



Local Democracy Working Group

Update On The Development Of Member Role Profiles (Recommendation #45)

Date: 18th December 2019

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Interim Chief Finance Officer

Outline and recommendations

Recommendation #45 of the Local Democracy Review stated that '*clarity and consensus should be developed around the roles and responsibilities, and anticipated work load, for the various responsibilities a councillor may undertake*'. As a result, draft role profiles (incorporating a role description and person specification) have been developed for each member position (see list in section 5.3). These draft role profiles will now be circulated to members and various lead officers (including the Director of Law) for feedback, then presented to the LDWG. Once formally agreed, the role profiles will provide clarity for councillors, officers and the wider public about what is expected of each different role that a councillor undertakes. They will also be used to support councillor's development and with their choices about the different roles they may want to undertake.

In this report, the Local Democracy Working Group (LDWG) are asked to note the three phases of work outlined above. They are also asked to agree to the inclusion of written guidance for all active councillor appointments to outside bodies as an appendix to the final set of role profiles, bringing together the two pieces of work around councillor roles and responsibilities.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

May 2018 – Mayor Damien Egan promises to launch a review that will make the Council *'even more democratic, open and transparent'*

July 2018 – Full Council agrees to establish a Local Democracy Review Working Group consisting of eight councillors. They are tasked with making recommendations about how the Mayor and Council could enhance their openness and transparency, increase public involvement in Council decisions and promote effective decision-making

September 2018 to January 2019 – the Working Group gathers evidence from a wide range of residents, community groups and local councillors (including an online questionnaire completed by over 700 respondents, workshops at four secondary schools and attendance at over 40 events)

January to March 2019 – the Working Group collects their evidence into a final report, which identifies 57 recommendations for change

March/April 2019 – Mayor & Cabinet and Full Council agree the report and recommendations

April 2019 to March 2020 – the retained Local Democracy Working Group oversees delivery of the recommendations

Reason for lateness and urgency

The report has not been available for five clear working days before the meeting and the Chair is asked to accept it as an urgent item. The report was not available for dispatch on 10th December 2019 because of the pre-election period. The report cannot wait until the next meeting because this was the only suitable date available in the Council calendar in advance of Christmas based on member availability and decisions are required to enable work to progress in advance of the next scheduled meeting.

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides the Local Democracy Working Group (LDWG) with an update on the development of member role profiles (recommendation #45).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The LDWG is recommended to:
 - Note the work undertaken to date and proposed next steps
 - Agree to inclusion of written guidance for all active councillor appointments to outside bodies as an appendix to the final set of role profiles

3. Policy context

- 3.1. The recommendations of the Local Democracy Review are consistent with all the Council's corporate priorities (outlined in the Corporate Strategy 2018-22) as effective decision-making underpins the delivery of every commitment within the strategy. However, the recommendations are particularly relevant under the priority of:

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- *Open Lewisham* – Lewisham is a welcoming place of safety for all where we celebrate the diversity that strengthens us

4. Background

- 4.1. Recommendation #45 of the Local Democracy Review is part of the ‘Effective Decision-Making’ theme. It sits under the thematic area of ‘Councillor Roles, Responsibilities & Relationships’, with Cllr Best as LDWG Champion. The recommendation states that:

‘Clarity and consensus should be developed around the roles and responsibilities, and anticipated work load, for the various responsibilities a councillor may undertake’

5. Work to date and next steps

- 5.1. The implementation of recommendation #45 has been divided into three phases:
- *Phase 1 (October to November 2019)* – develop and populate a role profile template¹ for each member position (see list below) using information from the Council’s Constitution, committee terms of reference and the Members Information website as well as best practice from the Local Government Association (LGA) and other local authorities
 - *Phase 2 (December 2019 to February 2020)* – consult with members and various lead officers (including the Director of Law) and refine the role profiles in line with their feedback. A review of how councillor champions can be further utilised (recommendation #55) will also be undertaken during this phase, which will inform the development of a specific role profile
 - *Phase 3 (March to April 2020)* – present the final set of role profiles to the LDWG. It is intended that the final set of role profiles will contain written guidance for all active councillor appointments to outside bodies as an appendix (recommendation #52 – see background papers)
- 5.2. The main purpose of the role profiles will be to provide clarity for councillors, officers and the wider public about what is expected of each position. However, members will also be able to use the role profiles to help them decide which position/s they would like to put themselves forward to undertake whilst the person specifications within each profile will also support them in assessing their skills and identifying areas for development.
- 5.3. A full list of the member role profiles is provided below:
- Elected Member
 - Mayor
 - Deputy Mayor
 - Cabinet Member
 - Speaker/Deputy Speaker
 - Chair/Vice Chair – Overview & Scrutiny Committee
 - Overview & Scrutiny Committee Member
 - Chair/Vice Chair – Select Committee
 - Select Committee Member

