



Councillor Role Profiles

Incorporating the Kirklees Skills & Knowledge Framework

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Councillor
Development



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Kirklees Council

Councillor Role Profiles

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Role Profile of a Ward Councillor

Leadership at Ward Level

- To lead and champion the interests of the local community and effectively represent the interests of the Ward and its constituents.
- To meet and liaise regularly with local interested parties and involve and consult them on key council decisions.
- To support and promote citizenship locally and empower the community to participate in the governance of the area.
- To undertake case work for constituents and act as an advocate in resolving concerns or grievances.
- To communicate with local people and answer enquiries:
 - about decisions that affect them
 - about opportunities in the community
 - regarding the rights of constituents within Kirklees
 - as to why decisions are taken

Localism and Local Area Committees

- To participate constructively in the good governance of the area.
- To use influence as a councillor to develop links between groups and communities in the ward and local area.
- To be constructively involved in the work of the Local Area Committee.
- To forge local partnerships to ensure resources are used to meet the needs of the area.

Representation

- To inform the debate at full council meetings and contribute to the effectiveness of the council meeting as the focus of visible leadership.
- To contribute to the formation and scrutiny of the council's policies, budget, strategies and service delivery.
- To contribute to the scrutiny of decision-making and review of policies/services of the council.
- To represent the council to the community and the community to the council.
- To develop and maintain knowledge of how the council works and develop working relationships with its officers.
- To participate in the activities of any political group of which the councillor is a member.
- To represent the council on outside bodies and, where appropriate, to represent those bodies within Kirklees.

Other

- To fulfil the legal (in accordance with the council Code of Conduct for councillors) and local requirements placed on a councillor.
- To prepare an Annual Report to be published every June.
- To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

Skills and Knowledge for a Ward Councillor

Leadership Skills

- Ability to lead and champion the interests of the local community.

Chairing Skills

- Ability to chair meetings in the community and facilitate discussions.

Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness

- Manage casework (including the use of information technology (IT) to support the process).
- Basic administration skills.

Team Working & Relationship Building

- Ability to develop relationships with key council officers and representatives from partner agencies.
- Ability to build effective relationships with all sections of the community (in order to be able to represent their needs to the council).

Knowledge

- Understanding of national policies and their impact on the ward.
- Knowledge of the issues within the ward and the wider locality.
- An understanding of how the council works.
- Knowledge of the council structure, key contact officers and services procedures and eligibility criteria (in relation to schemes and services administered by the council).
- Knowledge of the political decision-making structures of the council and partners.
- Understanding of the Code of Conduct for councillors, including ethics and standards.
- Knowledge of the strategic priorities and key policies of the council.
- Understanding of legislation and council policies to which councillors must adhere.
- Basic understanding local government finances and audit processes.
- Understanding the Corporate Parenting responsibilities of councillors.
- Knowledge of the council's standards of customer care and complaints procedure.
- Knowledge of partner agencies in the context of the ward.

Communication Skills

- Community engagement skills.
- Influencing, persuading and negotiation skills.
- Managing conflict and mediation skills.
- Ability to work with the media and to identify when additional support from public relations specialists is required, to ensure the council is positively represented.
- Ability to communicate with a range of audiences, including partners.
- Active listening and questioning skills.
- Ability to make an effective presentation and public speaking skills.

Other Skills and Abilities

- Ability to use IT to access agendas, minutes, reports, etc and to use the GroupWise e-mail system, the Kirklees Intranet and website.
- Ability to interpret council budgets and accounts.

Role Profile of the Leader of the Council

This role profile identifies the responsibilities, skills and knowledge required of the Leader of the Council, which are in addition to those set out for a Cabinet member (on pages 12 and 13).

- To provide leadership to the council.
- To undertake the role of 'community leader', building a vision for the area and leading the council and its partners towards that vision.
- To represent the council and provide leadership of the local strategic partnership and other key local partnerships.
- To chair the Cabinet meetings and to take responsibility for its performance, individually and collectively.
- To represent the authority, and be accountable for, discussions and negotiations with the community and with regional, national and international organisations.
- To undertake political executive responsibility for proposing and directing the overall strategy, budget, policy arrangements and service reviews.
- To act as spokesperson for the authority (in consultation with the Leader of other political Groups and the Chief Executive as appropriate).
- To ensure the work of the Cabinet is conducted in accordance with the council's constitution and with due regard for any statutory provisions set out in legislation.
- To facilitate good communication so that people within and outside the authority are able to contribute constructively to the decision-making processes of the council.
- To work closely with the Group Business Manager to ensure the smooth running of the Group and the personal development of members of the Group.
- To maintain effective liaison with the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny.
- To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

Skills and Knowledge for Leader of the Council

Leadership Skills

- Advanced leadership skills.
- Ability to develop a vision for Kirklees and drive the council and its partners towards achieving that vision.
- Advanced 'ambassadorial' skills (to be able to represent the council both within and outside the council, particularly at the sub-regional, regional and national level).
- Ability to lead the council towards continuous improvement.
- Ability to provide political leadership for their Group.
- Ability to, when necessary, discipline members of their political Group.

