

Article 2 - Members of the Council

2.01 Composition and eligibility

(a) Composition

The Council comprises 50 members (councillors). One or more councillors is 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 area or those living or working there will be eligible to hold the office of councillor.

2.02 Election and terms of councillors

The regular election of councillors will be held on the first Thursday in May every four years beginning in 2003. The terms of office of councillors will start on the fourth day after being elected and will finish, for payment purposes, on the third day after the date of the next regular election, essentially retiring on the fourth day after the election in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.

2.03 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 as advocates bringing views into the Council's decision-making process,
- (iii) deal with individual casework and act as an advocate for constituents in resolving particular concerns or grievances;
- (iv) balance different interests and represent the ward as a whole;
- (v) be involved in decision-making;
- (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 exempt without the consent of the Council or divulge confidential information to anyone other than a councillor or officer entitled to know it.

For these purposes, “confidential information” and “exempt information” are defined in the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution.

- (iii) Councillors will be permitted to address meetings of the Planning Committee about a particular application, in accordance with the procedures in place (set out in Part 5 of this Constitution).
- (iv) Councillors will be permitted to address meetings of the Licensing Committee only in accordance with the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings Regulations) 2005 (as amended)

2.04 Conduct

Councillors 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.

2.05 Allowances

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