

Agenda item: FC 09/23

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Annual Meeting

Monday 15th May 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To review and update information relating to the Lead Member roles.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Council notes this report and attached papers.
2. That the Council agrees to the definitions of the roles within the '*Lead Member Roles 2022-23*' document.
3. That the Council notes the explanations relating to the specific roles as detailed within '*Members Roles explanations 2022-23.*'
4. That the council considers the role of the Ambassador and the future of this role, with a view to further discussions within Full Council in June 2022.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

As part of the annual review, reflecting on the lead member roles, detailing the role for all members and considering whether any change is needed is an important element.

The attached papers reflect the committee structures, consider some minor changes to the roles of the senior members (moving some elements to within committees, passing the liaison with the Local Association of Councils to the Chair) and review the roles within the council more widely. The attached document, *Member Role explanations 2023-24* aims to bring some clarity to the expectations of all the roles within the council, with a shorter 'crib sheet' with the *Lead Member Roles* document.

The other element for discussion is the role of the Ambassador. This is the WCC 'ceremonial' role (WCC is unable to have a Woughton 'mayor', so the Ambassador was in lieu of this) and has played a varying role in terms of attendance at and engagement with the community. Whilst the past couple of years has significantly reduced opportunities for the current Ambassador, consideration of the future of this role, what form this may take, any duties and responsibilities that should sit within. ***It is recommended that members consider the Ambassador role and the future for this, in preparation for a formal discussions and potential motions at Full Council in June.***

More generally, members are encouraged to consider the roles within the council and any changes that they would like to see in terms of the papers provided. This is key for clarity within the membership, helpful in terms of any elections or interest from residents in the democratic process and can help WCC in preparing support, training and other resources that can assist in the development of councillors.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Lead Member Roles 2022-23.

Members Roles explanations 2022-23.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

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Members Roles

Section A

All Members

Roles

- 1) To act as a local Community Leader for the Ward represented
- 2) To advocate on behalf of individual residents where appropriate
- 3) To bring to the Councils attention issues of concern from the Ward represented and the parish as a whole, acknowledging and liaising with ward members if outside your specific estate
- 4) To act as a consultee on all matters affecting the Ward in particular (e.g. Planning applications, service reconfiguration etc)
- 5) To attend meetings of local community groups and organisations covering the Ward represented
- 6) To attend meetings of the Council and committees appointed to
- 7) To liaise with and from Officers of the Council in relation to local Ward matters and those affecting the whole parish
- 8) To act collectively to further the best interests of the Parish as a whole

Responsibilities

- 1) To Attend meetings of the Council, local Community groups and organisations as appropriate and as best able
- 2) To ensure the highest levels of probity and standards at all times
- 3) To act both as a Ward representative and in the best interests of the Parish as whole, acknowledging and liaising with ward members if working outside your specific estate
- 4) To ensure that no conflicts of interest are perceived or could be perceived
- 5) To take up relevant training opportunities whenever possible and to explore personal developmental needs
- 6) To provide a voice for the community represented and to communicate with local ward residents as appropriate, using a variety of techniques
- 7) To act in the best interests of all Ward residents equally
- 8) To submit (for publication in the Gazette and on the Council Website) a quarterly report on activities and relevant issues considered and an annual 'update' explaining actions and activities undertaken.

Rights

- 1) To be able and facilitated to communicate with the electorate represented, and with officials of The Community Council, Milton Keynes Council, statutory bodies and other agencies
- 2) To be able to submit items and motions for consideration at any Committee of the Council or the Full Council (with proper notice)

- 3) To be able to attend and speak at any committee or working group of the Council of the Council, whether a member or not, on any item up for discussion.
- 4) To reasonable support to enable members to perform their community leadership role subject to budget
- 5) To have access to IT facilities (subject to budgetary provision) and a Council E Mail address
- 6) To have their vote recorded on any matter being determined by the Council or Committee on which they are a member as detailed in Standing Orders
- 7) To all Agendas and reports of all Committees on request
- 8) An opportunity to raise specific Ward related issues at all meetings of the Council provided notice is given in advance of the meeting and provided that no decision of the Council that affects the finances or resources of the Council shall be considered on such occasions unless notice has been given via a motion

Additional Roles, Rights and Responsibilities affecting Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs.