Chairing Skills

- Advanced chairing skills

Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of council, Cabinet and its committees (having regard to the terms of reference and the key challenges facing the council).

Knowledge

- A detailed understanding of the strategic role of the Leader of the Council.
- Detailed understanding of the legally defined role of the Chief Executive and other senior officers.
- Detailed knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub-regional bodies and the role of the Leader and council within them.
- Detailed understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development.
- Detailed knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver.
- Detailed understanding of the council's constitution, Code of Conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies.
- Understanding of the relationship between national politics and local political leadership.
- Understanding of the wider, national issues facing councillors and the practical implications for Kirklees councillors.
- An understanding of project management principles.

Communication Skills

- Ability to facilitate effective communication within and across the council and to ensure the community are able to engage in the council's decision making processes.
- Advanced skills in working with the media and an ability to identify when additional support from public relations specialists is required, to ensure the council is positively represented.
- Advanced listening and questioning skills.
- Advanced presentation skills.
- Advanced public speaking skills.

Team Working & Relationship Building

- Tact and diplomacy to be able to work across the full range of council services, partners and political groups, to the benefit of the Kirklees community.
- Ability to build effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. Full Council, Overview and Scrutiny, Area Committees and other political Groups.
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues across all Groups.

Role Profile of Deputy Leader of the Council

This role profile is to be read in conjunction with both the role profile for Cabinet member and Leader of the Council. It identifies responsibilities specific to the role of Deputy Leader, in addition to those of a Cabinet member.

Role and Responsibilities

- To assist the Leader of the Council in the formal processes and matters of leadership of the authority (specifically set out in the Role Profile of the Leader of the Council on page 9).
- To work with the Leader of the Council on the budget and policy development.
- To ensure that appropriate developmental steps are taken to equip them with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role of the Leader when called upon.
- To deputise for the Leader in his/her absence and undertake the above mentioned duties set out in the Role Profile for the Leader of the Council.
- To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

Skills and Knowledge for Deputy Leader of the Council

As it is expected that the Deputy Leader should be able to deputise for the Leader, the same additional skills and knowledge are set out below.

Leadership Skills

- Advanced leadership skills.
- Ability to develop a vision for Kirklees and drive the council and its partners towards achieving that vision.
- Advanced 'ambassadorial' skills (to be able to represent the council both within and outside the council, particularly at the sub-regional, regional and national level).
- Ability to lead the council towards continuous improvement.
- Ability to provide political leadership for their Group.
- Ability to, when necessary, discipline members of their political Group.

Chairing Skills

- Advanced chairing skills

Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of council, Cabinet and its committees (having regard to the terms of reference and the key challenges facing the council).

Knowledge

- A detailed understanding of the strategic role of the Leader of the Council.
- Detailed understanding of the legally defined role of the Chief Executive and other senior officers.
- Detailed knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub-regional bodies and the role of the Leader and council within them.
- Detailed understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development.
- Detailed knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver.
- Detailed understanding of the council's constitution, Code of Conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies
- Understanding of the relationship between national politics and local political leadership
- Understanding of the wider, national issues facing councillors and the practical implications for Kirklees councillors.
- An understanding of project management principles.

Communication Skills

- Ability to facilitate effective communication within and across the council and to ensure the community are able to engage in the council's decision making processes.
- Advanced skills in working with the media and an ability to identify when additional support from public relations specialists is required, to ensure the council is positively represented.
- Advanced listening and questioning skills.
- Advanced presentation skills.
- Advanced public speaking skills.

Team Working & Relationship Building

- Tact and diplomacy to be able to work across the full range of council services, partners and political groups, to the benefit of the Kirklees community.
- Ability to build effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. Full Council, Overview and Scrutiny, Area Committees and other political Groups.
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues across all Groups.

