

MEMBERS'

handbook





Introduction from the Chief Executive

Dear Councillor,

Warmest congratulations on being elected to serve as a Member of Haringey Council for the next four years.

Here at Haringey we are constantly striving to improve the lives of our residents by delivering better services, working innovatively with our partners and building a safer community. To do this we rely on your vital role as an elected representative and a community champion.

You have chosen a challenging path and we are committed to supporting you in achieving your goals and in being successful in all aspects of your role. As part of that support we offer an extensive Member Learning and Development Programme designed to help and guide you, not only as a new Councillor but throughout your term of office.

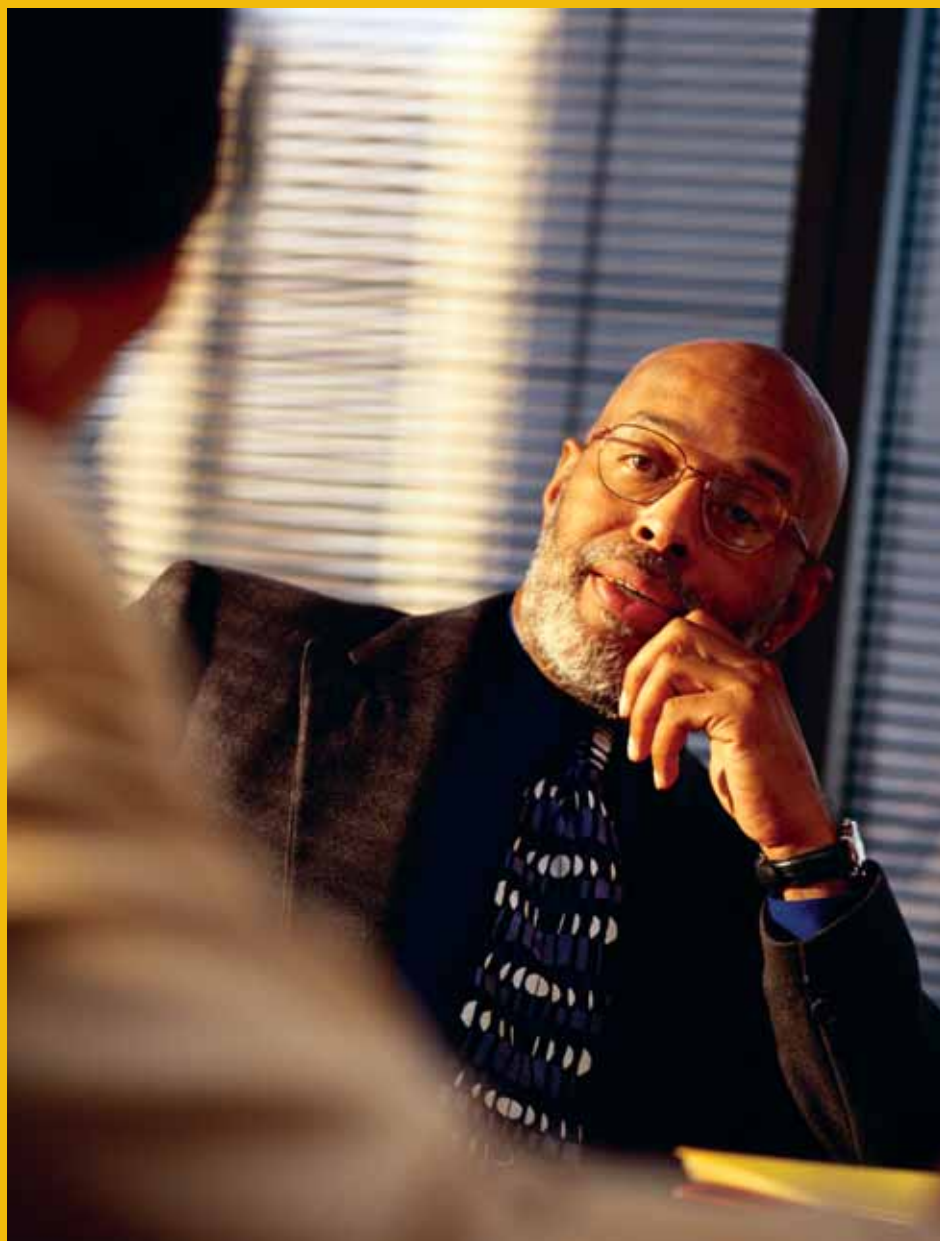
This Handbook is intended as an introduction to Haringey and to your role as a Councillor. Whether you are a new member or you have been re-elected to the Council, I hope that you will find it interesting and useful and that you will make the most of the learning and development opportunities on offer to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ita O'Donovan'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Ita O'Donovan
Chief Executive

May 2006

Now you are a Councillor



Now you are a Councillor you are the voice of your community. You are a champion of the users of local services and you play a critical role in the effective functioning of democracy and in helping to shape future services for the benefit of the local people.

This section of the Handbook aims to provide you with some useful guidance to support you in carrying out your role effectively.

I Introduction to your roles and responsibilities as a Councillor

During your time in the Council you will come into contact with the Council's decision making process and with local residents, partners and stakeholders. When this happens you will be introduced to the concept of the Councillor/member. You may hear the term 'Councillor' or 'member' used but they actually mean the same thing....As a *Councillor* you are an elected *Member* of the Council.

