

Part C – The Cabinet, formerly known as Executive

Section C2:- The Roles, Responsibilities and Attributes of Cabinet, formerly known as Executive Members

In Part C:-

Section C1 contains an overview of the Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, and the discharge of Cabinet functions.

This Section (C2) sets out the roles and attributes of Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members and Opposition Group Leaders

Section C3 contains the Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Procedure Rules which govern Cabinet meetings and Cabinet decision taking.

Part C – The Cabinet, formerly known as Executive

Section C2:- The Roles, Responsibilities and Attributes of Cabinet, formerly known as Executive Members

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1. Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members

Introduction

- 1.1 The roles, responsibilities, values, skills, and attributes expected of all Members set out in Section B3 of the Constitution also apply to the Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members. Cabinet Members should demonstrate a higher level of aptitude commensurate with their role as an Cabinet Member.
- 1.2 The additional role of the Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Member is principally to be a figurehead or champion for all matters falling within their Portfolio. . They are responsible for taking Cabinet decisions individually and for providing political leadership, oversight and accountability for all matters within their Portfolio.
- 1.3 Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members also have collective responsibilities and must take an interest in each other's Portfolios so that they can support each other, recognise and contribute to issues which cut across different Portfolios, and take an active part in meetings of the Cabinet and collective decision taking.
- 1.4 Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members are accountable to the Cabinet, the Leader, Council, and ultimately to the communities that they are elected to represent.

Member of the Cabinet, formerly known as Executive,

- 1.5 Operating in this capacity, it is the role of all Cabinet Members to work with Officers and Policy Development Boards (if appointed) to formulate strategic and statutory policy documents which ensure that the priorities and objectives set by Council are carried to and delivered through the Cabinet

Portfolio Holder

- 1.6 Operating in this capacity, it is the role of all Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members to:-

- (a) provide assistance and direction in working up and carrying through a strategic work plan for the Portfolio embracing the requirements of Council and statute undertaking appropriate consultation with stakeholders as required, and ensuring the Portfolio's forward work plan is accurate and up to date.
- (b) be a strong, competent, knowledgeable and persuasive spokesperson to represent the Portfolio and give political direction to Officers on Portfolio matters
- (c) act as a figurehead in meetings with stakeholders providing leadership and brokering differences of opinion and competing priorities particularly when working with partners to achieve common aims.
- (d) operate as an inclusive and adaptive leader on Portfolio matters within the community showing vision and foresight and encouraging community empowerment, engagement and participation.

Accountability

1.7 One of the key responsibilities of all Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members is to be ultimately accountable for the discharge of their Portfolio responsibilities. This requires all Cabinet Members to:-

- (a) have an sound overview of the performance management, efficiency and effectiveness of the Portfolio and participate fully in the setting of strategic agendas and work programmes.
- (b) report as appropriate to the Leader, Council, Cabinet, and relevant regulatory bodies.
- (c) liaise with the appropriate Scrutiny Chairmen in discharging Portfolio responsibilities, appear before Scrutiny Committees as and when required and receive Scrutiny reports.

Skills and Attributes

- 1.8 In addition to the skills and attributes of all Members set out in Section B3 of the constitution, the following skills and attributes are particularly important for an effective Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Member:-
- (a) Sound current knowledge of issues and objectives at national and local levels and of the Council's objectives, strategies, policies and operations in order to be able to constructively challenge decisions, suggest alternatives and contribute to discussion and resolution of cross cutting and collective issues.
 - (b) Well developed and demonstrable adaptive and inclusive leadership, advocacy, communication, negotiation and interpersonal skills.
 - (c) The ability to gain the respect of Officers within the Portfolio and provide support to Officers in the implementation of Portfolio programmes.
 - (d) The ability to exercise foresight, strategic awareness and judgement, to think laterally and creatively, excellent knowledge of decision making processes, protocols, policies, codes of conduct and who to involve in decision making.

2. Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council

Introduction

- 2.1 References in this section to the Leader of the Council include the Deputy Leader unless the context suggests otherwise.
- 2.2 The roles, responsibilities, values, skills, and attributes expected of all Members set out in Section B3 and of Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members as set out above also apply the Leader of the Council. The Leader should demonstrate a higher level of aptitude commensurate with their role as Leader.
- 2.3 The Leader of the Council is elected to that office by all of the other Members of Council. The Leader appoints the Deputy and other Cabinet, formerly

known as Executive, Members and is Chairman of the Cabinet and the political figurehead for the Council.

- 2.4 The Leader provides political leadership to the Council by forming a political consensus around Council policies and forming a vision for the Council and the community.
- 2.5 The Leader is responsible for providing strong, clear leadership in the co-ordination of policies, strategies and service delivery and acts as the principal political spokesperson for the Council.
- 2.6 The Deputy Leader of the Council is responsible for assisting and supporting the Leader and discharging the duties of the Leader in his or her absence.
- 2.7 The Leader is accountable to Council, and ultimately to the communities that they are elected to represent.

Leading the Council

- 2.8 Operating in this capacity, it is the Leader's role to:-
 - (a) compile Portfolio responsibilities and allocate them to the other Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members having regard to their abilities.
 - (b) fulfil the role of a Portfolio holder and advise and mentor other Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members.
 - (c) lead and manage the work and continual development of the Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, to ensure that it meets national and local policy objectives through the forward plan, effective leadership, effective management, chairmanship of meetings /briefings and appropriate liaison and co-ordination with Senior Officers
 - (d) work closely with other Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members and Policy Development Board chairmen to ensure the development of an effective Budget and Policy Framework and the delivery of high quality services.

- (e) accept collective responsibility and support decisions made by the Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, (collectively and individually) once they have been made.
- (f) liaise with the Chief Executive and other appropriate Officers on a regular basis to lead the organisation, develop the strategic vision and direction of the Council, the management roles of Officers and the development of policy.
- (g) promote inclusive leadership, fulfil the role of mediator and to seek to resolve difficulties and build consensus when differences arise between Members or Members and Officers.

Representing the Council

2.9 Operating in this capacity, it is the Leader's role to:-

- (a) provide strong, competent and eloquent representation and leadership for the Council at national, regional and local levels.
- (b) act as the public sector champion and provide leadership and support local partnerships and organisations in the pursuit of common aims and priorities.

Skills and Attributes

2.10 In addition to the skills and attributes of all Members and Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members, the following skills and attributes are particularly important to be an effective Leader:-

- (a) knowledge of community strengths, areas of improvement, and key issues facing the Council.
- (b) a good working knowledge of all Portfolios.
- (c) a good understanding of the relationship between national and local politics and policy objectives.
- (d) a good understanding and awareness of and ability to promote the Council's strategies, policies and operations.

- (e) the ability to recognise talent amongst Members and to appraise, guide and mentor senior Members.
- (f) the ability to negotiate the most advantageous appointments within and across political groups.
- (g) enhanced adaptive and inclusive leadership style, advocacy, communication, negotiation and interpersonal skills to enable the ambassadorial role to be undertaken and to communicate effectively with the media, local community and a wider variety of audiences.
- (h) enhanced chairmanship skills, a sound understanding to the constitution, procedure rules, codes and practices to effectively manage the work of the Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, chair meetings to encourage full participation and engagement from the public and all Members
- (i) the ability and desire to seek consensus and compromise when in the best interests of the Council and the whole electorate of Cheshire West and Chester.
- (j) a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Chief Executive and other Officers and the ability to foster good working relationships.

3. Assistant Cabinet Members

Introduction

- 3.1 The Leader may appoint Members as Assistant Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members to assist Portfolio holders in carrying out their roles and responsibilities. Assistant Cabinet Members act in an advisory and support role but may not exercise Cabinet powers or substitute for Cabinet Members.
- 3.2 Assistant Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members are accountable to the Portfolio holder that they are appointed to support. Their responsibilities may vary, they may be assigned to support individual Portfolio holders or to support particular projects such as acting as chair to one of the 5 Policy Development Boards which have been aligned to the Altogether Better

programme. They are responsible to the Cabinet collectively, to the Leader, relevant Policy Performance Panels or Working Groups, Council and ultimately to the communities that they are elected to represent.