Role Profile of a Cabinet Member

- To have the strategic responsibility for, and provide a lead on, a named portfolio of services.
- To have the responsibility for, and provide a lead on, the initiation of policy in respect of the relevant portfolio.
- To contribute to the development of strategic policy as part of the cabinet collective.
- To decide the executive action to be taken in implementing those matters of council policy allocated to them within their portfolio, seeking advice from the Executive Management Group and Heads of Service, where appropriate.
- To be a member of, and attend, Cabinet meetings and to share the collective responsibility for decisions taken by Cabinet.
- To take personal responsibility, and to be held accountable, for any decisions taken, and to share with the appropriate service managers responsibility for the performance of services within their portfolio.
- To respond to or deal with any issues arising at council meetings relating to their portfolio, to include reporting on progress made against portfolio priorities.
- To act as spokesperson or advocate within and outside the authority on those services and functions within their portfolio.
- To provide regular reports on progress and to undertake consultation on decisions as required.
- To attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Panels to share priorities, discuss decisions taken and/or support the policy formulation process.
- To develop partnership working with other agencies and contribute as a key player to delivering a partnership agenda through the Local Public Service Boards.
- To represent the council on outside bodies, and contribute the Kirklees perspective on national, regional and sub-regional bodies and feedback as appropriate.
- To consult ward councillors and other stakeholders as part of the development and review of policy.
- As part of the Cabinet, to be involved in:
 - leading the community planning process for the council;
 - the consultation on, and drawing up of, the revenue and capital budgets, and monitoring budget under/over spends
 - leading the search for continuous improvement;
 - taking decisions on resources and priorities to deliver the strategies and budget approved by Full Council;
 - promoting and participating in Councillor Development.
- To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

Note: The Cabinet has decided that all decisions will be taken collectively. No decisions have been delegated to individual Cabinet members.

Skills and Knowledge for a Cabinet Member

Leadership Skills

- Advanced leadership skills for areas of individual responsibility and, the ability to work with the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader as an executive team.
- High level decision-making.
- Ability to challenge the status quo and deal with complex strategic issues and problems.
- Ambassadorial skills to be able to represent the council both within and outside the council.

Chairing Skills

- Intermediate chairing skills to be able to chair meetings relating to their portfolio and local public service boards.

Team Working & Relationship Building

- Relationship building – with other Cabinet colleagues, Executive Management Group/senior officers, Overview and Scrutiny, Partners etc
- Ability to work as part of an executive team to drive forward the continuous improvement of the council.

Knowledge

- Knowledge of the key areas relating to their Cabinet portfolio and its relationship with other portfolios within the cabinet.
- A detailed understanding of the strategic role of Cabinet within the council.
- Understanding of the role of a portfolio holder as part of the executive team.
- Detailed understanding of council strategy, policies and operations.
- Understanding of the legally defined role of certain senior officers.
- Detailed knowledge of the challenges facing local government.
- Understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development.
- Knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub regional bodies and the role of the council within them.
- Knowledge of community needs and their priorities for action.
- Knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver.
- Understanding of the council's constitution, Code of Conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies.
- Understanding of the principles and importance of making sound, evidenced-based decisions.
- An understanding of project management principles.

Communication Skills

- Advanced communication skills to be able to work constructively with officers, councillors and partners.
- Advanced listening, questioning and negotiation skills.
- Advanced presentation and advanced public speaking skills.
- Advanced skills in working with the media and an ability to identify when additional support from public relations specialists is required, to ensure the council is positively represented.

Organisational Skills

- Ability to manage a busy and complex workload, often to tight timescales and deadlines.

Other Skills and Abilities

- Research skills and policy development skills.
- Ability to assimilate and analyse complex information.

Role Profile of a Leader of an Opposition Group

- To establish and represent the views of the Group on issues of policy and priority, and develop group policies that are credible and could be implemented by the council.
- To lead an Opposition Group within the council.
- To manage the work of councillors within the Group, and the overall co-ordination of opposition spokespersons and the business of the Group.
- To shadow and scrutinise the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet in their duties.
- To represent the council on key local partnerships and in so doing act as an ambassador for the council.
- To act as the principal spokesperson for an Opposition Group of which he/she is leader and as a representative of the authority to external bodies and organisations as appropriate.
- To comment on, challenge and review the council's administration performance in the co-ordination and implementation of its policies and procedures.
- To champion and participate in Councillor Development and manage the Group Business Manager to ensure the smooth running of the Group and the personal development of its councillors.
- To advise the Leader of the Council of the Group's position on issues relating to external relationships.
- To represent the Group on relevant formal and informal working groups
- To maintain effective liaison with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.
- To participate in the development of corporate strategies and policies.
- To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

Note: The level of Allowance paid to Group Leaders is calculated in relation to the size of the Political Group and the level of workload and responsibility that comes with that Group.