The role of a Councillor is a privileged one and you have been elected by the people in the community to make a difference to their quality of life.

As a modern Councillor you have to balance the interests of your ward residents with the needs of the overall community, your political party's objectives and the requirements of Haringey Borough.

The modern Councillor role involves being:

- a ward representative
- a decision maker
- involved in policy and strategy review and development
- involved in the overview and scrutiny process
- a regulator
- a community leader and networker.

There is no formal 'job description' for being a Councillor and, even if there were, all of you would interpret the role and responsibilities in different ways depending on your interests, background, individual ambitions, experience and the time you have available.

However, there are a number of basics to which all Councillors and members in Haringey have to adhere. Some of the basics are enshrined in law; others are part of the Council's Constitution, while some are simply common sense.

2 Your basic responsibilities as a Councillor

By law, you must:

- attend Full Council and designated committee meetings. (The statutory requirement is to attend at least one meeting every six months)
- comply with the Code of Conduct
- register interests

- register gifts and hospitality
- declare personal and prejudicial interests at meetings and follow the appropriate protocols
- register under the Data Protection Act
- observe the Member/Officer protocols.

In addition, Haringey's Constitution sets out a definition of the role of Councillors:

- collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions
- contribute to the good governance of the area and actively encourage community participation and citizen involvement in decision making
- effectively represent the interests of their ward and of individual constituents
- respond to constituents' enquiries and representations, fairly and impartially
- participate in the governance and management of the Council and borough locality;
- maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics.

3 Ethics and Probity

Councillors must adhere to a strict code of conduct which underpins the way in which they carry out their responsibilities as an elected representative. A detailed section on Ethical Governance can be found in Section 5 of this Handbook.

4 Carrying out your role effectively

You will of course have your own priorities as to how much time you can or wish to devote to your work as a Councillor and indeed in which areas you choose to concentrate, however in order to be effective in your role it will be helpful if you follow a few general guidelines and continue to develop the following skills:

Skills and knowledge:

- a good understanding of the operation of the Council, its partners, other outside bodies and key stakeholder organisations
- a good understanding of the social, economic and environmental situation of your ward and the Haringey locality
- a general understanding of legislation, national and local policy
- your communication and interpersonal skills and techniques to deal effectively with a range of different audiences and all Haringey's communities on a group and individual basis
- to plan and think strategically and corporately
- your abilities to deal courteously with the public and to enable all points of view to be heard
- your abilities to understand how documents, reports and briefings relate to your responsibilities as a ward Councillor, community leader and champion and elected representative
- ability to listen effectively to different and sometimes conflicting views within the local community and to

take these views on board when representing local interests within the Council and outside

- ability to work effectively within a team environment
- a variety of effective leadership skills
- a sound range of chairing skills in order to facilitate open discussion and participation at various Council, public and community forums that you may be required to chair as a Councillor. Also ensuring that business on the agenda is dealt with properly and that there are clear outcomes.

Guidelines and useful tips:

- plan and manage your time and prioritise your objectives
- be available to all the constituents in your ward by holding regular accessible surgeries and responding to enquiries within a reasonable time frame
- participate actively as a member of any committee or panel to which you are appointed, making sure you maintain an up-to-date knowledge of the issues and developments related to it
- champion the causes that best relate to the interest and sustainability of the community and campaign for the improvement in the quality of life of the community in terms of equity, economy and environment
- act as an advocate, facilitator and representative of the local community, ensuring that all views are heard
- to participate in area and service-based consultative processes with the community and other organisations

- contribute constructively to open government and democratic renewal through active encouragement to the community to participate generally in the governance of the locality, including via area assemblies
- represent the Council to the community and the community to the Council through the various forums available
- participate in the activities of any outside body to which you are appointed, providing two-way communication between organisations. To do this effectively you will need to develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's policies and practices in relation to that outside body and of the community's needs and aspirations in respect of that body's role and function
- participate in the activities of your political group
- promote equality and diversity in the undertaking of all your activities as a Councillor
- develop good working relationships with relevant officers of the Council
- participate fully in member learning and development opportunities.

Surgeries

As a ward representative a Councillor's primary role is to represent the ward and the people who live in it. The traditional way for Councillors to meet with constituents is through the use of surgeries. Haringey Councillors all hold local surgeries and the venues and times of these sessions are advertised in Haringey People, on the Council's web site and in a Councillor Surgery leaflet.

At surgeries residents will speak to Councillors about a wide range of issues, for instance, complaints about anti social behaviour; wanting a housing transfer; objecting to proposed Controlled Parking Zone schemes; lobbying for more traffic calming measures; complaining about rubbish and seeking guidance on how to apply for grants and benefits.

Details on how to use the Member Enquiries procedure for casework arising from your surgeries can be found under Member Enquiries in Section 6 of this Handbook.

Surgeries enable Councillors to:

- meet their constituents
- solve people's problems
- receive casework queries
- gain support for their work and ideas
- discuss the impact of Council policies on the area
- raise their profile
- be an effective advocate for the people and communities they represent.

You should be aware that occasionally people who come to see Councillors about serious or intractable problems may be stressed and angry. An advice sheet on security and personal safety at your surgeries is provided separately from this Handbook and you are strongly recommended to read it carefully before embarking on your first surgery.