Roles, Responsibilities, Values, Skills and Attributes

- 3.3 The roles, responsibilities, values, skills, and attributes expected of all Members set out in Section B3 of the constitution and also apply to Assistant Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members.
- 3.4 With the exception of exercising Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Powers, the roles, responsibilities, values, skills and attributes expected of Cabinet Members as set out above also applies to Assistant Cabinet Members under the direction of the Leader.
- 3.5 In particular, Assistant Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members support Cabinet Members by:-
- (a) Chairing the Policy Performance Panels whether aligned to individual portfolios, the Altogether Better Programme, or other Working Groups that may be set up from time to time.
 - (b) assisting with the provision of leadership in the Portfolios.
 - (c) at the request of the Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, liaising with the appropriate Scrutiny Chairmen and receive Scrutiny reports as required.
 - (d) having an overview of the performance management, efficiency and effectiveness of the Portfolios.

4. Leader and Deputy Leader of Opposition Political Groups

Introduction

- 4.1 Opposition Political Groups (“Group(s)”) are those political groups that do not, as a group, hold a majority of the seats on the Council. Each Group will elect a leader. This section relates to the roles and responsibilities of Group leaders within the Council and does not cover the role of Group leaders within their Groups.

- 4.2 References in this section to Group leaders include any deputy leader of those Groups unless the context suggests otherwise.

Shadowing the Cabinet, formerly known as Executive,

- 4.3 The role of a Group leader is to provide a political figurehead, point of contact and spokesperson for their Group. Group leaders effectively assume the role of “shadow” Leader of the Council. Group leaders do not exercise any executive powers and do not operate as spokespersons on behalf of the Council. They discharge a representational/spokesperson role from the perspective of their own group in parallel to that of the Leader of the Council.
- 4.4 Opposition Groups may, if they wish, also appoint “Shadow” Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members usually aligned to the Portfolio appointments made by the Leader of the Council. Much like Group leaders, Shadow Cabinet Members do not exercise any executive powers and do not operate as spokespersons on behalf of the Council. They discharge a representational/spokesperson role from the perspective of their own Group in parallel to that of the Cabinet Member that they shadow.
- 4.5 Group leaders and any Shadow Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members are accountable to their group, Council and ultimately to the communities that they are elected to represent.

Building Consensus and Informed Alternative Views

- 4.6 Group leaders and any Shadow Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members have an important role to play as mediators who seek to resolve difficulties or differences of opinion which may arise between Groups, between Members of their Group or between Members of their Group and Officers.
- 4.7 The overriding objective of this role is to build consensus amongst Members as to what is in the best interests of the Borough. There may be circumstances when it is appropriate for Group leaders and/or any Shadow Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Member to offer an informed

alternative view on matters which fall to the Leader and Cabinet to be determined or undertaken.

- 4.8 The role of providing appropriate and informed alternative views is part of the informal Scrutiny process that is essential to open and transparent governance arrangements that is to be exercised in a constructive manner and not solely for party political purposes.

Roles, Responsibilities, Values, Skills and Attributes

- 4.9 The roles, responsibilities, values, skills, and attributes expected of all Members set out in Section B3 of the Constitution apply to all Group leaders and any Shadow Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, Members.
- 4.10 With the exception of functions relating to the administration or discharge of Cabinet, formerly known as Executive, functions, the roles, responsibilities, values, skills and attributes expected of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members also apply to Group leaders and any Shadow Cabinet Members.
- 4.11 In particular, the following skills and attributes are particularly important to be an effective Group leader or Shadow Cabinet, formerly known as Executive Member:-
- (a) The ability and desire to be pragmatic, seek consensus and to compromise in the best interests of the Council and the Borough
 - (b) The ability to constructively challenge decisions and suggest alternatives.