

Article 2 – Members of The Council

2.1 Composition and eligibility

- (a) **Composition.** The Council will comprise 51 members, otherwise called councillors. Three councillors will be elected by the voters of each ward in accordance with a scheme drawn up by the Local Government Commission and approved by the Secretary of State.
- (b) **Eligibility.** Only registered voters of the district or those living or working there will be eligible to hold the office of councillor.

2.2 Election and terms of councillors

Election and terms. The ordinary election of a third of all councillors will be held on the first Thursday in May in each year, except that in 2005 and every fourth year after there will be no regular election. The terms of office of councillors will be four years starting on the fourth day after being elected and finishing on the fourth day after the date of the regular election four years later.

2.3 Roles and functions of all councillors

- a) **Key roles.** All councillors will:
 - (i) collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions;
 - (ii) represent their communities and bring their views into the Council's decision-making process, i.e. become the advocate of and for their communities;
 - (iii) contribute to the good governance of the area and actively encourage community participation and citizen involvement in decision making;
 - (iv) represent the interests of their ward and of their constituents;
 - (v) participate in the governance and management of the Council;
 - (vi) be available to represent the Council on other bodies; and
 - (vii) maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics.

b) Rights and duties

- (i) Councillors will have such 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.
- (ii) Councillors will not make public information which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the Cabinet or the Standards Committee on behalf of the Council or divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a councillor or officer entitled to know it unless required by law.
- (iii) For these purposes, "confidential" and "exempt" information are defined in the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution.

2.4 Conduct

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

Where a Member declares a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at a meeting they must not remain in the room where the meeting is taking place during the discussion or vote on that matter.

2.5 Allowances

Councillors will be entitled to receive allowances in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme set out in Part 7 of this Constitution.