

Kirklees Councillor Role Profile

Context:

We want Kirklees Council to be an informed citizen-led democracy with accountable elected representatives who enable communities to influence and affect decisions governing their lives. We want the councillor role to be clear, widely communicated and universally understood. To help us achieve this aspiration we want our councillors:

- To have the confidence, skills, support and capacity to lead the changing relationship between the council and local citizens.
- To be placed at the heart of the Council;
- To be accessible and confident in their role in a digitally networked society;
- To play a vital part in ensuring local democracy works and is valued by our citizens;
- To ensure the delivery of good quality services to citizens which are fair and efficient;
- To play a pivotal role in working with local citizens to shape their places;
- To represent the citizens who live in their Ward and provide a bridge between those citizens, the Council and other agencies;
- To have the confidence and ability to take action and make a difference.

Your Role:

There will be many different elements to your Councillor role and throughout your Term of Office you will receive support from your political group, if you have one, and from Kirklees Council officers, in order to carry it out. This will commence with a comprehensive New Councillor Induction programme when you are first elected. Your role will be varied and will include:

Advocating and Representing Your Place

You will:

- Be the voice or spokesperson for the community and provide feedback to them;
- Fulfil the responsibilities of a Corporate Parent;
- Work with citizens on common causes and build relationships between the community, partners and the Council;
- Be an ambassador for the Ward you represent and Kirklees as a whole;
- Advocate for vulnerable individuals;
- Network and signpost citizens to Council and partner services;
- Be knowledgeable about your Ward;
- Be visible and approachable in your Ward
- Undertake casework on behalf of citizens;
- Lead engagement with citizens and communities and work collaboratively with citizens, services and agencies to respond to such engagement;
- Raise the profile of your Ward;

Leadership & Partnership Working

You will:

- Be an ambassador for your Ward and Kirklees;
- Work with partners and stakeholders including the voluntary and community sector;
- Understand the wider regional context and benefits for Kirklees and your Ward;

Influencing and Decision Making

You will:

- Use evidence and insight to make informed decisions;
- Manage citizen and partner expectations;
- Empower communities to find solutions and make decisions
- Work together for common causes and across political boundaries;
- Ensure community priorities and aspirations are fed into decision making;
- Understand and communicate the impact decisions will have to citizens and partners;
- Be a member of or chair a formal Council committee;
- Attend full Council meetings,
- Represent Kirklees Council on Outside Bodies as appropriate;

Working constructively with Officers

You will:

- Develop and maintain effective and professional working relationships with officers;
- Treat officers with respect and be a critical friend;
- Contribute to developing a shared understanding of each other's roles;
- Provide constructive challenge and support to officers where appropriate;
- Not involve officers in party politics and be mindful of their need to be neutral;

Being Political

You will:

- Participate in the activities of your political group (where relevant);
- Attend your political group meetings and away days;
- Respect and understand the political dimension of your role.

Core Expectations and Personal Development

You will:

- Carry out your role in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct and the Working Together Effectively Protocol for Councillors and Officers in Kirklees. The Code of Conduct refers to a number of general principles and obligations on members including (but not limited to):
 - You must treat others with respect;
 - You must not bully or harass any person (including specifically any Council employee);
 - You must not conduct yourself in a manner which is contrary to the Council's duty to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour;
 - You must not do anything which may cause the Council to breach any of the equality duties.

- Act in a professional and responsible manner;
- Comply with Standards protocols;
- Be open and committed to personal development;
- Undertake training and development relevant to the role;
- Understand digital opportunities and use different methods to communicate, including IT and social media;
- Participate in regular performance management within your political group and meet expected standards.

In order to carry out the role of a Councillor you will be supported to develop the following skills:

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills that recognise the situation and audience;
- Depth of knowledge of the ward, including its differences and similarities, its geography, demographics, economy, challenges and opportunities;
- Broad understanding of Kirklees as a place and a Council;
- Understanding of the role of officers in Local Government and be respectful of the remit of an officers role;
- Ability to manage conflict between ward issues and Council decisions;
- Understanding of the time commitment required of a councillor
- Personal resilience;
- IT skills to support effective communication in a digital age;
- Organisation skills to manage a busy schedule of commitments;
- Ability to work respectfully with all interested parties, including other Councillors, partners and community groups for the benefit of Kirklees citizens and communities.