Section B

All Chairs

Roles

- 1) To provide a point of liaison with specific senior managers relevant to the Committees term of reference and to weekly or fortnightly (as agreed) liaison meetings
- 2) To act as the spokesperson of and for the Council in respect of the business and services covered by the committee terms of reference
- 3) To provide leadership on matters relevant to the Committees terms of reference
- 4) To meet with other agencies relevant to the committees' terms of reference as appropriate

Responsibilities

- 1) To Chair meetings of Committees with fairness and to guide committees to successful resolutions and decisions
- 2) To work with officers to create an agenda, identifying current issues and, where appropriate, contributing to discussion papers.
- 3) To provide a point of reference for senior managers of the Council and to become familiar with the operations and services of the Council relevant to their committee
- 4) To ensure that Standing Orders and all constitutional type issues affecting the Council are adhered to
- 5) To provide strategic leadership to the Council in relation to the committee's terms of reference

Rights

- 1) To be consulted on all significant service and business issues arising within the committees' terms of reference
- 2) To be consulted in advance of the agenda and whenever possible the reports for all committees and Full Council and to be able to request additional items/determine order of business of their committee
- 3) To be provided with all relevant and key information relating to their roles and responsibilities

Nb The role of Vice Chairs is relevant only in the absence of the Chair, but they need to be facilitated to perform this role in a seamless way.

Role of Leader, Ambassador and Chair of the Council.

Section C

Ambassador

- 1) The Ambassador shall perform the Civic Functions of the Council. Represent the Council at Civic Functions of other authorities, represent the Council at Community and charitable events within the Parish, which are of a non-political or noncontroversial nature (e.g. Fun Days, Charity Fundraising, Social Events).
- 1) The Ambassador shall be regarded as first Citizen meeting and greeting VIPs and dignitaries of a special nature.
- 2) The Ambassador shall be supported in his/her role by Officers of the Council.

Section D

The Chair of the Council

The Chair will of course Chair meetings of the Full Council, ensuring that standing orders are adhered to, and shall have a casting Vote in the event of any vote which results in a tie. The Chair will ensure that meetings are orderly and kept to a reasonable timetable and shall determine speaking order and ensure the effective running of such meetings.

The Chair will sign the minutes of meetings of the Council as approved by the Council.

The Chair will ensure in consultation with the Council Manager and other Officers that all statutory duties of the Council are performed, and all matters required by statute to be brought before the Community Council or its committees on a timely basis. Such matters include but are not restricted to Budget setting, Audit Reports, Statements of Community Governance, Annual Meeting of the Council, Annual Meeting of the Parish.

The Chair, in consultation with the Council Manager and Officers, will ensure that all statutory and similar requirements on the Council are being adhered to including but not limited to Register of Interests, Record of Hospitality, Publication Scheme, Risk Assessment, Statement of Sufficiency, Code of Conduct, Review of Financial regulations, Standing Orders and the like.

The Chair's role in the matters mentioned in the previous two paragraphs is to ensure that these matters are performed in a timely way, and that where necessary are brought before the Council or its committees in a proper way. The Chair would be expected to be consulted on the contents, but this is not the primary role.

The Chair will be consulted on all matters of constitutional propriety, calendar of meetings and arrangements for special meetings and whilst it is recognised that, except where allowed for in Standing Orders, the Chair does not have Executive Authority, they will be regarded as being the constitutional 'head' of the Council in a similar way to a Speaker or Presiding Officer of the UK Parliament or devolved assemblies.

The Chair shall provide stewardship to ensure probity and high standards by members.

The Chair and the leader will provide line management to the most senior officer of the Council.

Section E

The Leader

The Leader will be responsible for tabling before the Council or its committees, in consultation with the Council Manager and other Officers the Budget and key policy initiatives, without undermining the role of Committee Chairs.