In all aspects of your role as a Councillor, there is a

wealth of support and assistance provided both directly to members and by way of advice from a wide range of officers across the authority. Our comprehensive learning and development programme is designed to guide and support you throughout your term as a Councillor and help you to continue to develop your skills and abilities in undertaking your various roles and responsibilities.

As well as their ward role, many members take on additional responsibilities such as Leader, Executive Member and Committee Chair. Information on how these roles work can be found in Section 4 of the Handbook.

5 Community Leadership, 'Localism' and the Neighbourhood Agenda

'Local Government's role, I believe, is to help citizens and communities become the masters of change – create communities that feel they have the power and capacity to look optimistically at the future. This is the community leadership challenge for local government'.

(David Miliband – Minister for Communities and Local Government – 21st February 2006).

'Councils have a unique potential to bring people together and encourage them to work in partnership. That is why we place such importance upon Councillors and... others who have leadership roles in their local communities'.

(John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister – January 2005).

Councillors are democratically accountable to all the communities in the ward that they represent, giving them a unique role. They are vital in maintaining the link between the users and the providers of local public services. Effective representation involves acting as both advocates and leaders for wards and neighbourhoods. Councillors should be at the heart of their local neighbourhoods, stimulating the local voice, listening to it, and representing it at a local level. Neighbourhood leadership must be a central element of every local Councillor's role. Visibility and clarity of leadership are both vitally important expectations of Councillors at local level. (Summarised from the consultation document 'Vibrant Local Leadership', published by the ODPM in January 2005).

Equally, in being strong advocates for their communities, Councillors must not lose sight of the strategic context for the Council and borough as a whole, balancing their responsibilities at local ward level with their duties – fiduciary and otherwise – borough-wide, as well as being accountable and open to challenge from residents for corporate decision making.

Working with local people to identify and solve problems in a collaborative manner is the core principle of community leadership. Gaining the trust and confidence of local residents contributed to Haringey earning Beacon Council accreditation for 'Getting Closer to Communities' in 2005/6.

Councillors by necessity have different roles on the Council and different personal 'styles' and, as such, have a

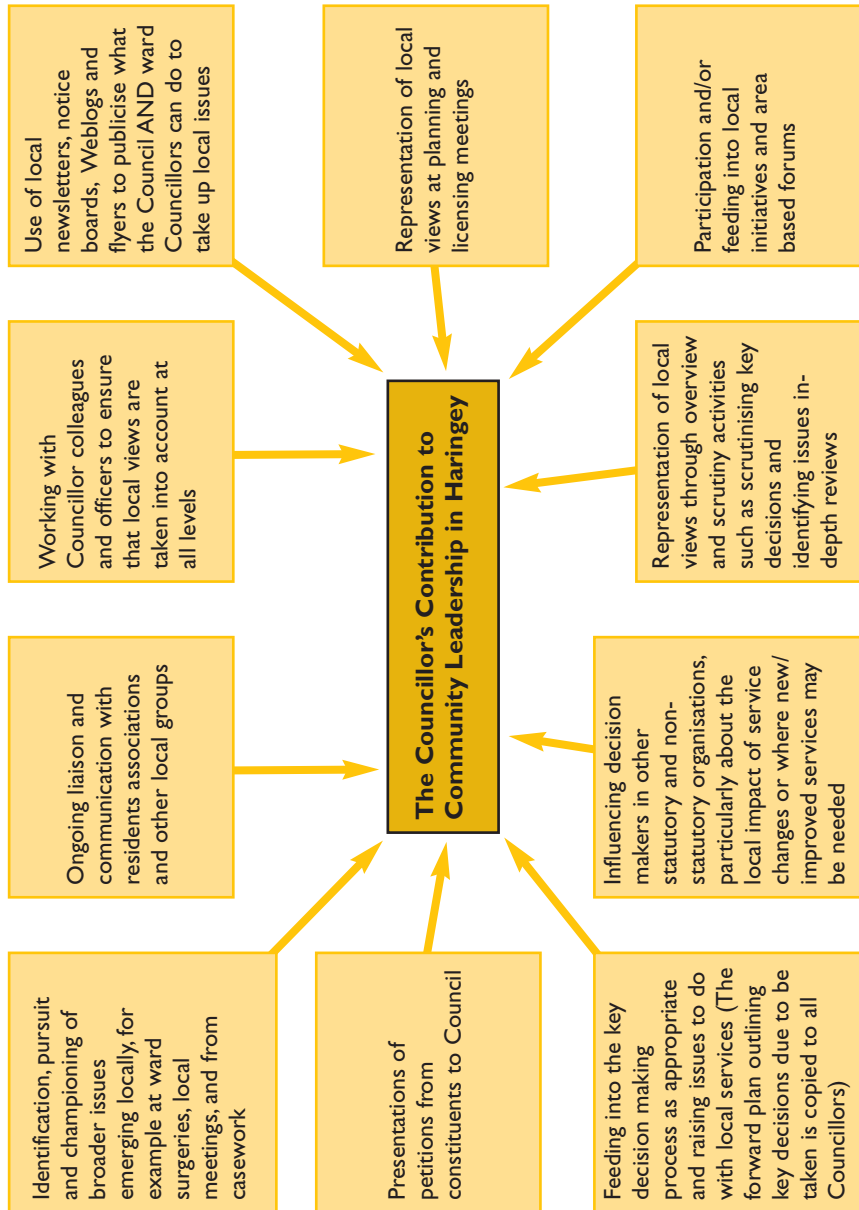
differing range of options for demonstrating community leadership. The following boxes illustrate some of the main channels through which Haringey's Councillors can and do demonstrate community leadership.