¹ The role profile template contains a role description (covering responsibilities, time requirements and key officer contacts) and a person specification (covering key skills and required learning).

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- Business Panel/Education Business Panel Member
- Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee Member
- Chair/Vice Chair – Planning/Strategic Planning Committee
- Planning/Strategic Planning Committee Member
- Chair/Vice Chair – Licensing Committee
- Licensing Committee Member
- Chair/Vice Chair – Other Committee/Panel/Working Group
- Appointments Committee Member
- Audit Panel Member
- Constitution Working Party Member
- Council Urgency Committee Member
- Elections Committee Member
- Health & Safety Committee Member
- Pensions Investment Committee Member
- Public Transport Liaison Committee Member
- Standards Committee Member

6. Financial implications

- 6.1. Any specific costs involved in implementing the final set of member role profiles will be identified in a further report to the LDWG, scheduled for March 2020.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1. The Local Government Act 2000 sets out the differentiation between executive and non-executive functions and the establishment of clear role profiles for members should underline this legal requirement. There are also other key factors in relation to various roles played by councillors and these will be highlighted in the specific role profiles.

8. Equalities implications

- 8.1. The key driver behind this recommendation is to provide clarity and consensus about what is expected of each different role that a councillor undertakes. Whilst the role profiles will primarily be used by members and officers, they will also enhance residents' understanding of Council business and decision-making, thus enabling them to become more involved in local democracy.

9. Climate change and environmental implications

- 9.1. There are no specific climate change and environmental implications arising from this report.

10. Crime and disorder implications

- 10.1. There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

11. Health and wellbeing implications

- 11.1. There are no specific health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

12. Background papers

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- [Local Democracy Review: Report Of The Working Group \(Spring 2019\)](#)
- [Update On Audit Of Councillor Appointments To Outside Bodies \(Recommendation #52\)](#)

13. Glossary

Term	Definition
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members are appointed by the Mayor. They provide collective and individual leadership as part of Mayor and Cabinet (the 'Executive') and also have lead responsibility for a specific portfolio of services.
Constitution	The Constitution is a written legal document that guides the Council on its decision-making processes.
Full Council	Full Council is a meeting of all 54 Lewisham councillors. It is chaired by the Speaker, who also maintains a ceremonial role. It is run according to formal rules of debate known as 'standing orders' as set out in the Council's Constitution. Full Council's decision making responsibilities include agreeing strategies and plans, setting budgets and adopting and/or changing the Constitution. It is also a forum for debate on policy issues.
Local Democracy Working Group	The Local Democracy Working Group is a group of eight councillors who are responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Local Democracy Review during 2019/20.
Mayor	The Mayor is directly elected by residents of Lewisham to lead the Council and represent the borough for a period of four years. They provide political leadership and strategic direction for the entire Council, chair meetings of Mayor & Cabinet and are responsible for all decisions which are not reserved to Full Council or any of its committees.
Overview & Scrutiny	Overview and scrutiny is the way in which Mayor and Cabinet (the 'Executive'), officers and external organisations are held to account for the decisions that they make. It is led by councillors who are not members of the Executive. They also influence policy development and investigate issues of local concern, making recommendations for improvement.
Role Profile	A role profile outlines the key duties and responsibilities of a particular role as well as the skills that an individual would need to undertake the role.

14. Report author and contact

- 14.1. If there are any queries about this report, please contact Rosalind Jeffrey (Principal Officer – Policy, Service Design & Analysis) by email (rosalind.jeffrey@lewisham.gov.uk) or telephone (020 8314 7093).

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