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) process

10. To participate in opportunities for training and development provided for members by the authority.

**Chair/Deputy Chair of Committees/Boards/Task Group**

Chairs/deputies provide leadership and direction and ensure that adequate resources (financial & officer support) are identified and sought from the Council. They also chair Committee/Board meetings and ensure the Committee/Board achieves its terms of reference

**Duties and responsibilities**

* Chair the committee/board/task group in a fair and open manner in accordance with the procedures of the committee.
* Guide, with the assistance of officers, the committee to reach decisions based on the information presented to it and the relevant legal guidelines
* Encourage Members to obtain necessary skills to contribute to the work of the Committee and to work with officers to provide training if necessary
* Lead the Committee/Board/Task Group in prioritising its work
* Co-ordinate work with other Committees & Chairs and to share learning
* Develop a constructive relationship with the Cabinet, Senior Leadership Team Directors/Operational Directors in the areas relevant to the Committee/Board’s work
* Endeavour to engage all Members of the Committee/Board/Task Group in its activities
* Be available to chair up to 25 meetings per annum.

**Essential Skills/knowledge**

* Good communication and interpersonal skills
* Leadership and chairing skills
* Project and time management skills
* Ability to influence and work constructively with Members, officers, the public and outside organisations
* Ability to frame insightful and probing questions
* Ability to work as part of a team

**Learning Requirements**

* Advanced Chairing Skills essential
* The Procedures relevant to the particular Board/Committee/Task Group
* The professional disciplines and services relevant to the work of the Committee

**Time Requirements (in addition to that for Board/Committee/Task Group members)**

* Pre-Meetings to prepare for Board/Committee/Task Group

# Planning Committee Member

**Purpose**

Exercises the Council’s development control (local planning) functions

**Duties and responsibilities**

* To demonstrate to the public, applicants, objectors etc., fair and open decision making by or on behalf of the Committee

**Skills/knowledge required**

* Clear knowledge and understanding of law and regulations relating to Planning matters.

**Learning Requirements**

* Initial training: assessed course over two evenings
* Additional training to keep up-to-date with changes in legislation
* Occasional training related to design and planning issues

**Time Requirements**

* Meetings currently held every four weeks on Mondays at 7pm
* Chair’s briefing for Chair/Deputy Chair to prepare for Board
* Occasional pre-application meetings are held prior to the application being considered by the Committee.

# Licensing and Regulatory Committee Member

**Purpose**

Exercises the Council’s licensing and regulatory duties and functions.

**Duties and responsibilities**

* To demonstrate to the public, applicants, objectors etc., fair and open decision making by or on behalf of the Committee.
* To guide, with the assistant of officers, the committee to reach decisions based on the information presented to it.

**Skills/knowledge required**

* Clear knowledge and understanding of the laws and guidelines relating to Licensing and Regulation
* Ability to frame relevant and investigatory questions.

**Learning Requirements**

* Training is mandatory for all new Members of the Board before they take part in any decisions
* Additional training to keep up-to-date with changes in legislation
* Occasional training related to design and planning issues

**Time Requirements**

* Licensing Sub-committee meetings are currently held fortnightly on Wednesdays at 7pm
* Full Board meetings held every three months
* Pre-Meetings for Chair/Vice Chair to prepare for Board

# Personnel Board Member

**Duties and responsibilities**

Hear appeals against dismissals for Redundancy, Gross misconduct, Capability, Sickness absence & Final written warnings for misconduct cases. Note chair/deputy chair are both called on to chair Personnel Board meetings

Members of the Personnel Board may be required to attend Sounding Board meetings to discuss proposed outcomes of bullying and harassment appeals. The Chair and one other member can attend these (on a rotational basis)

**Skills/knowledge required**

* Knowledge and understanding of guidelines and law relating to Personnel
* Objectivity/impartiality
* Assertiveness
* Ability to maintain control/order
* Ability to frame relevant and investigatory questions.

**Learning Requirements**

* Mandatory training for all new Board members
* Subsequent training for updates and to moderate on decisions made

**Time Requirements**

* Appeals are always held daytime on Thursdays or Fridays and vary from half to two days in length depending on case to be hear
* Frequency of meetings depends on Appeals made
* Preparation reading for each case 3-5 hours

# Chair/Deputy Chair of the Assembly

**Purpose**

The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Assembly are responsible for chairing the Assembly and ensuring the Assembly achieves its goals whilst adhering to the Constitution

**Duties and responsibilities**

* To update and promote the purposes of the Constitution and interpret it (with the help of the Chief Executive)
* To preside over meetings of the Assembly so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of councillors and the interests of the community.
* To ensure that the Assembly meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of interest to the local community and the place at which all Members are able to question and/or hold the Council’s political structure and decision making to account.
* To promote public involvement in the Council’s activities.

