

Chair of the Council

(1) Role and function of the Chair

The Chair of Council, and in her/his absence the Vice-Chair, will have the following roles and functions:

(a) Ceremonial Role

The Chair is the ceremonial head of the Council having no overt political role whilst undertaking this role. Her/his functions may be summarised thus:

S/he is an ordinary member of the Council who, having been elected Chair:

- (a) takes the chair at Council meetings;
- (b) promotes public involvement in the Council's activities;
- (c) attends such civic and ceremonial functions as the Council and s/he determines appropriate and represents the Council;
- (d) entertains on behalf of the Council;
- (e) at her/his own discretion lends support to non-political causes as Chair of the Council;
- (f) speaks for the Council as a whole on non-political issues, particularly on public occasions;
- (g) represents the Council, where appropriate, on negotiations with other bodies where the Council is in essence not divided and it is desirable that the Council be seen to be represented at the highest possible level;
- (h) where the Council has expressed its wish, does not speak publicly save in accordance with the declared wish of the Council;
- (i) should consult the Monitoring Officer as to whether it is appropriate for her/him to make a statement on, or participate in, any particular matter where there can be doubt;
- (j) where advised that a matter is political, should refrain from comment
- (k) discretion to adjourn a Council meeting without question to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, or other, at any point.

(b) **Chairing the Council Meeting**

The Chair will be elected by the Council annually. No member shall normally occupy the position of Chair for more than one year at a time.

The Chair will have the following responsibilities:

1. to uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and to interpret the Constitution when necessary;
2. to preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of councillors and the interests of the community;
3. to ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which members who are not on the Cabinet are able to hold the Cabinet to account;
4. to ensure the business of the Council is discharged effectively and conducted in a fair and even-handed manner taking account of the range of views expressed; and
5. to be the conscience of the Council.