

Member Job Descriptions

2015/16



Bassetlaw
DISTRICT COUNCIL
— North Nottinghamshire —



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INTRODUCTION

Job descriptions for Members are to be introduced by Bassetlaw District Council and will be used by the Independent Remuneration Panel to underpin the Member Allowance Scheme.

The job descriptions clearly set out the expectations of a Ward Councillor and all the roles attracting a Special Responsibility Allowance.

By creating clear role descriptions and by identifying the skills and knowledge required for those roles we can shape our Member development programme to address these requirements.

The job descriptions have been created by the cross-party Member Development Steering Group. There has been consultation with Members and key officers to ensure the job descriptions reflect the current roles of elected Members.

The job descriptions have three main purposes: -

- To provide clarity for both Members and officers about what is expected of each role
- To provide guidance to the Independent Remuneration Panel in the preparation of the Member Allowance Scheme
- To support Councillors in their development by providing a checklist to identify their development needs, both for the roles they are currently undertaking and for future roles to support succession planning

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Accountable to

- Full Council
- Nominating Group
- Electorate

Purpose

- To provide effective political leadership and strategic direction for the Council
- To provide effective stewardship of the Council
- To Chair the Cabinet and ensure it achieves its terms of reference
- To ensure that the Council delivers high quality, value for money services

Duties and responsibilities

Political leadership to the Council

1. To provide political leadership to the Council, including proposing the policy framework within which the Council will operate and to take such executive action as may be delegated by the authority.
2. To communicate the Administration's policies and priorities to the Senior Management Team and receive their advice.
3. To work with other Political Groups to achieve, where possible, cross-party co-operation and to demonstrate at all times a respect for the individual.
4. To work with Group Leaders and Whips to ensure all Members of the Council fulfil their role.

Managing and leading the work of the Cabinet

5. To lead the Cabinet and be responsible for the Council's corporate and resource strategy.
6. To ensure the Cabinet is effective both collectively and as individual portfolio-holders.
7. To ensure the effective integration of roles, responsibilities and functions within the Cabinet membership.
8. To work with Cabinet Members and senior managers to address budget priorities and budget setting for each municipal year and present these recommendations to Council.
9. To promote the long-term financial stability of the Council.

Representing and acting as Ambassador for the Authority

10. As Leader of the Council to be the key contact for outside organisations (including Central Government, local authority associations and Council partners).
11. To be the representative voice of the Council and to positively promote the Council in the media.
12. To act as a political spokesperson for the Council.

Community leadership

13. To provide political leadership to key external partnerships.
14. To act as a leader of the local community by showing vision and foresight.

Personal development

15. To be responsible for continuous personal development. Take advantage of learning opportunities to build on knowledge and to develop relevant skills.

Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

16. To observe and demand in others the highest standards of probity and corporate governance within the Council.
17. To adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council (refer to the Member/officer protocol).

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED FOR THE ROLE OF LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER

Skills

- Effective, advanced leadership skills
- Ability to chair meetings and facilitate open discussion
- Analytical skills to grasp complex issues
- Business planning skills to plan and prioritise Council business
- Ability to build effective relationships within the Council and externally
- Computer literacy/research skills
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Excellent political knowledge and awareness
- Advanced public speaking, presentation, listening and questioning skills

Knowledge

- Detailed understanding of the strategic role of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council
- Detailed knowledge of the powers of the local authority
- A clear understanding of the needs of the District (social, economic and environmental)
- Detailed understanding of the role of the Chief Executive and other senior officers
- Detailed understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development
- A good understanding of how local, national and European government operates including the statutory and financial frameworks
- Detailed understanding of the Council's Constitution, Code of Conduct, Budget, and key internal processes e.g. audit/performance management

DEPUTY LEADER

Accountable to

- Leader
- Full Council
- Nominating Group
- Electorate

Purpose

- To work with the Leader of the Council to provide effective political leadership and strategic direction for the Authority
- To fulfil the duties of the Leader in his or her absence (where appropriate and permissible under the Council's Constitution)
- To fulfil specific responsibilities determined by the Leader

Duties and responsibilities

1. To assist the Leader of the Council to fulfil his/her leadership responsibilities.
2. To work with the Leader and Cabinet Members on the Council budget; the development and delivery of the vision and priorities of the Council.
3. To deputise for the Leader and carry out the requirements of the job profile where it is appropriate and legally permissible.
4. To carry out duties and portfolio responsibilities as delegated by the Leader of the Council.
5. To observe and demand in others the highest standards of probity and corporate governance within the Council.
6. To adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council (refer to the Member/officer protocol).

