

**Expectations for Members of the Council to Reduce Demand on Council Services**

1. The representational role of Members in their Wards is currently significant. There is a wealth of evidence about the strong role Members play in their communities and the work that goes on beyond the Town Hall. The Council and Members will, however, need new approaches in the future to reduce demand on Council services if the Darlington delivery model is to be successful.
2. This paper summarises the enhanced role for a Member taking on a community leadership role, stimulating a community response which is designed to address the reduction in services and the need for greater partnership working to make maximum use of limited publicly funded resources.
3. It is recognised that Councillors will require support in their new leadership role and that developing new empowered roles for councillors will require commitment to change and strong leadership from both the Council and the leadership of the three political parties.
4. For the Council to succeed it will need to be supported by its Members to stimulate good local economic growth by working with local businesses and engaging with communities to encourage them to reduce the demands on Council services.
5. Members need to be the source of local intelligence for their ward and the Council and they will need to be able to educate their electorate about how to work with them and with other bodies.
6. Councillors will need to work with constituents to identify needs and issues and develop solutions locally and then deliver outcomes to meet those local needs.
7. Councillors will need new approaches to do this successfully and to raise their profile in the Ward. The use of digital technology (e.g. email, blogs, social media, or online chat) is becoming increasingly vital to contacting/informing constituents, particularly young people.
8. Meanwhile, to meet the needs of all residents other channels such as Newsletters/Letters continue to need to be used particularly to reach people

who are digitally excluded because they do not have access to or the ability to use digital technology.

9. Councillors will need access to the right information and intelligence to enable them to build relationships in the new delivery model.

10. Members will need to develop networks and acquire the skills to carry out this enhanced leadership role.

Members are expected to follow the Role Profile required of a member of the Council (Attached at **Annex 1**) and undertake a PDR to ensure all training and development requirements and skill sets of the role are met.

## **MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL**

### **Role**

All Borough Councillors are expected to carry out their duties serving all members of the community equally, fairly and without discrimination in accordance with the Council's Social Inclusion Strategy 'All Together Now'; the Code of Conduct for Members; and the Codes and Protocols detailed in the Council's Constitution.

### **Main Duties**

1. To represent the needs, priorities and aspirations of your electors and the people of Darlington by making yourselves known within your ward, being accessible and liaising/consulting extensively with your local community, organisations and businesses.
2. To promote the Council's Vision 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed' and to act in accordance with the highest standards of probity in public life, seeking to serve the community without personal gain.

### **Key Duties within the Community**

3. To find ways of effectively and regularly communicating and working with your constituents including the use of digital technology (e.g. email, blogs, social media, or online chat).
4. To find ways to make yourself accessible to your constituents so they can raise issues of importance, or personal concern with you and to take appropriate action.
5. To seek ways of improving the quality of life for people in Darlington now and for the future by promoting economic, social and environmental well-being of your ward having regard to the effects of other communities and the Borough as a whole.
6. To champion health and care services in your ward, liaising with the Director of Public Health, the Health and Well-being Board and the Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group, as appropriate.

7. To explore ways of facilitating shared solutions to local needs in challenging times working in partnership with your community and the voluntary sector as part of 'Darlington Together'.
8. To support the work of Darlington Partnership to achieve the best for the people of Darlington.
9. To act as a pivot by which various funding streams can be brought together for the benefit of your community.
10. To act as a corporate parent, especially for those children being 'looked after' by the Council.
11. To work in partnership with other levels of government or individuals which influence the well-being of your ward, including:-
  - Durham Constabulary
  - The Police and Crime Commissioner
  - The Police and Crime Panel
  - Durham and Darlington Fire Authority

### **Key Duties to the Council**

12. To assist the Council in promoting a high level of understanding by people in Darlington of its role and functions and to promote its desire to improve access to information and services.
13. To attend full Council meetings and participate in the business of the Council.
14. To Chair meetings as required.
15. To be familiar with the Council's policies, plans and priorities.
16. To liaise with other levels of government, agencies or bodies which influence the well-being of the Borough.
17. To participate in the activities of any outside body to which you have been appointed, providing two-way communication between the organisations; and to develop and

maintain a working knowledge of the Authority's policies and practices in relation to that body and of the community's needs and aspirations in respect of that body's role and functions.

18. To participate in the activities of any political group of which you are a Member.]
19. To attend all meetings of Committees and bodies to which you are appointed, unless there is a bona fide reason not to.
20. To attend Council policy briefing sessions.
21. To undertake a personal development review and promote and participate in Member training and development and attend a minimum of five training/development/briefing events per calendar year.

**Skills required to undertake the Role:-**

- The ability to connect with all areas of the Ward and represent everyone fairly.
- The ability to balance local concerns with the political demands of the Group manifesto.
- To be able to exercise community development skills – support local projects and initiatives, and educate people about local participation.
- To be a good communicator – explain simply what political decisions and structures mean to constituents and community organisations.
- To be sensitive to issues of diversity and equality.
- To have the knowledge and skill to engage people in a variety of ways.
- To understand the complex business of local government and services provided by both the council and others.
- To have the ability to challenge and hold service providers to account.

- To be able to work in partnership with a range of agencies and interests.
- To understand local problems and use this knowledge locally and strategically in local action planning.
- To have the knowledge to be the primary source of local intelligence flowing between the ward and the Council.
- To have the skills and ability to collect and analyse local information and use it to the benefit of the community.