The Leader will act as the Chief External spokesperson of the Council in consultation with Officers, Chairs and other members as appropriate

The Leader will provide the key interface between the Council and external bodies

The Leader will ensure that all Members and Officers of the Council are kept abreast of significant events, issues and concerns that arise and provide direction to the Council

The Leader will consult on and recommend Lead members for appointment by Council

Section F

Lead Members

The Council has determined that from time to time it may appoint Lead Members.

Lead members will be appointed annually in May.

Lead Members should be carefully selected to ensure that the position adds value to the issue. Relevant roles should be selected that are tangential and relevant to the work of the Council, but so as not to undermine the role of Committee Chairs and others.

Lead Members will be expected and will be supported in becoming familiar with the issue in hand.

They will provide a key link between the Council and relevant organisations in relation to that issue.

Lead members will be expected to keep the Council abreast of any relevant considerations that arise in their work by written report to Council, and shall be a champion of the cause or issue concerned.

Lead members do not enjoy any decision-making rights, but may as part of their role make recommendations to the Council and Committees as appropriate.

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Lead Member Roles

2023/2024

Chair of the Council
Constitutional Matters, Member and Officer Relationships, Standards. Neighbourhood Plan (in conjunction with Chair of PLaD), Regeneration (in conjunction with Chair of PLaD), Events (jointly with the Ambassador and where appropriate the Chair of the Services & Communities Committee), Full Council Agenda (jointly with the Leader of the Council), B&MKALC and MKALC Liaison.
Leader of the Council
Budget, External Communications, Corporate Strategy, Income Generation, External Relations (MK Council and other organisations), Policy Development, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Full Council Agendas (jointly with the Chair of the Council).
Chair of the Services and Communities Committee
Youth Services, Environmental Services, Community Services, Landscaping, Advice Service, Communities and Environment Fund. Carnival and events, Community Development, Liaison with Residents Associations and Community Groups. Community Centres.
Chair of the Operations and Resources Committee
HR Policies, Appraisals, Member and Officer Training and Development, Internal Communications, Grievance, and Disciplinary Procedures, Information Technology, Capital programme, investments, financial systems and oversight, banking / payments, insurance, risk management and register, asset register.
Chair of the Planning, Licensing and Development Committee (PLaD)
Neighbourhood Planning (in conjunction with Chair of Council), Regeneration and Renewal (in conjunction with Chair of Council), planning and licensing applications, public realm issues, consultation responses where related to associated issues.
Ambassador
Civic Matters, Formal Representation of the Council at Civic Events and Functions. First Citizen, Events (Jointly with the Chair and where appropriate Chair of the Services Committee).
The Deputy Leader and Vice Chairs
Shall deputise for the above as appropriate except for the Ambassador where the Chair of the Council shall deputise.

It is recommended that these roles should be seen as guidance and, where appropriate, shared and collective responsibility for all aspects of the council rest with the councillors as a corporate body.