See diagram: **Councillor contribution to community leadership in the Haringey locality** on page 11

Here are some recent examples of ward Councillors providing community leadership in Haringey:

Harringay and St Ann's

- Engaged with stakeholders and partners, through the Green Lanes Strategy Group, to drive local priorities and to mould mainstream services to meet local needs
- Worked closely with the Metropolitan Police, Council and Government enforcement agencies providing local intelligence
- Steered the Council's submission to the Finsbury Park Partnership to secure £100k SRB funding to carry out environmental improvements to the Green Lanes Bridge and surrounding area
- Negotiated additional capital funding of £50k to upgrade the basket ball area and carry out further improvements in Falkland Fairfax Open Space
- Negotiated additional capital funding of £10k to contribute towards a scheme to improve pedestrian crossing at the junctions with Harringay Passage by the two primary schools in the ladder roads
- Supported Making The Difference projects.



Campsbourne Estate:

- Engaged residents in an urban design study on the estate
- Negotiated with the Primary Care Trust about the lack of GP provision in the neighbourhood
- Negotiated with London Buses about the need to re-route buses onto the estate
- Negotiated funding of £250k for improvements to the estate, secured from planning gain associated with an adjacent housing development
- Opened a community shop on the estate, to provide premises for the newly established residents association.

Tottenham Green

- Identified serious problems around drug crime on local housing estates
- Worked collaboratively with the local police, Neighbourhood Regeneration Partnership and Housing Service to secure major improvements to a local playground, installation of door entry systems to housing blocks and environmental improvements to local roads to design out anti-social behaviour.

Haringey Council has invested significant resources to roll-out neighbourhood management borough-wide.

Council Officers endeavour to keep ward Councillors informed and consulted on relevant matters affecting their ward, i.e. on planning, licensing and other relevant matters. In the case of public meetings in a particular locality, all ward Councillors will normally be invited to

attend and should normally be consulted on any form of consultative exercise on local issues.

Good partnerships at a local level are key to delivering joined up and innovative services. Ward Councillors will play an important role within neighbourhood planning, engaging with agencies such as the local police, Primary Care Trust and Job Centre Plus to achieve effective and accountable partnerships that benefit local people. As the newly elected representatives of local residents, ward Councillors have a fresh opportunity to engage communities in planning new ways of delivering local services. New governance arrangements at area level are currently being developed as part of the new neighbourhood management agenda. This is an exciting time for local government, a time of significant change!

6 Councillors' role as corporate parents

Every year local Councils look after tens of thousands of children who need to leave their homes because of family pressures and problems, abuse or neglect. They may be looked after through a voluntary agreement with their parent(s) or because of a care order made by a court. They may be looked after in a children's home, by foster carers, or other family members.

Who in the Council is responsible for these children?

Looked after children (LAC) are not the sole responsibility of The Children's Service. The Council as a

whole is the corporate parent, and Councillors have a key role.

For these vulnerable children to thrive, the entire Council – members and officers – must play their part. Being a good corporate parent means we should:

- accept responsibility for children in the Council's care
- make their needs a priority
- seek for them the same outcomes any good parent would want for their own children.

There are several reasons why the Council needs to act together:

- It is very important for children who have been separated from their families to know that 'someone out there cares'
- Children and young people need 'joined up' services that work seamlessly together to protect, support and encourage them
- It has the backing of the law – the Children Act 1989 says health and council services should help Children's Services look after children in care and in particular encourage their education. The Children Act 2004 says that the council and partner agencies should work together to improve the outcomes for all children and young people to help them: be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution and achieve economic well being.

You do not have to be an expert to help looked after children. You do need to make it your business to find out

who and where these children are and to make sure your Council is doing its very best to help them.

If it were your child you would want to know they were well looked after, making progress at school, getting good health care and being given the chance to pursue hobbies and interests. As they grew older, you would want to know that they were being encouraged to become independent, with support if they needed it, that they were well linked in to the community and that opportunities for further education, training and jobs were opening up to them.

Council work may not normally bring you into contact with children in care, so how can you go about doing this? As a corporate parent, you have a right and a duty to question the Authority. The Council's scrutiny and executive functions and processes also offer you avenues through which to act.

7 Performance

Within the CPA Corporate Assessment members have a key role to play in determining and monitoring the Council's performance. The Corporate Assessment will look to see whether Councillors have a record of focused involvement in performance management through the Executive, Scrutiny and other Council meetings and that members use information to manage continuous improvement.

The Executive receives monthly financial and

performance data in the Finance and Performance reports which look at a set of performance indicators and financial information. The responsible Executive Members have input into the report. Each Executive member has responsibility for performance within their portfolio areas.

Members' role in performance includes effective and coordinated financial and service planning. As part of this process Scrutiny will be involved in evaluating the Financial Strategy and value for money.

