

Member Role Descriptions

ALL MEMBERS (as representatives elected by their division)

Responsible to: Kent County Council and the people of Kent.

Role purpose: To represent the views of their local community and the people of Kent generally within and outside the Council.

1. To represent the individual constituents within their Divisions, undertaking casework on their behalf and serving all equally.
2. To liaise with Cabinet Members, other Council Members, Officers, and other service providers in ensuring that local community needs are considered and identified.
3. To encourage and promote two-way communication within the local community about the decisions of Council, information about Council services and Council procedures.
4. To represent the views, aspirations, and concerns of the people of Kent as a whole, providing the focus for local democracy.
5. To participate in full Council meetings to:
 - determine the strategic priorities and objectives of the Council,
 - approve the annual budget and capital programme and the Council's Policy framework,
 - approve the scheme of remuneration for Members,
 - appoint and remove the Leader of the Council,
 - appoint and dismiss the Head of Paid Service,
 - approve the Constitution and any amendment to it, and
 - approve any other matters which by law can only be determined by the Council or one referred to Council.
6. To hold the Leader and Cabinet to account through Scrutiny.
7. To participate as a member of the Cabinet, committee or advisory panel to which they are appointed.
8. If appointed, to represent the Council on outside bodies.
9. To monitor the effectiveness of service delivery and the appropriateness of policy across the County.
10. To ensure the probity of Council financial and other transactions (including through audit and standards processes).

11. To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's services, management arrangements, powers/duties, and constraints and to develop good working relationships with the relevant Officers of the Council.
12. To lead by example and uphold the highest standards of conduct in public life and comply with the Code of Conduct and the Council's Constitution.
13. To undertake such training and development as the Council, the Standards Committee or the Member's own Group may recommend from time to time.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Responsible to: Kent County Council.

Role purpose: To take full responsibility for all functions of the County Council, which the Council does not reserve for itself (as required by legislation), appointing a Cabinet and providing overall leadership and direction to the Council.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To manage and lead the work of the Cabinet and to chair meetings of the Cabinet and Corporate Board.
2. To lead the Cabinet in decision making and make Executive decisions that are not exercised by other Cabinet Members or Officers.
3. To work closely with Cabinet Members to ensure the development of effective Council policies and the delivery of high-quality services (reflecting the principles of Best Value) to local people.
4. To be the focus for leading the Kent community.
5. To represent the Council at national and local level, on outside bodies or in partnership with other agencies.
6. To lead the Cabinet's work in:
 - providing strategic direction to the Council by identifying a vision, corporate objectives, and priorities for services,
 - providing a lead on the development of corporate policies and strategies,
 - the development of the Council's Policy Framework,
 - using the Council's objectives and priorities to drive the development of services and budget process,
 - seeing continuous improvement by establishing the appropriate culture within the Council and associated systems,
 - monitoring performance,
 - ensuring probity and financial monitoring,
 - keeping under review the organisation and management processes of the Council, including the democratic structures, and

- developing, in consultation and partnership with others, a strategy for providing the social, economic and environmental well-being of the County of Kent.
7. To act as the principal spokesperson for the Council:
 - promoting its work and acting as its principal political spokesperson,
 - participating in consultation,
 - listening to, and taking account of, the views of organisations, the public and businesses, and
 - representing the Council at all appropriate levels.
 8. To consult with and be accountable to Non-Executive Members.
 9. To appear before, and respond to reports of, Overview and Scrutiny bodies.
 10. To monitor the effectiveness of service delivery and the appropriateness of policy across the County and account for the efficient and effective delivery of services and functions within Council policies and budgets.
 11. To lead and direct the Cabinet Members in working closely with the Corporate Management Team and senior managers of every function aligned to their portfolios in relation to the strategic vision and direction of the Council, the management roles of Officers and the development and effective delivery of policy issues.
 12. To work closely with the Corporate Board/Corporate Management Team and Senior Managers of every function to ensure that operationally the Council is providing an effective service to the residents of Kent.
 13. To work closely with Cabinet Committees in enabling them to contribute to policy development and decision making.

DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Responsible to: The Leader of the Council.

