

West Somerset District Council
Job Profiles for Councillors

JOB PROFILE – COUNCILLOR

1. To effectively represent the interests of his/her ward.
2. To fulfil and enact any statutory requirements of an elected member of a local authority.
3. To actively and constructively contribute to the good governance of the District.
4. To actively encourage community participation and citizen involvement in the democratic decision making process.
5. To encourage people to take up their roles in terms of active and engaged citizenship.
6. To meet regularly with key local stakeholders.
7. To represent the Authority to the Community and the Community to the Authority using all appropriate means.
8. To be a channel of communication for their local ward and ensure that constituents are informed about :
 - Services in their area
 - Decisions that affect them
 - The reasons why decisions have been made
9. To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's policies, services and activities.
10. To develop and maintain a working knowledge of organisations operating within the District which have an impact upon the well-being of both the ward that the Councillor represents and the District as a whole.
11. To deal with constituents' enquiries and representations fairly and without prejudice.
12. To carry out case work on behalf of constituents and to represent their interests or enable the constituent to take action to deal with the matter themselves.
13. To identify and work with local 'hard to reach' and under represented groups to ensure that their views can be identified.
14. To contribute to the formation of the Council's policies and service delivery plans by active involvement in Committees and Task and Finish Groups.

West Somerset District Council
Job Profiles for Councillors

JOB PROFILE – COUNCILLOR (cont)

15. To undertake appropriate training to help fulfil the requirements of the Councillor role.
16. To act as the Council's representative on outside bodies (where so appointed) - a separate job profile will be provided for this role.
17. To champion the causes which relate to the interests and sustainability of the District and campaign for improvement in the quality of life of those living, working or visiting the district in accordance with the Comprehensive Three Year Plan.

West Somerset District Council
Job Profiles for Councillors

JOB PROFILE – CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL

1. To be the civic head of the Authority.
2. Throughout the term of office to be politically neutral.
3. To chair Council meetings.
4. To act as ambassador for the Council - attending ceremonial occasions and events with significant local importance.

Note:

- A. The Chairman of Council cannot be a member of the Executive (Local Government Act 2000 11 (7))*
- B. The Chairman of Council cannot be a Commissioner (Council Minute C89(5) Council 7th March 2001)*

West Somerset District Council
Job Profiles for Councillors

JOB PROFILE – VICE CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL

1. To assist the Chairman of Council in carrying out his/her duties.
2. To preside over Council meetings in the absence of the Chairman of Council.
3. To undertake any duties as set out in the Scheme of Delegation.

Note:

- (A) The Vice Chairman of Council cannot be a member of the Executive (Local Government Act 2000 11 (7))*
- (B) The Vice Chairman of Council cannot be a Commissioner (Council Minute C89(5) Council 7th March 2001)*

West Somerset District Council
Job Profiles for Councillors

JOB PROFILE – LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

1. To be the Political head of the Authority.
2. To co-ordinate the work of the Cabinet.
3. To appoint the Cabinet members and to allocate areas of responsibility – known as portfolios to Cabinet members.
4. To appoint Commissioners and to allocate areas of responsibility.

West Somerset District Council
Job Profiles for Councillors

JOB PROFILE – DEPUTY LEADER OF COUNCIL

1. Working within the Council's constitution, particularly the Scheme of Delegation and also the Council's policy frame work, to deputise for the Leader of Council in his/her absence.
2. To take an active role as a member of the Cabinet.
3. To assist the Leader in co-ordinating the work of the Cabinet and the Commissioners.

West Somerset District Council
Job Profiles for Councillors

JOB PROFILE – CABINET MEMBER

Cabinet Members will at all times need to work within the Council's constitution particularly the Scheme of Delegation and also the Council's policy frame work.

1. To promote the Council's key objectives in relation to the Comprehensive Three Year Plan, with particular attention to any responsibilities contained in the Member's designated portfolio.
2. To work in partnership with relevant (to the designated portfolio) external organisations including service providers and representative organisations.
3. To actively contribute to guiding the overall direction of the Council through research, developing and recommending to the Cabinet policies and development of services (relating to the designated portfolio) in accordance with the overall strategic approach of the Council as contained in the Comprehensive Three Year Plan; engaging as required with other Cabinet members, other Councillors, relevant Officers, service users, interest groups, and external partners.
4. To present to Council, Cabinet recommendations which relate to the designated portfolio.
5. To promote public participation and consultation.
6. To ensure effective communication of Council policies and strategies to all Councillors, Officers and members of the public to enable those people to maintain a working knowledge of the Council's policies and practices.
7. To provide regular reports for the Members Information Sheet regarding topical items, meetings and seminars attended which relate to the designated portfolio.
8. To act as a spokesperson for the Council for matters falling within the designated portfolio.
9. To represent the Council on relevant outside bodies, relating to the designated portfolio.
10. To prepare responses to consultation papers issued by Government and other organisations in consultation with the relevant Officers. Such responses to be approved by Cabinet.
11. To give guidance on the setting of priorities within the Comprehensive Three Year Plan.

West Somerset District Council
Job Profiles for Councillors

JOB PROFILE – CABINET MEMBER (cont)

12. To receive representations from other Councillors acting in their capacity as ward members in relation to the provision of services to local people regarding matters contained within the designated portfolio.
13. To present and promote a high profile on the current and emergent key issues within the designated portfolio.
14. To actively contribute to the Cabinet's decision making and accepting collective responsibility for those decisions.
15. To take responsibility for the designated portfolio and as appropriate (in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation) make decisions regarding the activities of the designated portfolio.
16. To attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee when requested to do so and answer questions pertinent to the designated portfolio.

West Somerset District Council
Job Profiles for Councillors

JOB PROFILE – COMMISSIONER

1. To work with and assist the relevant portfolio holder to help develop policy and practice relating to specific topics.
2. Upon request, to make presentations, give information and make recommendations to Cabinet (via the portfolio holder as appropriate).

Note:

- (A) Commissioners cannot sit on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee*
- (B) Commissioners cannot be Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee*
- (C) Commissioners cannot be the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Licensing and Environmental Protection Committee*
- (D) Commissioners cannot be the Chairman or Vice Chairman of Council*

A-D above are from Council Minute C89(5) from the Council Meeting on 7th March 2001

West Somerset District Council
Job Profiles for Councillors

JOB PROFILE – COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

1. To preside over Committee meetings in a manner that encourages contributions and achieves the objectives of the meeting; including the resolution of conflict.
2. To be accountable to the Council for the efficiency and effectiveness of the Committee meeting.
3. To ensure that the Committee only acts within its Terms of Reference.
4. To ensure that the Committee complies with the requirements of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Council Policies and relevant legislation.
5. To present recommendations of the Committee to Cabinet / Council as appropriate.
6. To act as a spokesperson for the Council for matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee, liaising with the Council's media consultant and relevant Cabinet members as appropriate.
7. Working within the Council's Scheme of Delegation with Officers to enable efficient and effective decision making.
8. To ensure the overall integrity of the decision making process within the Committee, and that the process operates fairly and openly.
9. Working with the Member Services Section to confirm/set the agenda for meetings.
10. To check the draft minutes of meetings prior to circulation.

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