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Woughton Community Council

Calendar of Meetings 2023/24

May-23		Dec-23	
Tues 2nd*	Planning, Licensing and Development	Mon 4th	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 15th	Annual Meeting	Mon 11th	Operations and Resources
Mon 22nd	Operations and Resources	Mon 18th	Full Council (incl Services issues)
Tues 30th	Full Council		
Jun-23		Jan-24	
Mon 5th	Planning, Licensing and Development	Mon 8th	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 12th	Operations and Resources	Mon 15th	Operations and Resources
Mon 19th	Services and Communities	Mon 22nd	Services and Communities
Mon 26th	Full Council	Mon 29th	Full Council
Jul-23		Feb-24	
Mon 3rd	Planning, Licensing and Development	Mon 5th	Planning, Licensing and Development
Mon 10th	Operations and Resources	Mon 12th	Operations and Resources
Mon 17th	Services and Communities	Mon 19th	Services and Communities
Mon 24th	Full Council	Mon 26th	Full Council
Aug-23		Mar-24	
	NOTHING		
Sep-23		Mon 4th	Planning, Licensing and Development
		Mon 11th	Operations and Resources
Mon 4th	Planning, Licensing and Development	Mon 19th	Services and Communities
Mon 11th	Operations and Resources	Mon 26th	Full Council
Mon 18th	Services and Communities		
Mon 25th	Full Council	Apr-24	
Oct-23		Mon 8th	Planning, Licensing and Development
		Mon 15th	Operations and Resources
Mon 2nd	Planning, Licensing and Development	Mon 22nd	Services and Communities
Mon 9th	Operations and Resources	Mon 29th	Full Council
Mon 16th	Services and Communities		
Mon 23rd	Full Council	May-24	
Nov-23		Tues 7th	Annual Meeting (s)
Mon 6th	Planning, Licensing and Development		
Mon 13th	Operations and Resources		
Mon 20th	Services and Communities		
Mon 27th	Full Council		
			All meetings start at 6.30pm and will last no longer than 2 hours

Agenda item: FC 23/23

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Annual Meeting

Monday 15th May 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update council with allowance rates for 2023/24, as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel, via MKCC.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That following agreement previously to link WCC allowances to the MKCC recommendations, that the following allowances are agreed for the 2023/24 council year, following a 4.69% increase recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP):
 - a. Basic allowance of £877.00 per annum
 - b. An allowance for the Chair of £1753 per annum
 - c. An allowance for the Leader (not specified in statute) of £1753 per annum.
2. That the Council agrees review this and uplift accordingly if / when the 'Quality Council' mark is achieved.
3. That the Council agrees to publicise these allowances, in line with legislation (namely *Section 5, Para 30* of 'The Regulations').
4. That in addition to these allowances, that Council also agrees that any ceremonial position, such as Ambassador or similar, should receive an allowance of £100 toward expenses relating to the role. This should be in addition to a basic allowance.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Councillor allowances in Woughton help to ensure that all who wish to be part of local democracy are supported to do so – finances should NOT be a barrier to involvement in the view of the council.

Allowances are considered 'from time to time' and in line with recommendations made by an independent panel.

There are regulations relating to allowances, primarily *The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 etc*, alongside amendments made at later dates (for ease of reading, within this paper simply '*the regulations*'). These explain that allowances 'may' be paid (it is a choice) and if so, should be paid equally to all, save the Chair. In Woughton, this has traditionally extended to include the Leader too, given the specific nature of the two roles. Councillors can, if they so wish, forego entitlement to some, or all of the allowance.

Allowances are taxable – members who chose to take an allowance are responsible for any taxation due and should make arrangements to make payment.

Please note that these allowances only apply to elected members – anyone co-opted onto the council is NOT entitled to any allowance.

There are further recommendations that sit outside the scope of the ‘allowances’ (but within ‘expenses’) which remain as our currently policy states – for ‘approved councillor duties’, travel costs and subsistence allowances which are detailed in the ‘Councillor Allowances and Expenses Policy’,

WCC has also traditionally allowed a small allowance for the ceremonial position (currently The Ambassador), to support the demands of that role – **it is recommended that this is set at £100 per annum from the 2023/24 Council year**, should the role continue.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This recommendation sits alongside the issue of lack of members – there are currently six (6) vacancies and as such, even if co-option is considered to fill these positions, no allowances are therefore payable for these six seats. If agreed, this proposal sets the allowance payments for the year at:

- 11 councillors @ £877	= £9647
- Chair and Leader @ £1753	= £3506
TOTAL	= £13,153

This amount doesn’t include any further expenses (e.g. broadband allowance @ £120 per annum per councillor – assuming 10 claims, an additional £1200 per year), but is below the expected budget for the coming year (budgeted at £18,735).

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

This is based upon the basic rates for councillors, paid at the ‘maximum’ amount. There is a further scale that relates to ‘quality councils’ – WCC have yet to undertake this process. In the event that WCC receives Quality Council status, allowances can be increased further.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay
Council Manager