CABINET MEMBER

Accountable to

- Leader
- Cabinet
- Full Council
- Electorate

Purpose

- To provide collective and individual leadership as part of the Executive
- To undertake lead responsibility for allocated portfolios
- To contribute effectively towards the strategic direction of the Council

Duties and responsibilities

Providing portfolio leadership

1. Act as lead Member /champion for a portfolio area, having regard to how this fits within the overall policy objectives of the Council. In particular: -
 - a. build good relationships with appropriate senior officers (observing the guidance in the Member/Officer Protocol) and work with them in developing policy and strategic issues prior to formal reporting;
 - b. contribute to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan;
 - c. keep abreast of related developments and policies at a national, regional and local level;
 - d. enhance the Council's reputation through taking the national stage, where possible, and participating in regional and national networks;
 - e. aim for Bassetlaw to be at the forefront of service development and provision where possible; take an active interest in related performance indicators and rankings;
 - f. represent the Executive at scrutiny committees in connection with the portfolio responsibilities and in response to a "call-in";
 - g. be aware of issues of importance to the community and other stakeholders related to the portfolio;
 - h. be aware of key budgetary issues in connection with the portfolio;
 - i. promote the portfolio and act as a spokesperson with the media for this area of work.
2. Exercise delegated powers in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Reporting and accounting

3. Encourage openness and honesty in the way that Cabinet business is conducted.
4. Be available to discuss queries or matters of concern with other elected Members.

Taking an active part in Cabinet meetings and decision making

5. Contribute to the development and delivery of the vision and strategic priorities of the Council.
6. Participate effectively as a Member of the Executive and take collective responsibility for Executive decisions.
7. Ensure that decision making is robust, evidence based and takes account of community/ equalities impacts.

Community leadership

8. Represent the Council on external bodies and feedback to the Executive any issues of relevance or importance.
9. Participate in key partnerships relevant to the portfolio.

Personal development

10. Be responsible for continuous personal development. Take advantage of learning opportunities to build on knowledge and to develop relevant skills.

Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

11. Adhere to the highest standards of probity and corporate governance within the Council.
12. Adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council (refer to the Member/Officer Protocol).

Skills

- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Computer literacy
- Analytical
- Leadership
- Team work
- Ability to work effectively with Members, Council officers, the public, outside organisations and the media

Knowledge

- An understanding of national and local government statutory and financial frameworks
- An understanding of the Council, including the economic and social situation within Bassetlaw
- An understanding of local government finance and the budget setting process in Bassetlaw District Council
- An understanding of the budget in respect of the portfolio
- Political knowledge and awareness
- Knowledge of the portfolio specialism

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIR

Accountable to

- Full Council
- Electorate

Purpose

- To provide leadership and direction to the Committee
- To promote the role of scrutiny within the Council and with external partners
- To evaluate the impact and added value of scrutiny activity and identify areas for improvement

Duties and responsibilities

Providing leadership and direction

1. To effectively chair the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
2. To work with Members of the Committee to develop a balanced work programme for the Committee which includes pre-decision scrutiny, policy development/review and investigative scrutiny.
3. To ensure that the programme takes account of relevant factors such as: work programmes of the Executive, other committees, strategic priorities/risks and relevant community concerns.
4. To endeavour to engage all Members of the Committee in the scrutiny process.
5. To develop a constructive relationship with the Executive Directors and Heads of Service in the areas that the Committee scrutinises.
6. To encourage Committee Members to obtain the necessary skills to carry out the scrutiny role and to work with officers to provide training if necessary.

Managing the work programme

7. To make sure that the agreed annual work programme is delivered.
8. To report on progress against the work programme to Council and others as appropriate at least on an annual basis.
9. To oversee the production of an Annual Scrutiny Report.

Holding the Executive to account

10. To evaluate the validity of Executive decisions and challenge inappropriate decisions through “call-in”.

Effective meeting management

11. To set agendas containing clear objectives and outcomes for the meeting.
12. To manage the progress of business at meetings, ensuring that meeting objectives are met, and the Code of Conduct is adhered to.

Community leadership

13. To act as a focus for liaison between the Council, community and external bodies in relation to the scrutiny function.

Personal development

14. Be responsible for continuous personal development. Take advantage of learning opportunities to build on knowledge and to develop relevant skills.

Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

15. Adhere to the highest standards of probity and corporate governance within the Council.
16. Adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council (refer to the Member/Officer Protocol).

Skills

- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Computer literacy
- Leadership
- Chairmanship
- Ability to influence and work constructively with Members, officers, the public and outside organisations
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Analytical
- Presentation and public speaking

Knowledge

- Role of scrutiny and the different types of scrutiny
- Understanding of the powers/limits of the powers of scrutiny
- Particular subjects that are being scrutinised

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE CHAIR

Accountable

- Full Council
- Electorate

Purpose

- To provide leadership and direction to the Committee
- To promote the role of audit and risk scrutiny within the Council
- To evaluate the impact and added value of scrutiny activity and identify areas for improvement

Duties and responsibilities

Providing leadership and direction

1. To effectively chair the Audit and Risk Scrutiny Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
2. To oversee the audit function of the Council ensuring the overall co-ordination and management of the audit process.
3. To ensure that the Council's risk management arrangements are robust and that action identified by auditors and inspectors are acted upon.
4. To ensure that the Annual Governance Statement is accurate and any improvement actions are implemented.
5. To produce an Annual Report for full Council on the activities of the Committee and how it has discharged its responsibilities.

Managing the work programme

6. Plan and prioritise the work of the Committee in consultation with the S151 Officer.
7. To approve the Council's internal audit strategy, plan and performance.

