

ROLE AND POWERS OF THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Appointment and General Role

The Annual Meeting of the Council will appoint the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Council for the forthcoming municipal year.

The Councillors appointed will hold these offices until:

- (a) The next Annual Meeting of the Council; or
- (b) The Leader or the Deputy Leader resigns from the office; or
- (c) The Leader or the Deputy Leader is no longer a Councillor; or
- (d) The Leader or the Deputy Leader is removed from the office by resolution of the Council requiring a simple majority, in respect of which the motion has been fully set out in the agenda for the meeting.

A notice of motion must be submitted to a Council meeting, if it is proposed to remove the Leader or Deputy Leader from this office and must be submitted 7 clear working days before the meeting.

If the Council meeting resolves to remove the Leader/Deputy from office but fails to appoint a successor, then an item to appoint a new Leader/Deputy must be included on the next and successive Council agendas until a replacement Leader has been appointed.

Where there is a vacancy in the office of Leader, the Deputy Leader will assume the responsibilities of the Leader until the next meeting of the Council.

Where both the Leader and Deputy Leader cease to hold office at the same time, the Council's Mayor shall call a meeting of the Full Council as soon as possible, to appoint a new Leader.

The role of the Leader/Deputy is not a formal legal role, but in practice, is the political head of the Council, and the Member with greatest responsibility for driving forward the broad policies of the Council.

Fulfilling the Role of Leader

The Council expects that the Leader will:

- be the political leader of the Council, for the benefit of all the Borough's communities - its citizens, taxpayers, businesses, public bodies and other public authorities
- lead and work with the Council, particularly the Chairs of its Committees and Sub-Committees:
 - in the development of the Council's vision for the future, policy framework, budgets and strategies

- in overseeing service delivery and the implementation of policies approved by the Council
- represent and pursue the interests of the Council in the community and at international, national and regional levels
- Serve as Chairperson of the Policy & Resources Committee
- fulfil the role of Leader at full Council
- lead in providing policy direction and guidance to the Chief Executive and Chief Officers
- meet regularly to progress the Council's objectives with Committee Chairs, the Chief Executive and Chief Officers, Leaders of other political groups on the Council, partner organisations, stakeholders, community representatives, government representatives, local Members of Parliament etc.

The Leader shall be recognised in the following ways:

- Chair Policy & Resources Committee: the Leader shall be appointed at the Council's Annual Meeting as Chairperson of the Council's Policy & Resources Committee.
- Attend and speak at any meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council, provided that they will only be entitled to vote if appointed as a voting member of that Committee or Sub-Committee.
- Be available to respond to questions at Full Council meetings.
- Establish policy direction, and the Council's priorities, and to facilitate discussion thereon.
- Be principal ambassador for the Borough and the Council (recognising the role of the Mayor).
- Represent the Council on external bodies, as considered appropriate, and to make decisions and vote on behalf of the Council at meetings of such bodies.
- Be involved in arrangements around major emergencies. The Leader and Deputy Leader must be informed if an emergency is likely to take place or has been declared under the Council's emergency planning or business continuity procedures.
- Promote and uphold high standards of ethical conduct by Members and the Council's equalities policies.

Legal Powers and Duties

As the Council operates a committee system, the Leader/Deputy have no formal legal powers and duties vested in them under the Local Government Act 1972, or the Local Government Act 2000.

However, in practice, all local authorities need to appoint to this office, and each will hold the most significant elected Member role within the Council. This office will act as the political/elected head of the Council; will be the focus for policy direction and community development; and will be the chief advocate and ambassador for the Borough.

Deputy Leader

The Annual Meeting of the Council will appoint a Councillor to be the Deputy Leader of the Council for that municipal year.

The Deputy Leader may be appointed as the Vice Chairperson of the Policy & Resources Committee of the Council.

The Deputy Leader is empowered to act in place of the Leader.

The Deputy Leader is empowered to represent the Council on any external body, as agreed with the Leader, and to make decisions and vote on behalf of the Council at meetings of such bodies.

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