**Essential Knowledge Skills Required**

* Good communication and interpersonal skills
* Leadership and chairing skills
* Ability to influence and work constructively with Members, officers, the public, external advisors and outside organisations
* Ability to cut across political divides to ensure the smooth and constitutional running of the Assembly
* Good knowledge of the Constitution in practice.

**Learning Requirements**

* Advanced Chairing Skills essential
* Procedure for Assembly meetings
* The Constitution – knowledge of parts relating to Assembly

**Time Requirements**

* Assembly meets up to six times per year in the evening
* Pre-meetings prior to each Assembly

# Pensions Committee Member

**Purpose**

Administers the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Pension Fund. This includes making appropriate arrangements for investment of assets, determining contribution levels and monitoring performance of fund managers.

**Skills/knowledge required**

* Good Financial Understanding
* Investment Principles
* Ability to frame relevant and investigatory questions.

**Learning Requirements**

* Extensive training for new and experienced members at beginning of the municipal year
* Additional training throughout the year

**Time Requirements**

* Meetings held quarterly at 7pm
* The tenure is two years

# Audit and Standards Committee Member

**Purpose**

The Committee considers reports for internal audit, external audit, performance, governance, annual governance statement (AGS) and to approve the statement of accounts.

The Committee also promotes and maintains high standards of behaviour by councillors and employees. It is responsible for dealing with allegations of breaches of the Members’ Code of Conduct, for which Sub-Committees are appointed as and when required.

**Skills/knowledge required**

* Knowledge and understanding of current rules and regulations relating to Standards
* Knowledge and understanding of audit matters.
* Ability to frame relevant and investigatory questions.

**Learning Requirements**

* Mandatory training for all new Committee members
* Additional training dependent on Committee needs

**Time Requirements**

* Meetings held quarterly at 7pm. In addition, Hearing Sub-Committees meet as required.

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair/Deputy**

1. Chair meetings of the Scrutiny Committee
2. Lead decision-making on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee, working closely with the Deputy Lead Member and consulting with the wider membership where possible
3. Act as a spokesperson for the Scrutiny Committee, raising the profile of scrutiny internally and externally and using your influence to remove barriers to effective scrutiny
4. Develop a clear understanding of the terms of reference of the committee and the scope and range of the services for which it is responsible
5. Ensure that the Scrutiny Committee works within its remit, is balanced in its focus of work, and fulfils any agreed terms of reference
6. Work closely with the Scrutiny Officer for the committee and the statutory Scrutiny Officer to deliver the agreed work programme
7. Agree all agendas for Scrutiny Committee meetings and take a lead in developing a forward plan and ensuring it is adhered to by Members of the committee
8. Review, challenge and question the implementation of agreed policy and service delivery and make recommendations to the Cabinet to improve policy, performance and service delivery
9. Ensure the work of the Select Committee contributes to the delivery of best value and continuous improvement in services and implementation of best practice
10. Meet on a regular basis and consult with relevant Cabinet Member(s) to advise them of progress in the work of the Select Committee, discuss issues arising from scrutiny reviews and note action being taken by the relevant Cabinet Member(s) to address the concerns of the Select Committee
11. Assist in the development of the Council’s budgetary and policy framework and ensure that the Select Committee is responsive to local issues
12. Create an atmosphere of participation where the views of other members are respected and valued
13. Enable all Scrutiny Committee members to play a full part in the scrutiny process and delegate tasks as appropriate to other Committee members and support less experienced scrutiny members
14. Identify training and development opportunities for Committee members
15. Ensure that recommendations are well evidenced, deliverable, and will make a positive impact on public services and the wider community
16. Take an active role in the drafting of scrutiny reports (including Annual Reports) to see that it reflects the views of the Committee as a group
17. Attend all pre-meetings and agenda-setting meetings of the Committee
18. Give suggestions where scrutiny could be improved and participate in review groups set up for this purpose.