8 Community Leadership and Partnership Working

As well as a key role in performance, members and officers have a role in ensuring that the Council provides effective leadership to the community and that this is recognised by residents, partners and staff. Much of the work of the Council is carried out in partnership with other agencies, the voluntary and private sectors, with the Council having a lead, co-ordinating role.

Partnership working and the development of effective working relationships is important as Council members work with others to deliver the priorities for the Council.

When making judgements for the Corporate Assessment the Audit Commission will look at Councillors' ability to tackle difficult problems and strike a balance between demands and available resources.

9 Equalities and Diversity and Community Cohesion

Throughout its work, Haringey Council is committed to reflecting the full diversity of the community it serves and to promoting equality of opportunity for everyone.

The Council aims to ensure equal access to services by all citizens on the basis of need and to provide services in a manner that is sensitive to the individual whatever their background. We will represent the needs of our diverse communities to other agencies and make equal opportunities a key guiding principle in all of our work with our partners. The Council is working towards ensuring that our workforce reflects the community it serves. Councillors have an important role in promoting and progressing the Council's policies in this area.

The Local Government Association (LGA) and its partners have defined 'community cohesion' as follows:

A cohesive community is one where:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities and
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

In common with all authorities, the challenge for Haringey is to develop a vision which is meaningful to the leading of cohesive communities.

All members have a leadership role in relation to their local communities and this is vital in the area of community cohesion. Whilst Councillors are elected to represent their constituents, they must avoid simply representing sectional interests, which are likely to damage or disadvantage others with equally legitimate and evident needs. They also have a responsibility to promote wider community interests and to be fair when considering resource allocation. They must therefore have an understanding of the needs of all groups, whether or not they are represented by their constituency interests. They must also be prepared to promote an interchange and dialogue between different groups and to promote tolerance and mutual respect.

A local authority's principal role is to represent their community – and that depends upon them knowing what is going on. Often Ward Councillors are very well connected and are the first to recognise where tensions might arise. Keeping in touch with local people – through surgeries, meeting people in the neighbourhood, or any form of local meeting – is essential.

10 Definition of the role of officers and members

Both Councillors and officers are servants of the public

and they are indispensable to one another but their responsibilities are distinct.

Members – Councillors are responsible to the Electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. All Councillors have responsibilities to determine the policy of the Council, monitor its performance, represent the Council externally and act as advocates on behalf of their constituents. Executive members, chair and vice-chairs of scrutiny and other committees may also have additional responsibilities. However, all Councillors have the same rights and obligations in their relationship with officers and should be treated equally.

Officers – Officers are responsible to the Council. Their job is to give advice to Councillors and the Council, and to carry out the Council's work under the direction and control of the Council, its Executive, committees and sub-committees. Within these guidelines all officers should endeavour to give every assistance to members carrying out their various roles. Officers have a duty to keep members of all political groups fully informed about developments of significance in relation to Council activities.

II Member/Officer Protocol

Members and officers work together to develop and deliver Council policies.

The purpose of this Member/Officer Protocol is to set down principles and procedures, which have been jointly

agreed by officers and members to guide their joint working in the public interest.

The protocol supplements and interprets, but does not supplant:

- Statutory provisions, the Member Code of Conduct and other codes and guidance
- The provisions of the Council's own adopted Constitution and especially the rules of procedure
- The disciplinary codes which regulate the conduct of officers.

It contains interpretation and guidance on some of the issues that commonly arise. It cannot cover every matter that will arise in Council life, but it reflects an approach and sets standards which will serve as a guide to dealing with other issues. It is intended to guide new members and officers and explain to them what they can expect of each other. It also explains what to do when things go wrong.

This protocol applies to voting non-elected members of committees and also to consultants and agency staff working for the Council. The full protocol is contained in the Council's Constitution.

The Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer jointly keep the protocol under review and make recommendations for changes as appropriate. The Monitoring Officer also assesses the corporate awareness of the protocol annually and reports to the Standards Committee.

12 Member/Officer Relations

One of the key issues addressed by the Member/Officer Protocol is the question of member/officer relations. Mutual trust and respect should be the key aim of both members and officers as it is essential for good local government.

Obtaining or granting favours – The Member Code of Conduct emphasises the need for members to avoid behaviour which could be viewed as conferring an advantage or disadvantage on an officer. Members should not seek personal favours from officers. Officers should not be tempted to give favours to please a Councillor. An example of favour seeking would be asking whether a Councillor's parking ticket could be withdrawn or whether an application for a service could be expedited. Similarly officers should not seek to circumvent agreed staff consultative procedures by lobbying Councillors on matters which directly concern them as employees.

Personal familiarity – Personal familiarity between members and officers can undermine public confidence in the Council. It is acknowledged that some close relationships will inevitably develop, particularly when officers and Executive members or chairs of committees work closely together. It is important that close relationships between members and officers are openly declared and should never be allowed to become so close, or appear to be so close as to bring into question the officer's ability to deal impartially with other members and other party groups, nor to undermine public trust and confidence in the Council. Where

possible members and officers who have close personal relationships should try to avoid coming into contact on projects and in the day to day business of the Council.

Courtesy – Members and officers should be courteous to each other at all times even if they disagree strongly with each others' views.

Bullying – Bad relations between members and officers can be equally destructive to good governance. Members may from time to time become frustrated by what they regard as unacceptable or incompetent officer behaviour. It is self-evident that sometimes these feelings may be entirely justified although sometimes there may be a legitimate reason why member expectations cannot be met – e.g. because of a Council policy or a legal requirement such as confidentiality.