Role Purpose: To deputise for the Leader as required and to be the Council's main representative and spokesman on the delegated area of responsibility.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To participate in the Cabinet in respect of all areas of work, including making certain individual Executive decisions within the areas of responsibility.
2. To act as the Spokesperson and advocate for the Council in respect of the delegated area of responsibility and on a wider basis as the Leader may require or in their absence.

3. To lead the development of the Council's Policy Framework within the area of responsibility and make recommendations to the Cabinet.
4. To provide guidance to the Cabinet on the management and implementation of functions in relation to activities within the area of responsibility.
5. To give guidance to the Cabinet on budget priorities within the areas of responsibility.
6. To ensure the delivery of policy through Officers and monitor performance against agreed objectives within the defined area of responsibility.
7. To assist the Leader in keeping under review the organisation and management processes of the Council, including the governance structures.
8. To appear before, and respond to reports of, Scrutiny bodies.
9. To lead the process of continuous improvement and responsiveness of Council services within the areas of responsibility.
10. To ensure that activities within their areas of responsibility take proper account of the Council's vision, core values and guiding principles.
11. To represent the Council at national and local level, on outside bodies or in partnership with other agencies.
12. To work closely with the Corporate Management Team and Senior Managers of every function to ensure that operationally the Council is providing an effective service to the residents of Kent.
13. To work closely with Cabinet Committees in enabling them to contribute to policy development and decision making.

CABINET MEMBER

Responsible to: The Leader of the Council.

Role purpose: To undertake portfolio responsibilities as delegated by the Leader and be the Council's main representative and spokesman on their delegated areas of responsibility, determining the defined area of activity for Deputy Cabinet Members (if allocated) as appropriate.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To participate in the Cabinet in respect of all areas of work, including making certain individual Executive decisions within the defined area of responsibility and contributing to debate and strategic decision-making as part of the Cabinet as a whole.

2. To act as the spokesperson and advocate for the Council in respect of the area of responsibility.
3. To lead the development of the Council's policy framework within the defined area of responsibility and make recommendations to the Cabinet as appropriate.
4. To provide guidance to the Cabinet on the management and implementation of functions in relation to activities within the defined area of responsibility.
5. To give guidance to the Cabinet on budget priorities within the defined area of responsibility.
6. To ensure the delivery of policy through Officers and monitor performance against agreed objectives within the defined area of responsibility.
7. To assist the Leader in keeping under review the organisation and management processes of the Council, including the governance structures.
8. To work constructively and in an open and transparent way with backbench and Opposition Members, and Officers to ensure that the process of Overview and Scrutiny is appropriate, effective, and proportionate.
9. To appear before, and respond to reports of, Overview and Scrutiny bodies.
10. To lead the process of continuous improvement and responsiveness of Council services within the defined area of responsibility.
11. To ensure that activities within the defined area of responsibility take proper account of the Council's vision, core values and guiding principles.
12. To represent the Council at national and local level, on outside bodies or in partnership with other agencies.
13. To work closely with the Corporate Management Team and Senior Managers of every function aligned to their portfolio to ensure that operationally the Council is providing an effective service to the residents of Kent.
14. To work closely with Cabinet Committees in enabling them to contribute to policy development and decision making.

DEPUTY CABINET MEMBER

Responsible to: The Cabinet Member.

Role purpose: To support the work of their Cabinet Member and to be the Council's Member champion for their areas of special responsibility.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To support the Cabinet Member in respect of all activities connected with the area of special responsibility.
2. To act as the Member champion and spokesman for the area of special responsibility both within and outside the Council.
3. To support the Cabinet Member in the development of the Council's policy framework within the area of special responsibility and make recommendations to the Cabinet Member on the making of Executive decisions.
4. To support the Cabinet Member in monitoring the management and implementation of functions in relation to activities within the area of special responsibility.
5. To give guidance to their Cabinet Member on budget priorities within the area of responsibility.
6. To ensure the delivery of policy through Officers and monitor performance against agreed objectives within the defined area of responsibility.
7. To assist the Leader in keeping under review the organisation and management processes of the Council, including the governance structures.
8. To work constructively and in an open and transparent way with backbench and Opposition Members, and Officers to ensure that the process of Overview and Scrutiny is appropriate, effective, and proportionate.
9. To appear before and assist the Cabinet Member in responding to reports of, Overview and Scrutiny bodies.
10. To support the Cabinet Member in driving forward the process of continuous improvement and responsiveness of Council services within the area of special responsibility.
11. To ensure that activities within their areas of responsibility take proper account of the Council's vision, core values and guiding principles.
12. To represent the Council at national and local level, on outside bodies or in partnership with other agencies, as agreed with the Cabinet Member.
13. To support the Cabinet Member in working closely with the Corporate Management Team and Senior Managers of every function aligned to their portfolio to ensure that operationally the Council is providing an effective service to the residents of Kent.
14. To assist the Leader and Cabinet Member to work closely with Cabinet Committees in enabling them to contribute to policy development and decision making.

CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

Responsible to: Kent County Council.

Role purpose: As the Civic Head of the Council, to uphold the democratic values of the Council as a whole and represent the Council at civic and ceremonial functions.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Provide strong, fair, and visible civic and ceremonial leadership to the Council in relation to citizens, stakeholders, partners, Members and Officers.
2. Ensure that Kent County Council is represented at such civic and ceremonial functions as the Council or he/she determines appropriate.
3. Be the principal ambassador for the Council and the County, both at home and abroad and formulate and deliver speeches as appropriate.
4. Promote public involvement in the Council's activities.
5. Uphold and promote the Council's Constitution and, if necessary, rule on the interpretation of the Constitution at formal meetings of the County Council.
6. Preside over meetings of the Council, including determining the topic of the item for full debate, the order of items and a timetable for each Council meeting after consultation with the political group leaders, to ensure that the business of the Council can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the interests of the community and the rights of elected Members of all political groups and independent Members.
7. Request such special meetings of the Council as may be considered necessary or appropriate by Members, determining their format in consultation as required by the circumstances and in accordance with the business to be discharged.
8. Ensure the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and a place at which Members who are not on the Executive can challenge and debate Executive and other matters.
9. Be consulted on any matter in relation to which consultation with the Chairman of the Council is required under the Constitution.
10. During his/her year as Chairman, to continue to perform the duties expected of all County Councillors in relation to his/her electoral Division.
11. To foster and maintain good working relationships with other Local Authorities, both within and outside the County of Kent.
12. To act as the leading Civic dignitary in the conduct of Citizenship Ceremonies.

VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

Responsible to: The Chairman of the County Council and Kent County Council.

Role purpose: To fulfil the duties of the Chairman in their absence, to assist the Chairman in specific duties as required.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. To support the Chairman of the Council in carrying out their Civic responsibilities.
2. Deputise as the Chairman may require in their absence.
3. Undertake specific tasks and responsibilities as requested by the Chairman.
4. Share and support in general the full workload range of the Chairman.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Responsible to: Kent County Council.

Role purpose: To provide leadership and direction for the Committee to ensure that the Committee takes balanced decisions based on all relevant evidence, always with impartiality and fairness.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Provide leadership and direction for the Committee.
2. Chair and manage the business of the Committee, ensuring that all committee members have an opportunity to make a relevant contribution.
3. Request such additional meetings of the Committee as may be considered necessary or appropriate.
4. Promote the role of the Committee both within and outside the Council.
5. Represent the Council and the Committee on relevant external bodies as required.
6. Guide Members through those functions delegate by the Council to the Committee.
7. To be consulted on matters of business between meetings.
8. To undertake the necessary preparation prior to Committee meetings to lead the Committee effectively.
9. Ensure that the Committee takes balanced decisions based on all relevant evidence, always with impartiality and fairness.

10. To manage the meeting to ensure the objectives of the meeting are fulfilled.
11. Ensure, where appropriate, that there is full consultation with and participation by all interested parties on issues to be considered by the Committee.
12. Ensure that Committee decisions are properly recorded with full justifications.
13. Liaise and consult with relevant Officers wherever appropriate.
14. To define and manage appropriate Member and Officer conduct at the meeting.

CHAIR OF A CABINET COMMITTEE

Responsible to Kent County Council.