**Deputy Chair Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Deputise for the Chair in all of the above where necessary
2. Support the Chair in the effective management of the Committee
3. Lead working groups and be responsible for reporting findings back to the Committee
4. Attend all pre-meetings and agenda setting meetings of the Committee

**Collective Responsibilities**

1. Attend all formal and informal meetings of the Scrutiny Committee
2. Champion the four principles of good scrutiny: led by independent people who take responsibility for their role, drives improvement in public services, provide a constructive ‘critical friend’ challenge, amplifies the voices and concerns of the public
3. Be a ‘critical friend’ to Cabinet members, senior officers, and partners when holding them to account
4. Seek evidence from a wide range of stakeholders
5. Regularly check the Council’s Forward Plan and be mindful of contentious decisions that may require or assist with pre decision scrutiny or consensus building with a wider group of members. Discuss with the relevant portfolio holder and statutory Scrutiny officer.
6. Seek professional advice on the scrutiny process to ensure that the Committee acts in accordance with the Council’s Constitution

**Essential Skills/knowledge**

* Leadership and chairing skills
* Extensive knowledge and understanding of the role of Scrutiny and Challenge in local government and the latest law and regulations relating to it. An understanding of the principles of best value.
* Ability to frame insightful and probing questions.
* Ability to work as part of a team
* Good communication and interpersonal skills
* Able to challenge effectively
* Good command of interview techniques
* Project and time management skills
* Ability to influence and work constructively with Members, officers, the public and outside organisations

**Learning Requirements**

* Advanced Chairing Skills essential
* Procedure relevant to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee
* Law, regulation and good practice relating to Scrutiny meetings
* Questioning Skills

**Time Requirements (in addition to that for Scrutiny Committee members)**

* Pre-Meetings to prepare for Committee meetings

# Employee Joint Consultative Committee (EJCC) Member

**Purpose**

To provide a forum for effective communication between the Council and its employees and promote good employee relations.

**Duties and responsibilities**

* To promote good employee relations and facilitate communications between the Council and employees;
* To consider issues affecting conditions of service and employees generally
* To provide opportunities for employees to have a wider interest in, and greater responsibility for, the conditions under which their work is performed;
* To inform employees about the Council's strategy and promote their involvement in the Council's core values and corporate objectives;
* To provide opportunities for employees to contribute to the above processes.

**Skills/knowledge required**

* Ability to work constructively with officers and trade unions
* Knowledge and understanding of employment and health and safety legislation and the Council’s approach
* Knowledge and understanding of employee consultation arrangements
* Objectivity/impartiality
* Assertiveness

**Learning requirements**

* Training for new and experienced Board members at beginning of municipal year
* Additional training dependent on Committee needs

**Time requirements**

* Meets as required

**The Mayor**

The Mayor is the Borough’s first Citizen. The Mayor is elected each year by the Ceremonial Council and must be a serving councillor. The role of the Mayor is non-political. The Mayor is chosen to represent the Borough at Civic, Ceremonial and community events.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

* To be an Ambassador when attending events both in and out of the borough
* To maintain effective relationship with other councillors and the relevant support officers
* Adhere to protocols and customs
* To encourage diversity and equality
* To promote wherever possible the borough’s community priorities
* Conduct themselves in a manner that will uphold the respect of the office of Mayor
* Be willing to attend any courses or other learning opportunities to enhance the knowledge and skills of the service

**Skills/knowledge required**

* A good understanding of the purpose of the role
* Understanding of protocols and customs
* History of the Mayor’s Regalia, including the Chain and Badge of Office, past insignia, the Mace, the borough crest.
* Local Authority and council services
* Good communication skills
* Ability to work constructively with Members, officers, the public and outside organisations
* Time management skills
* Dealing with the media
* Public Speaking
* IT – electronic Calendar and email systems
* Networking – in a range of different settings
* Chairing Ceremonial meetings
* Ability to appraise own and others performance and amend if necessary

**Learning Requirements**

* Assessment of learning requirements will be undertaken and a development plan put into place once the Mayor elect is chosen.

**Time Requirements**

* There is a busy schedule of daytime, weekend and evening events.

**Cabinet Members**

Cabinet Members have two sets of duties and responsibilities, one exercised individually, the other as a group, all of which are in addition to those expected of every Member.

**1 Collective responsibilities (CABINET)**

Members devise policy, take decisions, and monitor performance collectively, participating in regular formal and informal meetings as a group.

Duties and responsibilities include:

* Provide strong and consistent leadership and clear political guidance to members and officers
* Policy formulation and Policy decision making with awareness of the Council’s priorities and Vision Participate in discussions about policy issues across all services
* Ensure community interests are properly regarded and represented and ensure stakeholders are consulted in making decisions
* Have regard to the collective responsibilities of the Cabinet as set out in the Council’s constitution
* Have regard to the financial, constitutional and statutory framework in which the Cabinet operates
* Work collectively with chief officers to monitor and improve performance
* Give appropriate regard to equalities and diversity issues
* Represent the Council on external bodies (as appointed by the Assembly) and provide feedback to the Cabinet as required
* Attend meetings with stakeholders
* Act as a representative of the Cabinet to other members, briefing on matters of policy change, answering enquiries and dealing with concerns where appropriate
* Attend all Cabinet meetings

**2 Individual responsibilities (PORTFOLIO)**

Members develop policy ideas, discuss and formulate strategy and monitor performance, working closely with their portfolio Operational and Commissioning Directors.

