

## Appendix E

### Ward Councillor – Role Description

#### 1: Accountabilities:

- To the electorate of their ward
- To the Council

All members could be expected to carry out the following duties and responsibilities:

#### 2: Role Purpose and Activity

##### Representing and supporting communities

- To lead and champion the interests of the local community and effectively represent the interests of the Ward and its constituents
- To attend parish councils and parish meetings within the ward to keep them informed about District Council activities and when invited, to discuss ward matters with them as appropriate
- 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 casework 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 South Somerset
  - As to why decisions are taken

##### Making decisions and overseeing Council performance

- To attend and effectively participate in all meetings of the full Council and the relevant area committee, reaching and making informed and balanced decisions and overseeing performance
- To adhere to the principles of democracy and collective responsibility in decision making
- To promote and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of Council services
- To keep up to date with the corporate priorities of the Council, its policies and procedures and to read the relevant paperwork prior to participating in any meeting of the Council

##### 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 scrutiny of decision making and review of the policies and services of the Council
- To represent the authority to the community and the community to the Council
- To develop and maintain a knowledge of the Council and a close working relationship with its officers and other members to promote the Council's objectives

- To represent the Council on outside agencies and to participate effectively in the appointed role and, where appropriate, to report back to the relevant member level body

### **Other**

- To adhere to the Code of Conduct for Members: the Council's Constitution and the law relating to councillors and to ensure that no conflict of interest occurs, which might undermine the integrity of the Council
- To support and adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council
- To prepare an Annual report to be published in June
- To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

### **3: Values**

- To be committed to the values of the Council and the following values in public office
- Openness and transparency
- Honesty and integrity
- Tolerance and respect
- Equality and fairness
- Appreciation of cultural difference
- Sustainability

### **Skills**

- Ability to lead and champion the interests of the local community
- Ability to chair meetings and facilitate discussions
- Manage casework (including the use of IT to support the process)
- Basic administration skills
- Ability to use information technology to communicate through Council systems eg emails, accessing agendas, minutes, reports, intranet etc
- Ability to interpret Council budgets and accounts
- Community engagement skills
- Negotiation skills
- Managing conflict and mediation skills
- Ability to develop relationships with key officers and partner agencies
- Ability to build effective relationships with all sections of the community so as to be able to represent their needs to the Council
- Ability to deal with the media whilst being able to identify when additional support is required from the Communications team to ensure that the Council is positively represented.
- Active listening and questioning skills
- Public speaking

### **Knowledge**

- Understanding of how the Council works
- Knowledge of the Council structure, key contact officers and service procedures and eligibility criteria
- Knowledge of the political decision making structures
- Understanding the Code of Conduct for councillors, ethics and standards and the role of the Standards Board for England
- Understanding of national policies and their impact on the Council

- Knowledge of strategic priorities and key policies of the Council
- Understanding the of legislation and council policies eg: Freedom of Information, Data Protection, Equality legislation, Smoking Policy
- Knowledge of the Council's complaints procedure
- Knowledge and understanding of legislation and policy relating to planning and planning appeals.