However, members should take up their concerns through the appropriate channels, rather than through public criticism. They should bear in mind that officers are instructed not to “answer back” in public.

Attacking an officer's conduct in public can in severe cases constitute bullying. Similarly, undue pressure brought by either officers or members in private can be construed as bullying.

Lines of contact between members and officers – It must be remembered that officers within a department are accountable to their chief officer. Members should direct enquiries to junior staff through senior management, or if the matter is routine at least keep a senior manager

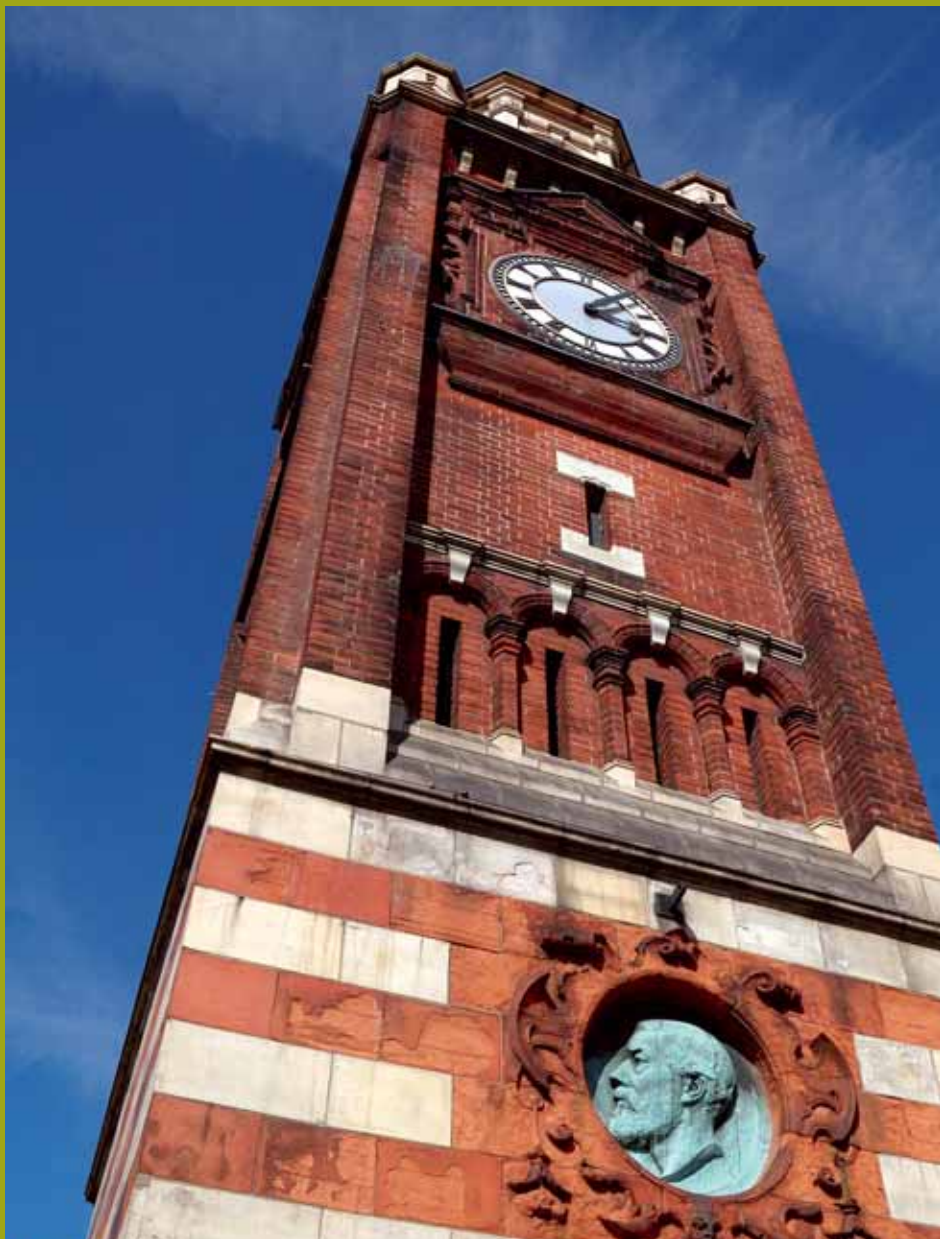
informed by copying the manager in on correspondence or emails. Officers should always seek to assist members but in so doing they must not go beyond the bounds of whatever authority they have been given by their chief officer under the delegation scheme.

In relation to visits to front-line services by members, members should consider advising relevant chief officers in advance of such visits. In the case of unannounced visits to front-line services, members should take care not to disrupt organisations unreasonably. If the visit is of a statutory inspection nature other procedures apply.

Learning and development opportunities in relation to all your roles and responsibilities as a Councillor and the development of the skills and tools required to carry them out effectively will be provided as part of the Member Learning and Development Programme.

About Haringey

Section 2



This section provides you with a brief introduction to Haringey and its diverse communities.

