

# **1 The role of the councillor – a job description**

## **1.1 Responsible for:**

- ☐ representing people as a Labour Party member of the local council
- ☐ helping to form or scrutinise policies to improve the lives and opportunities of people in the area
- ☐ providing leadership and engaging in partnerships in their community
- ☐ Duties will include representation, policy making, policy review, regulation of services, scrutiny of services, partnership working and consultation.

## **1.2 Key objectives:**

- ☐ to oversee the work of the council and ensure that quality public services are provided to local people, and that the services continuously improve and give best value
- ☐ to seek improvements in the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area
- ☐ to participate in community planning and the production of a corporate strategy and vision for the authority
- ☐ to represent and act as an advocate for the people of the ward they represent
- ☐ to provide community leadership and build partnerships with other agencies and organisations in the area
- ☐ to promote the values and policies of the Labour Party

## **1.3 Key duties on the council:**

- ☐ to attend full council, the council executive and/or overview and scrutiny committee(s) and other committee meetings as necessary
- ☐ to contribute effectively to the work of the council, in line with Labour group policy as appropriate
- ☐ to help to decide service priorities and participate in agreeing and setting a budget, in line with Labour group policy
- ☐ to monitor performance against targets in all areas of the council activity
- ☐ to engage with local residents to consult them, feedback on council activity, take up their concerns as appropriate and be their voice in the council

## **1.4 Key duties within the community:**

- ☐ to develop links with all parts of the community eg visiting schools, meeting local businesses, attending tenants' meetings, visiting local projects and community groups
- ☐ to conduct regular walkabouts in the ward to identify issues of concern and tackle nuisance e.g. fly-tipping, graffiti, abandoned cars

- ☐ to promote and represent the council in the local community and on community bodies (e.g. school governing bodies, residents associations)
- ☐ to conduct regular surgeries to allow constituents to raise issues of importance or personal concern with their elected representatives
- ☐ to take action on issues raised by constituents and lobby for resources for the ward within the constraints of the group's overall priorities and financial strategy for the council
- ☐ to attend local community events on a regular basis
- ☐ to support consultative arrangements organised by the council in the ward and its locality
- ☐ to provide regular newsletters and letters to help build relationships with the residents the councillor is elected to serve
- ☐ to promote Labour's values and represent the Labour party locally

#### **1.5 Key duties within the Labour group:**

- ☐ to participate actively in Labour group meetings and contribute to effective decision-making
- ☐ to assist in the formulation of the Labour group's strategies and policies, within a framework of national Labour Party policy
- ☐ to be a part of the Labour team working to deliver Labour's policies locally
- ☐ to support regular campaign and communications in the local community, raising the profile of Labour and its work for local residents
- ☐ to be an ambassador for the Labour Party

#### **1.6 Key duties with the local branch Labour Party:**

- ☐ to attend branch meetings and report and consult on all council activity undertaken
- ☐ to campaign with branch members on local issues
- ☐ to support policy discussion eg partnership in power, the big conversation
- ☐ to recruit new members and mobilise existing ones into action
- ☐ to build a healthy party locally

## **2 The skills to stand – a person specification**

Below is a person specification which shows the skills you will need to be an effective Labour councillor. How do you measure up against the criteria?

### **2.1 Community leadership**

- ☐ Engages enthusiastically and empathetically with the community in order to learn, understand and act upon issues of local concern.
- ☐ Mediates fairly and constructively, encouraging trust by representing all sections of the community.

### **2.2 Regulating and monitoring**

- ☐ Understands and executes judicial role by following protocol, evaluating arguments and making decisions that balance public needs and local policy.
- ☐ Ensures progress by monitoring and intervening where necessary.

### **2.3 Scrutiny and challenge**

- ☐ Acts as a critical friend to the council by seeking opportunities for scrutiny and providing constructive feedback.
- ☐ Analyses information quickly and presents arguments in a concise, meaningful and easily accessible way.

### **2.4 Communication skills**

- ☐ Listen sensitively, uses appropriate language and checks for understanding.
- ☐ Communicates regularly with individuals and groups in the community, speaks clearly and confidently in public, and makes sure that people are informed.

### **2.5 Working in partnership**

- ☐ Builds positive relationships by making others feel valued, trusted and included and by working collaboratively to achieve goals.
- ☐ Maintains calm and focus, recognises when to delegate or provide support and is able to take a long-term view in developing partnerships.

### **2.6 Political understanding**

- ☐ Acts ethically, consistently and with integrity when communicating values or representing group views in decisions and actions. Effectively works across group boundaries without compromising values or ethics.