Duties and responsibilities include:

* Act as Lead Member for a portfolio as required by the Leader
* Have a clear understanding of the portfolio including the scope and range of services, financial context and position within the portfolio areas of responsibility
* Maintain close relationships with appropriate senior officers relevant to their portfolio
* Work with portfolio officers to develop policy or examine strategic issues before reporting back to the Cabinet
* Provide support and direction to portfolio officers on all issues of strategy and policy
* Keep up to date with policy developments at local, regional and national level relevant to the portfolio
* Act as spokesperson for issues relating to the portfolio and take an active role in publicly promoting and defending the portfolio
* Meet with chair(s) of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis to discuss progress in their area of responsibility, responses to concerns raised and future programmes of work
* Engage with local stakeholders and partners relevant to the portfolio
* Attend all Cabinet meetings

# The Leader

The Leader provides political leadership and strategic direction for the entire Council, ensures effective corporate governance by Members, and provides stewardship and community leadership of the authority. The Leader chairs the Cabinet and ensures that it achieves goals and objectives within the Council’s constitutional framework. The Leader ensures that the Council delivers high quality, value for money services to the whole borough, with a regard for short and long term success.

**Duties and responsibilities**

In addition to the duties and responsibilities required of Members and Cabinet Members, the Leader is expected to:

* Provide the political leadership to the Council, including designing the policy framework in which the Council and other Members will operate
* Take such executive action as may be delegated by the authority in the Constitution
* Be the representative voice of the Council in its dealings with Central Government, the GLA and other Local Authorities and their associations, and to positively promote the Council as a whole in the media and to the public at large.
* Lead on member governance, ensuring that the highest ethical standards are maintained by all members.
* Lead the Cabinet and be responsible for the Council’s corporate strategy
* Act as Chair of the Cabinet
* Bring Cabinet Members together as a close and cohesive group, ensuring their responsibilities and functions integrate closely
* Set objectives for Cabinet Members and regularly monitor performance
* Hold regular meetings with the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Directors to discuss strategic direction, policy and performance across the authority
* Be the key contact for outside organisations (including Central Government, Local Authority Associations and Council partners) and the Council’s Senior
* Management Team
* Act as the spokesperson for the Council on all issues, unless delegated to an appropriate Cabinet Member or chief officer
* Promote the long term financial, business and economic stability of the Council
* Encourage the highest standards of probity and corporate governance among officers and members
* Promote the borough Manifesto

# Deputy Leader/s

There are two Deputy Leaders on the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham. Both work closely with the Leader, providing assistance and support in all areas of their work. Where appropriate, and where permissible under the Council’s constitution, a Deputy Leader may act in the absence of the Leader.

**Duties and responsibilities**

In addition to the duties and responsibilities required of Members and Cabinet Members, the Deputy Leaders are expected to:

* Be the representative voice of the Council in its dealings with Central Government, the GLA and other Local Authorities and their Associations and to positively promote the Council as a whole in the media and to the public at large
* Assist and work with the Leader in achieving the aims and objectives of his role
* Chair Cabinet meetings in the Leader’s absence
* Act on behalf of the Leader in his absence, as instructed by the Leader, and in line with the statutory and constitutional framework of the Council
* Deputise for the Leader at external and stakeholder meetings as required
* To carry out such other duties and undertake portfolio responsibilities as delegated by the Leader

**Essential skills and knowledge for:**

- Leader

- Deputy Leaders

- Cabinet Members

* Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
* Able to analyse and grasp complex issues
* Able to establish strategic policy and prioritise actions based on local needs, manifesto and regional opportunities
* Good understanding of how local, regional and national government operates, including the statutory and financial frameworks
* Good understanding of the operation of the Council
* Excellent understanding of the socio-economic situation in Barking and Dagenham, and a clear vision of the needs of its residents
* Able to work effectively as part of a team
* A grasp of the Council’s business and financial requirements, including the ability to understand and manage the Council’s budget
* Excellent political knowledge and awareness
* Able to chair meetings and facilitate discussions
* Able to work effectively with Council officers, the public, the media and outside organisations

**Learning Requirements** **for all Cabinet**

* New Portfolio Holder induction process of briefings/meetings/visits
* Public speaking
* Media handling
* Leadership Academy/Peer Mentoring/courses as relevant to role

For further information about these Member Role Profiles, please contact:

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