I Haringey's people

Located in the north of the Capital and covering an area of more than 11 square miles, Haringey is one the most diverse boroughs in London with nearly half of our 224,300 residents coming from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The 2001 Census recorded the largest groups as being:

- Caribbean – 11%
- African – 10%
- Asian (Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) – 8%
- Eastern European, Turkish and Kurdish – 5%
- Irish – 4%

The people of Haringey speak over 160 languages.

We have a young population; the average age of our residents is 34.

17% of the local population are under 18 while 13% are over 60.

2 Haringey today

The borough is divided into two parliamentary constituencies, Hornsey and Wood Green, plus Tottenham. On a local level there are 19 wards each with

3 Councillors. To complete the political picture, Haringey and Enfield form one of the 14 constituencies of the Greater London Assembly.

It is often said that Haringey is an outer London borough with inner London challenges. It ranks as one of the most deprived boroughs in the country with 7.5 per cent of the population unemployed in July 2005. This is more than twice the national average of 3.2%. However, an injection of funding from Europe and central government is financing urban regeneration projects, boosting the local economy and creating local jobs for local people.

Features in the borough include Alexandra Palace, Bruce Castle Museum, Tottenham Hotspur Football Club and Wood Green Shopping City.

3 Historic Haringey

The London Borough of Haringey was created in 1965 from the three former Middlesex Boroughs of Hornsey, Wood Green and Tottenham. Though young in historical terms, Haringey has a long history – there were settlements in Tottenham and Hornsey from the time of the Norman Conquest. The Haringey we know however dates effectively from the nineteenth century when wave after wave of new settlers arrived in the area attracted by its accessibility to central London. As commerce developed, railways were built, linking the separate townships, and gradually merging a once rural area into the urban world.

4 Haringey in the 21st Century

Modern day Haringey is a vibrant community and significant funding grants are bringing new life to eastern and central parts of the borough. Working with private, public and voluntary sector partnerships, local partnerships are investing in projects to improve the quality of life and promote the local economy. The projects aim to regenerate local neighbourhoods, reduce crime and the fear of crime, improve residents' health, raise educational standards, help unemployed residents get jobs, provide local employment opportunities, improve run down housing and improve the environment.

5 Business in Haringey

Haringey is home to around 8,200 businesses, together employing some 60,300 people. One of the key features of Haringey's businesses is size – over 95% of companies in the borough employ fewer than 24 people. The largest sectors in Haringey according to the number of people they employ are retail trade, real estate and education.

Records from 2004 show 3,198 retail premises – including shops, financial and professional services and food and drink outlets (but excluding public houses and hotels). There are also 1,098 offices, 1,179 factories and 883 warehouses. (These totals exclude leisure and sports premises, as well as public facilities such as schools, hospitals and libraries.)

6 Regeneration programmes

The key regeneration programmes are:

- The Bridge – New Deal for Communities (NDC): community-led programme focussing on housing, environment, health, employment, education, crime and community safety in Seven Sisters
- Joining Up Northumberland Park: Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) neighbourhood projects to improve service delivery, employment, health, safety and the environment
- Tottenham Futures: project to create opportunities for young people in education and work
- West Green Learning Zone: a better place to live and learn for the people of mid-Tottenham
- Made in London: support for manufacturing in the Upper Lee Valley and across the capital
- Neighbourhood Renewal Fund: narrowing the gap between the East and West of Haringey by improving basic services across the deprived areas rather than relying on small area initiatives
- Sure Start: a Government-sponsored programme to support children, parents and communities through the integration of early education, childcare and health and family support services
- Children's Fund: development of services for children and young people aged 5-13 years that support multi-agency working, bringing together preventative services from the voluntary, community and statutory sectors – as well as the beneficiaries of such services
- City Growth: business-led strategy that aims to

identify key areas of opportunity (e.g. clothing cluster) to build on the strengths of the borough

- **Tottenham High Road Strategy:** holistic approach to the re-development of the High Road (housing, transport, retail and the environment,) to make it a thriving town centre for its residents and retailers.
- **The Wood Green Master Plan:** The Wood Green Master Plan is a vital opportunity for the local community, the London Borough of Haringey and its partners to define a vision for Wood Green Town Centre. The Master Plan is being prepared by planning, urban design and regeneration consultancy, Urban Practitioners. Further information on the Wood Green Master Plan can be found at:
<http://www.woodgreenmasterplan.net/comment.html>
- **Haringey Heartlands:** The London Plan identifies Haringey Heartlands as an “area of intensification”. These areas are identified as areas with significant potential for increases in residential, employment and other uses through development or redevelopment of available sites, and regeneration. Regeneration monies will support investment in homes, business, the environment and creativity in the heart of the Borough (Wood Green area)
- **Urban master plan for Tottenham Hale (Tottenham Hale International):** Tottenham Hale is considered by the Mayor of London to be an opportunity area and also featured in the Unitary Development Plan Framework. External funding has been received to enable a Master plan study of Tottenham Hale, which is crucial in enabling future development and investment in the area. The Master Plan will be a guide

for future projects in the Tottenham Hale area. Baseline research had already started on the Urban Centre Master Plan, which will include an analysis of the urban design, transport and movement and property market issues. There will also be consultation with the local residents and stakeholders to ensure that the final, master plan is acceptable to the community.

7 Education and training

According to the Census of April 2001, 11% of the resident Haringey population aged 16-74 years were school pupils or full-time students. This compared with 5% of the population in England and Wales.

