

Member Job Descriptions

Duties associated with being a Member of West Sussex County Council

In accordance with the Constitutional arrangements of the County Council all members of the Council are expected to carry out their duties serving all of their communities equally and without discrimination, in accordance with the Council's equality and diversity policy and the Code of Conduct for members. Each member of the County Council shall:

1. Participate in the good governance of the county, represent the strategic interests of the county as a whole and contribute actively to the formation and scrutiny of the County Council's strategies, policies, budgets, commissioning activity and service delivery.
2. Represent effectively the needs and interests of the division for which the Councillor was elected (both as an individual community representative and through active participation in the County Local Committee for the area). Use best endeavours to represent the interests and concerns of all constituents in the member's division and deal effectively with constituency enquiries and representations. Communicate and consult with all such constituents on all County Council business and other issues affecting or relevant to the interests of those constituents so far as appropriate and reasonably practicable.
3. Champion the causes which best relate to the interests and sustainability of the community and campaign for the improvement of the quality of life of the community in terms of fairness, the economy and the environment.
4. Act as the County Council's representative on such outside bodies or organisations to which they have been appointed by the County Council. Be aware of any conflicts which may arise between this obligation and any which the body or organisation may wish the member to assume and seek advice from the Director of Law and Assurance or other relevant County Council officer when appropriate. Alert the relevant Cabinet Member and/or Leader to any contentious issue arising and, in the case of organisations of county-wide significance, make an annual report to the relevant Cabinet Member.
5. Commit themselves to provide sufficient time towards maintaining effective contributions to County Council and the local community and, to this end attend all meetings of committees or groups of which they are a member unless prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond the member's control.
6. Lead by example, in accordance with the highest standards of probity in public life and not bring the reputation of the County Council into disrepute.
7. To ensure that skills and knowledge are maintained through training and development.

8. Keep abreast of and contribute to new initiatives relating to the County Council, how it commissions and delivers services, and how it engages with local communities sufficient to ensure effective performance as a councillor.
9. Develop effective working relationships based on mutual respect and co-operation with all officers with whom the member may need to deal in the performance of their various roles.

The role of a Member in West Sussex:

A County Councillor is 'One who is a supported, confident, talented and professional community leader. One who understands but can also transform their place. One who can think strategically, as well as be informed and inspired by their local roots.'

Leadership Centre for Local Government

To carry out his/her duties, a good councillor will demonstrate the characteristics below:

<p>Listening to residents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Aware of local issues and concerns ✓ Listens well and act decisively with evidence ✓ Friendly and approachable ✓ Holds surgeries and mechanisms for being available to people ✓ Helps residents communicate with the Council 	<p>Making Things Happen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Involved in decision-making ✓ Attends meetings of groups appointed to (County Council, Scrutiny, CLCs etc) ✓ Knowledgeable about the Council and its services ✓ Works collaboratively – managing expectations, helps bring about local solutions to problems 	<p>Community Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintains link with businesses and local groups ✓ Keeps in touch with local councils and residents' groups ✓ Willing to be involved in community life ✓ Sits on local bodies as required ✓ In touch with other public services and bodies ✓ Awareness of role as Corporate Parent
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<p>Representing Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Represents ALL residents and community members ✓ Makes views of community known ✓ Champions local interests ✓ Awareness of and acts upon poor performance by the Council 	<p>Community Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Well known/good networks ✓ Communicates with residents ✓ Up-to-date with local and county matters ✓ Knows how the Council works ✓ Able to explain how County Council policy may affect a community 	<p>Behaving Ethically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Observes Code of Conduct ✓ Registers and declares appropriate Interests ✓ Awareness of Constitution ✓ Commits to necessary training to carry out the role ✓ Respects everyone in the community and treats people as individuals
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Members' Roles in the Community

Statement of Values/Behaviours

1. Community Leadership

County Councillors:

- Are well known locally, have good personal networks and are easily contactable
- Communicate with residents in a variety of ways such as surgeries, newsletters etc.
- Keep up to date about local and County matters that may affect their residents
- Understand how the Council operates and are able to explain this to their residents including the strategic role of the County Council
- Can explain how Council policy may affect a community

2. Making Things Happen

County Councillors:

- Are involved in decision making
- Attend meetings of the full County Council (six a year), Select and other Committees to which they have been appointed
- Attend meetings of the County Local Committee(s)/Area Committee(s) for the area that they represent
- Are knowledgeable about the Council and its services and who does what or are willing to find out
- Manage expectations, offer alternatives and explain what cannot be done
- Help, where possible, to solve problems for local residents
- Work collaboratively within the Council and the community
- Campaign if appropriate

3. Community Involvement

County Councillors:

- Maintain links with local councils and other local and voluntary bodies in the community
- Help, where possible, to solve local issues in liaison with staff, partners and other local organisations
- Are willing to be involved in community life
- Sit on other local bodies as required/appropriate
- Have an awareness of their role as Corporate Parents

4. Listening to Residents

County Councillors:

- Are aware of local issues and concerns
- Listen well and act decisively when all the evidence is available
- Are friendly and approachable
- Hold surgeries or have other mechanisms for being available to people

5. Representing Communities

County Councillors:

- Represent ALL residents and members of the community ensuring that their needs as customers are met wherever possible
- Are aware of the performance of the County Council generally and in their division and act to address low or poor performance
- Make the views of the community known

6. Behaving Ethically

County Councillors:

- Observe the County Council's adopted Code of Conduct
- Register interests as appropriate
- Are aware of the County Council's Constitution
- Commit to training that helps support them in their role
- Respect everyone in the community and treat people as individuals