

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Head of Corporate Organisation	Report Number: N61
To: Council	Date of meeting: 27 September 2013

LEAD MEMBER ROLE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To review and approve the proposals developed for the role descriptor, core responsibilities, designations and allocation for the Lead Member role.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the role descriptor and core responsibilities for the Lead Member role outlined in Appendix A to this report be approved.
- 2.2 That the proposed designations and allocation of Lead Member roles outlined in paragraph 9.7 of the report be approved.
- 2.3 That the existing Member Champion roles be deleted as described in paragraph 10.1 of the report.
- 2.4 That Mr C W Arthey continue to be the Council's representative on the Suffolk Waste Partnership for the remainder of the current term of office.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 No immediate implications, however the potential for a special responsibility allowance for the roles to be considered as part of the overall review of the Members' Allowances Scheme.

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 This report is linked to Strategic Business Risk associated with the review of the Governance arrangements for the Council, ensuring that robust and timely processes are in place for the effective management of the authority's business.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 The proposals were developed in consultation with the Babergh Political Leaders Group and Joint Constitutional Working Group members. The authority's Monitoring Officer and Interim Corporate Manager – Legal were also consultees in the development of these proposals.

6. Equality Analysis

- 6.1 There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

7. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

- 7.1 The development of the Lead Member role will support more effective working with Mid Suffolk District Council in the shared services arrangement.

8. Background and context

- 8.1 Council approved the proposal contained in Paper M178R to develop the role and designation for the Lead Member and Deputy Leader roles at the meeting on 28 March 2013.

- 8.2 The roles have been developed with regard to the broad principles used for the authority's governance arrangements, specifically the key principle of :

“Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles, promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through standards of conduct and behaviour, developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective”.

- 8.3 The Lead Member role was initially reviewed by the Babergh Political Leaders Group, which proposed that the Lead Member role be developed, however that the Deputy Leader role should not proceed at this time in the context of a no overall control position with no single majority administration in place.

9. Key information

- 9.1 The Lead Member role descriptor and core responsibilities (Appendix A) designations and allocations have been developed in close consultation with the Babergh Political Leaders Group. The developmental process was iterative and inclusive of all the political groups on the Council.

- 9.2 The Lead Members will help the Leader of the Council to give leadership to the authority in the pursuit of its strategic objectives. They will form a link between Officers and Members in the overall management and governance of the authority. They will ensure the effective flow of information and intelligence so that issues are addressed in a timely manner.

- 9.3 The role descriptor and core responsibilities have been developed to recognise the unique and local nature of the political environment in place at Babergh. Specifically, the no overall control position and associated working arrangements, where political groups work closely together to support the achievement of the Council's strategic priorities.

- 9.4 The elements of the role descriptor and responsibilities are designed to recognise the collaborative nature of the Lead Member role in the Babergh context, and to provide a framework for the effective implementation of the role into the business management processes for the Council.

- 9.5 Support arrangements will be developed to ensure that Lead Members are able to effectively discharge their role and engage with political groups and individual Members to support the role.

9.6 The specific designations for the Lead Member roles are designed to align with the Council's strategic priorities and organisational development programme. The objective is for the roles to provide strategic leadership aligned to the key outcomes the Council is seeking to achieve for its communities. These designations will link into appropriate programmes of work and initiatives with the Lead Member taking the lead role for this work (i.e. Transformation Enquiry groups).

9.7 The Council Leader will be appointed as the Lead Member for Finance and Resources. The following designations and appointments are proposed for the Lead Member roles :

- Leader, Finance and resources Jennie Jenkins
- Environment John Hinton
- Housing Tony Bavington
- Health and Well Being and Communities Nigel Bennett
- Growth and the Local Economy (including planning) Simon Barrett
- Public Access Kathy Pollard

9.8 The current purpose and function for the Political Leaders Group will continue, acting as a sounding board and vehicle for liaison and communication between the authority's management team and the political groups. It is also proposed that an additional group is developed, consisting of the Political Group Leaders and other Lead Members to play a strategic role in supporting the work of the Council.

9.9 There is a planned review of the full Members' Allowances Scheme at the end of the Municipal year, following the finalisation of all of the remaining Terms of Reference and roles for new member bodies. It is proposed that any potential additional responsibility allowances for the Lead Member roles are considered as part of this review.

9.10 The Independent Remuneration Panel will be asked to consider the overall Governance framework, structure and roles and functions of the range of member bodies in making a recommendation for a revised Members' Allowances Scheme for Councillors. This recommendation will then be considered by the Council.

10. Member Champions

10.1 The development of the Lead Member role provides the opportunity to consider the Member Champion roles, which had previously been designed to provide member focus for particular areas of work or communities of interest. In the context of the development of the new Lead Member roles it is proposed that the following Member Champion roles are deleted :

- Waste Management
- Efficiencies and Procurement
- Equalities

- Health and Safety
- Children and Young People
- Arts and culture

10.2 The Waste Management Champion is the Council's representative on the Suffolk Waste Partnership. It is suggested that Mr C W Arthey, the current Champion, remain as the Council's representative on this partnership for the remainder of the current term of office.

11. Background Documents

11.1 Appendix A – Lead Member role descriptor.

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Role and responsibilities for Lead Members

1. The Lead Member will have no individual decision making powers or delegated authority; the function will be significantly different from that of a Cabinet member in a Leader and Cabinet model.
2. Lead Member roles will be designed to give leadership to achieving specific corporate priorities and outcomes.
3. Lead Members will act as a focus for Members and officers in delivering the strategic objectives on which they lead.
4. The Council Leader will also be the Lead Member for Finance and Resources.
5. Lead Members will seek to create the trust and support of all Babergh Members by carrying out the role in a non partisan way.
6. Lead Members will be supported by officers to ensure that clear and effective two way communication with all members is in place, and will inform and involve all members and groups in the work that they carry out.
7. Lead Members must be appointed as members of the Strategy Committee.
8. Political proportionality rules will not apply in the allocation of the Lead Member roles.
9. Lead Members will work with officers to speak for the authority in public and in discussions with other public, private and voluntary sector partners.
10. Lead Members will support partnership working in their area and have an awareness of the role and work of members appointed to relevant outside bodies.
11. Lead Members will respond questions at Council meetings relating to their respective roles.
12. Lead Members will be responsible for their own personal development and undergo appropriate development and training for the role undertaken.