

ARTICLE 2 - MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

2.01 Composition and eligibility

- (a) **Composition.** The Council will comprise 52 members, otherwise called councillors. One or more councillors will be elected by the voters of each ward in accordance with a scheme drawn up by the Electoral Commission and approved by the Secretary of State.
- (b) **Eligibility.** Only registered voters of the Borough or those living or working there will be eligible to hold the office of councillor.

2.02 Election and terms of councillors

Election and terms. The regular election of councillors will be held on the first Thursday in May every four years beginning in 2003. The terms of office of councillors will start on the fourth day after being elected and will finish on the fourth day after the date of the next regular election.

A councillor will cease to be a member if they resign by giving notice in writing to the head of paid service, if they fail to observe the requirements to attend Council meetings as prescribed by Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 or if they are disqualified from holding office by virtue of Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 or any other statutory provision.

2.03 Roles and functions of all councillors

- (a) **Key roles.** All councillors will:
 - (i) collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions;
 - (ii) contribute to the good governance of the area and actively encourage community participation and citizen involvement in decision making;
 - (iii) effectively represent the interests of their ward and of individual constituents;
 - (iv) respond to constituents' enquiries and representations, fairly and impartially;
 - (v) participate in the governance and management of the Council; and
 - (vi) maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics.
- (b) **Rights and duties**
 - (i) Councillors will have such rights of access to such documents, information, land and buildings of the Council as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions and in accordance with the law.

- (ii) Councillors will not make public information which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the Council, divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a councillor or officer entitled to know it or process personal information in a manner contrary to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- (iii) For these purposes, “confidential” and “exempt” information are defined in the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution.

2.04 **Conduct**

Councillors will observe the Members’ Code of Conduct, the Planning Code of Good Practice, The Protocol on Presentations to Councillors and the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations set out in Part 5 of this Constitution.

2.05 **Allowances**

Councillors will be entitled to receive allowances in accordance with the Members’ Allowances Scheme set out in Part 6 of this Constitution.