

Member Champion protocol

1. Member Champions have evolved in this Council to focus Member activity on certain aspects of the Council's business and functions,
2. A Champion is an Elected Member appointed by the Council to provide a focus on a specific area of the Council's business or a community need to ensure it is given due regard in relation to the activities of the Council and of its partners in local governance,
3. A Member Champion can be an executive Member or, more commonly, a non-executive Member,
4. The Council at its annual meeting, or at other Council meetings during the year, will identify the interests to be championed and will appoint named Councillors to champion one specific interest. The Council will be entitled to make changes at its annual meeting but the expectation is for a Champion to serve a minimum of two years to ensure some stability in the role.
5. Within the context of the interest being Championed, and as part of their overall and individual community leadership responsibilities:
 - ❑ A Champion will be expected to exert influence on those within the Council who make executive decisions and on other Members of the Council in the context of full Council, regulatory and overview and scrutiny functions,
 - ❑ A Champion will be expected to exert influence on relevant external partners and bodies in their decision making and planning,
 - ❑ A Champion will act as a catalyst for change and improvement
 - ❑ A Champion will work with others within the Council to maintain efficient, effective and relevant services and policies
6. By appointing a Member as a Champion, the Council is empowering that Member to act in that capacity. It follows, therefore, that the Council will put in place such arrangements as it thinks appropriate to support the Champion in that capacity,
7. The above role is set in the context of the specific interest or theme. The following parameters apply to the role.
 - ❑ All Champions must act reasonably in the role.
 - ❑ All Champions must recognise and work effectively within the political management and executive working arrangements agreed by the Council.
8. A Champion who is NOT an executive Member:
 - ❑ Is effectively given authority by the Council to take all reasonable actions judged by the Member as being necessary to perform the role of Champion,
 - ❑ Cannot commit the Council in any way that is contrary to established policy and practice, but may confirm a Council position as stated in published policy,
 - ❑ Cannot make decisions that bind the Council
 - ❑ Is not a recognised media contact on behalf of the Council, but is permitted to contribute to media publicity with the prior agreement of the relevant executive Member or Chairs of Overview or Scrutiny
 - ❑ Is entitled to have access to information being held by the Council's Officers relating to the interest being championed and access to a reasonable amount of Officer time to discuss that information (although the Champion may not commit Officer time to such an extent that other priority work required of Officers is prejudiced).
 - ❑ Should agree, with the relevant Portfolio Holder/Leader, a programme of activity that can be generally endorsed and which sets out clearly the areas of activity which the Champion can be expected to be involved in and for which practical/administrative support can be given,
 - ❑ The work programme must reflect the Council's overall priorities.
11. A Champion who is a Member of the Executive already has structured support within the Council and certain legal responsibilities and functions to perform. An executive Member has decision making powers, may commit the Council as long as the overall policy framework is complied with and may act as a media spokesperson.