Holding officers and Members to account

8. To lead the review of internal /external audit reports and financial statements and seek assurance that action has been taken where necessary.

Effective meeting management

9. To set agendas containing clear objectives and outcomes for the meeting.
10. To manage the progress of business at meetings, ensuring that meeting objectives are met, and the Code of Conduct is adhered to.

Personal development

11. Be responsible for continuous personal development. Take advantage of learning opportunities to build on knowledge and to develop relevant skills.

Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

12. Adhere to the highest standards of probity and corporate governance within the Council.
13. Adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council (refer to the Member/Officer Protocol).

Skills

- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Computer literacy
- Partnership work with internal and external partners
- Advanced listening and questioning skills
- Advanced chairing skills
- Public speaking/presentation skills
- Handling the media

Knowledge

- Relevant legislation and local/national developments on audit, financial/risk management issues and their implications
- Financial framework, contract regulations, audit regulations, professional disciplines and services relevant to the work of the Committee
- Anti-fraud policies of the Council
- In depth understanding of local government finance and the Bassetlaw District Council budget

CHAIR OF A REGULATORY COMMITTEE (LICENSING/PLANNING)

Accountable to

- Full Council
- Members of the Regulatory Committee
- Electorate

Purpose

- To provide leadership and direction to the Committee
- To ensure that applicants, members of the public and other interested parties are satisfied with the transparency and fairness of the regulatory process

Duties and responsibilities

Providing leadership and direction

1. To chair the Committee in a fair and open way so that applicants and objectors can put their arguments to the Committee.
2. To guide the Committee, with the assistance of officers, to reach decisions based on the information presented to it.
3. To ensure the Committee demonstrates integrity and impartiality in decision making.
4. To ensure the Committee act within technical, legal, constitutional and procedural requirements.
5. To endeavour to engage all members of the Committee in its activities.
6. To manage the work programme for the Committee in consultation with relevant officers.

Promoting the role of the regulatory committee and quasi-judicial decision making

7. To encourage Committee Members to obtain the necessary skills to contribute to the work of the Committee and to work with officers to provide training if required.
8. To act as an ambassador for the regulatory committee, facilitating understanding of the role.
9. To act as a spokesperson for the Committee with the media and other stakeholders.

Personal development

10. Be responsible for continuous personal development. Take advantage of learning opportunities to build on knowledge and to develop relevant skills

Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

11. Adhere to the highest standards of probity and corporate governance within the Council.
12. To understand the respective roles of Members, officers and external parties operating within the regulatory committee's area of responsibility.
13. Adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council (refer to the Member/Officer Protocol).

Skills

- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Computer literacy
- Leadership
- Chairmanship
- Project and time management
- Ability to work constructively with Members, officers, the public, external advisors and outside organisations
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Ability to plan and prioritise the work of the Committee
- Advanced listening and questioning skills
- Presentation/public speaking

Knowledge

- Relevant legislation
- Local and national developments that relate to the work of the regulatory Committee
- Understanding of the powers of the Committee

WARD MEMBER

(the duties and responsibilities of Members are outlined in more detail in a 'Job Description for Councillors')

Accountable to

- Full Council
- Electorate of their Ward
- Group Leader

Purpose

- To contribute to the work of the Council
- To champion the interests of the local community and effectively represent the interests of your Ward and its constituents

Duties and Responsibilities

Representing and supporting communities

1. To represent ward interests.
2. To be an advocate for the Council in the Ward.
3. To be a channel of communication with the community on Council strategies, policies, services and procedures.
4. To represent individual constituents/local organisations, undertaking casework on their behalf and serving all fairly and equally.
5. To liaise with Executive Members, other Council Members, Council officers and partner organisations to ensure that the needs of local communities are identified, understood and supported.
6. To promote tolerance and cohesion in local communities.

Making decisions and overseeing Council performance

7. To participate in Full Council meetings, reaching and making informed, balanced decisions and overseeing performance.
8. To participate in informed and balanced decision making on Committees to which you are appointed.
9. To adhere to the principles of democracy and collective responsibility in decision making.
10. To promote and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of Council and other public services in the area.

Representing the Council

11. To represent the Council on local outside bodies as an appointee of the Council.
12. To represent the Council on local partnership bodies, promoting common interests where possible.

Community Leadership

13. To provide community leadership in your ward and promote active participation in the life of the ward with local residents.

Personal development

14. Be responsible for continuous personal development. Take advantage of learning opportunities to build on knowledge and to develop relevant skills

Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

15. Adhere to the highest standards of probity and corporate governance within the Council.
16. Adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council (refer to the Member/Officer Protocol).

Skills

- Ability to lead and champion the interests of the local community
- Ability to manage casework
- Computer literacy
- Community engagement
- Ability to influence and persuade
- Negotiation skills
- Managing conflict and mediation skills
- Ability to build effective relationships

Knowledge

- How the Council works
- Council structure, key contact officers, service procedures/eligibility criteria
- Political decision making structures
- Code of Conduct
- National policies and their impact on the Council
- Strategic priorities and key policies of the Council

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