Skills and Knowledge for an Opposition Leader

Leadership Skills

- Ability to provide political leadership of their Group and manage the tensions between the political demands and expectations of the Group, and the needs of the council.
- Ability to hold Cabinet to account.
- Ambassadorial skills to be able to represent the council both within and outside the council including at regional and national level.
- Ability to discipline members of their political Group, when necessary.
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues with other Groups.

Team Working & Relationship Building

- Tact and diplomacy to be able to work across the full range of council services, partners and political groups, to the benefit of the Kirklees community
- Ability to build effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. full council, Overview and Scrutiny, Area Committees and other political Groups.
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues across all groups.

Knowledge

- Understanding of the roles of Leader of the Council, Cabinet members and the Leader of an Opposition Group within the council.
- Understanding of the legally defined role of certain senior officers.
- Detailed knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub-regional bodies and the role of the council within them.
- Detailed understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development.
- Detailed knowledge of the challenges facing local government.
- Understanding of council strategy, policies and operations.
- Knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver and their relationship with the council.
- Detailed understanding of the council's constitution, Code of Conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies.
- Detailed knowledge of community needs and their priorities for action.
- Understanding of the relationship between national politics and local political leadership.
- Understanding of the wider, national issues facing councillors and the practical implications for the councillors in their Group.

Communication

- Ability to facilitate effective communication within and across the council, and ensure the community is given the opportunity to engage in policy development of the opposition Group.
- Advanced skills in working with the media and an ability to identify when additional support from public relations specialists is required, to ensure the council is positively represented.
- Advanced listening, questioning and negotiation skills.
- Advanced presentation and public speaking skills

Chairing Skills

There are no specific chairing responsibilities inherent in this post.

Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of the Group.

Other Skills and Abilities

- Ability to assimilate and analyse complex information.
- Research skills and policy development.

Role Profile of a Deputy Leader of an Opposition Group

This role profile is to be read in conjunction with the role profile for Leader of a Group.

Role and Responsibilities

- To undertake the development required to ensure that the post holder is equipped with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role of the Group Leader when called upon.
- To assist the Group Leader to manage the work of Councillors within the Group.
- To work with the Group Leader on the budget and policy development for the Group
- To deputise for the Group Leader in his or her absence and undertake the duties set out in the role profile for Leader of a Group.
- To support the Group Leader in the initiation of policy.
- To work closely with Executive Management Group and Heads of Service where appropriate.
- To hold the Cabinet to account at Council meetings.
- To play a proactive role in Overview and Scrutiny to discuss decisions taken or support the policy formulation process.
- Consult interested parties, ward councillors and citizens as part of the development and review of group policy
- To assist the Group Leader when consulting on, and drawing up the revenue and capital budgets.
- To undertake detailed work in preparation for Council meetings.
- To be an advocate for the group within their capacity as a group officer.

Skills and Knowledge for a Deputy Leader of an Opposition Group

As it is expected that the Deputy Leader is able to deputise for the Leader, the additional skills and Knowledge set out for the Leader are copied here as they are also required of the Deputy Leader.

Leadership

- Ability to provide political leadership of their Group and manage the tensions between the political demands and expectations of the Group, and the needs of the Council
- Ability to hold the Executive to account
- Ambassadorial skills to be able to represent the Council both within and outside the Council including at regional and national level
- Ability to, when necessary, discipline Members of their political Group
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues with other Groups

Chairing

Intermediate chairing skills

Organisational Skills

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of the Group

Other Skills

- Assimilating and analysing complex information
- Research skills and policy development

Knowledge

- Understanding of the roles of Leader of the Council, Cabinet members and the Leader of a Group within the Council
- Understanding of the legally defined role of certain senior officers
- Knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub regional bodies and the role of the Council within them
- Understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development
- Knowledge of the challenges facing local government
- Understanding of Council strategy, policies and operations
- Knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver and their relationship with the Council
- Understanding of the Council's constitution, code of conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies
- Knowledge of community needs and their priorities for action
- Understanding of the relationship between national politics and local political leadership
- Understanding of the wider, national issues facing councillors and the practical implications for the Councillors in their group

Team Working & Relationship Building

- Tact and diplomacy to be able to work across the full range of Council services, partners and political groups, to the benefit of the Kirklees community
- Ability to build effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. full Council, Overview and Scrutiny, Area Committees and other political groups
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues across all groups

Communication

- Ability to facilitate effective communication within and across the Council, and ensure the community are given the opportunity to engage in policy development of the group
- Advanced skills in working with the media whilst being able to identify when additional support from public relations specialists is required, to ensure the Council is positively represented
- Advanced listening and questioning skills
- Advanced presentation skills and public speaking.