Role Purpose: To lead the effective consideration of Cabinet Member decisions and to facilitate the Committee to endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member prior to the decision being taken. Consider and make comment to the Cabinet and Cabinet Member on the development of County Council policy and review the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives and performance targets.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To ensure that the work of the Cabinet Committee is at all times conducted in a positive manner and in the interests of the Council and the people of Kent.
2. To work constructively and in an open and transparent way with the Executive Members and Officers.
3. To assist the Council and Executive in the development of the policy framework and budget by an in-depth analysis of policy issues in the area/s for which they have special responsibility.
4. To encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options in the areas for which they have special responsibility.
5. To support the work of the Cabinet Committee in ensuring the effective operation of the Committee in their areas for which they have special responsibility which will:
 - a. examine and review proposed decisions to be made by the Cabinet Member(s) for the areas in which they have special responsibility.
 - b. Question the Cabinet Member(s) and senior Officers for the areas in which the Committee has special responsibility about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE CHAIR OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Role purpose: To lead the effective Scrutiny of the Council's decisions and actions and monitor policy development within appropriate areas of responsibility.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To ensure that the work of the Scrutiny Committee (and any sub-committees thereof) is at all times conducted in a positive manner and in the best interests of the Council and the people of Kent.
2. To work constructively and in an open and transparent way with Executive Members, the Cabinet Committees and Officers to ensure that the process of Overview and Scrutiny is appropriate, effective, and proportionate.
3. To lead and support the Scrutiny Committee in ensuring the effective operation of a Scrutiny function which will:
 - a. examine and review decisions made by the Cabinet, Cabinet Members other committees and Council Officers exercising Executive functions,
 - b. question Members of the Cabinet, other appropriate committees, and senior Officers about their decisions, and
 - c. make recommendations to the Leader, the Cabinet, a Cabinet Member, Officers and/or Council arising from the outcome of the Scrutiny process, the performance management of functions and service delivery.
4. To scrutinise and review the County Council budget process.
5. To lead and support Members in scrutinising authorities responsible in Kent for:
 - a. Crime and Disorder Strategies.
 - b. Risk management authorities of flood risk management functions or coastal risk functions.
6. To support the development of an annual Scrutiny work programme, including the Select Committee Work Programme.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE CHAIR OF THE PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Role Purpose: To provide leadership and direction for the Committee to ensure that the Committee takes balanced decisions based on all relevant evidence, always with impartiality and fairness.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To Chair the monthly meetings of the Planning Applications Committee, which has statutory authority for determining all planning applications to KCC (waste and mineral related applications and all KCC developments including schools, highways, and social services applications).
2. To undertake relevant and frequent training and development sessions to ensure that the role can be performed to the exacting standards required.
3. To attend site visits, public meetings and meetings with Officers as required on a frequent basis.

LEADER OF AN OPPOSITION GROUP

Responsible to: Kent County Council.

Role purpose: To provide strong, fair and visible leadership and direction to the Opposition Group within the Council.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Act as a spokesperson for the Group and as a representative of the Council to external bodies and organisations as appropriate.
2. Represent the interests of the Group in any discussions with the Leader of the Council, other Group Leaders, other Senior Members of the Council or Senior Officers.
3. Be responsible for the appointment of Group Members to seats on Council Bodies in accordance with the Council's political balance apportionments.
4. Comment on, challenge and review the majority Group's performance in the coordination and implementation of its policies and procedures.
5. Be the Group's principal consultee on Council business in general and establish and represent the views of the Group on issues of policy and probity.
6. With all Group Leaders, work with the Corporate Management Team on relevant corporate matters.
7. Support the learning and development needs of all Members of the Group.

DEPUTY LEADER OF AN OPPOSITION GROUP

Responsible to: Kent County Council.

Role purpose: To fulfil the duties of the Leader of an Opposition Group in their absence, to assist the Group Leader in specific duties as required.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Undertake a full deputising role in the absence of the Leader of the Group.
2. Undertake specific tasks and responsibilities as requested by the Leader of the Group.
3. Work actively with the Leader of the Group to co-ordinate the work of the Group.
4. Share and support in general the full workload range of the Leader of the Group.