The Local Education Authority of Haringey is part of the London region. In the academic year 2004/05, 48.3% of pupils in Haringey achieved 5 or more GCSE's Grade A* to C, compared to an average for England of 57.1%.

Between 1999 and 2005, standards in education, as shown by the Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) improved in respect of younger students in the area. The proportion of pupils achieving at least level 4 at Key Stage 2 (the anticipated level of attainment for pupils aged 11 in their final year at primary school) increased from 61% in 1999 to 68% in 2005 for Mathematics and from 60% to 73% for English.

Haringey is home to the College of North East London (CONEL) which is situated in Tottenham and has various outreach centres across the Borough. The College offers a wide range of courses for both the academic and technically minded and has built strong relationships with local businesses and other educational establishments to provide courses to suit most learning needs.

8 Haringey's libraries

It is free to join a library and most library services are free too. There are nine libraries in Haringey. All apart from Wood Green Library open six days each week from 9.00am to 7.00pm Monday to Friday and 9.00am to 5.00pm on Saturdays. Wood Green Library opens a little earlier each morning at 8.45am. In addition Wood Green Central and Alexandra Park libraries are open on Sunday 12 noon – 4.00pm.

There is also a mobile library and a housebound library service. A local history and archive service operates from Bruce Castle Museum.

Haringey Libraries, Archives and Museum Service works closely with other departments within Haringey Council and the Friends of Libraries groups to provide a high quality library service.

Latest figures issued on World Book Day show Haringey libraries bucking the trend with massive increases in lending over the past four years. While loans from London's libraries as a whole fell by 16 per cent, in

Haringey lending is up by a massive 32% since 2001/2 – the biggest increase in the Capital.

As well as lending going up, visits to Haringey libraries are up by a massive 82.1% since 1998 – again the largest increase in London. Haringey libraries currently meet eight out of the ten challenging Public Library Service Standards. More than four out of five users rate Haringey libraries as 'good' or 'very good'.

Libraries in the Borough hold a varied programme of activities. Events are supported by displays of books, DVDs and CDs which are available for loan.

9 Better Haringey programme

In the autumn of 2003, Haringey Council launched 'Better Haringey', a £5 million drive to clean up the Borough. It was a direct result of residents putting crime and grime at the top of their list of concerns. Since then, the Council has invested a further £5 million per year into an extensive programme of improvements.

The aims of the programme are to:

- raise performance of environmental services across the Council
- communicate improvements to local residents, businesses and visitors
- encourage uptake of environmental services through targeted education
- encourage residents, businesses and visitors to help

sustain improvements, through a programme of education

- improve public perception of the environment, environmental services and the Council as a whole.

Activities delivered as part of the Better Haringey programme are those which have improved the built or natural environment and encourage civic pride amongst our residents. Under the themes of 'Cleaner, Greener, Safer,' a vast programme of initiatives and activities has been delivered.

Projects in the Better Haringey programme are showcased through regular events and celebrations of the achievements of our residents, schools, businesses and Council staff.

The programme is backed up with publicity via a wide range of media to get the key messages of the campaign across to the community. Advertising media have included direct mail, magazine articles, bus back posters, train station posters, billboards, leaflets and radio advertising.

A strong brand identity was established for Better Haringey, with all publicity materials, campaigns and merchandise branded in the house style. Brand recognition amongst residents currently stands at 94%.

10 “Haringey is better”, say residents

Highlights from results of the 2005/06 Annual Residents' Survey

The most recent survey results show 64% of residents say the Council is doing a good job. This means that satisfaction levels are up 13% over two years.

Scores on involving and listening to residents, doing better than a year ago and making Haringey a better place to live are all up. Two-thirds of residents rate rubbish collection good or excellent, and libraries, parks and playgrounds all get the thumbs-up.

As in previous surveys, crime remains the main area of concern for residents. Concern about crime has increased by five % on the 2004 figures. The Council and the police have since launched the Haringey Community Safety Strategy for 2006-8, with action targeted at residents' priorities.

Of all the Council services, parking attracted the most concern. As this had been highlighted in previous years the survey included a set of detailed questions, which will now be used to help improve the service. The results show that half of Haringey residents do not drive, and just a quarter, drive every day. The greatest concern for residents was not being able to find a parking space near home (56%), followed by lack of spaces in the area (31%), too much enforcement (17%) and not enough spaces in local shopping areas (13%). This will be used to help make plans for parking in the future.

The various business units within the Council use the survey results in their forward planning to make sure we are addressing the concerns of residents and to help us measure the results of various initiatives undertaken throughout the year.

See figure 1, it shows *how people access Haringey Council services*, page 12.

See figure 2, this shows *how people gain information about Haringey Council*, page 13.

The Haringey Residents' Survey is part of a London-wide polling activity that has been running since 1991 in partnership with the Association of London Government and its predecessor bodies. It is designed to measure the concerns of Haringey Residents, their perception of the Borough they live in and a range of services in the Borough. The survey has been conducted on behalf of the Council by Taylor Nelson Sofres, a well recognised market research organisation.

The questions in the survey are in two groups: the London-wide questions which are asked in Haringey and across London and local questions which are only asked in Haringey.

So that we can measure change over the years, the London-wide questions do not alter much from year to year.

The core questions cover the following topics:

- Issues of concern to residents

figure 1. How people access Haringey Council services

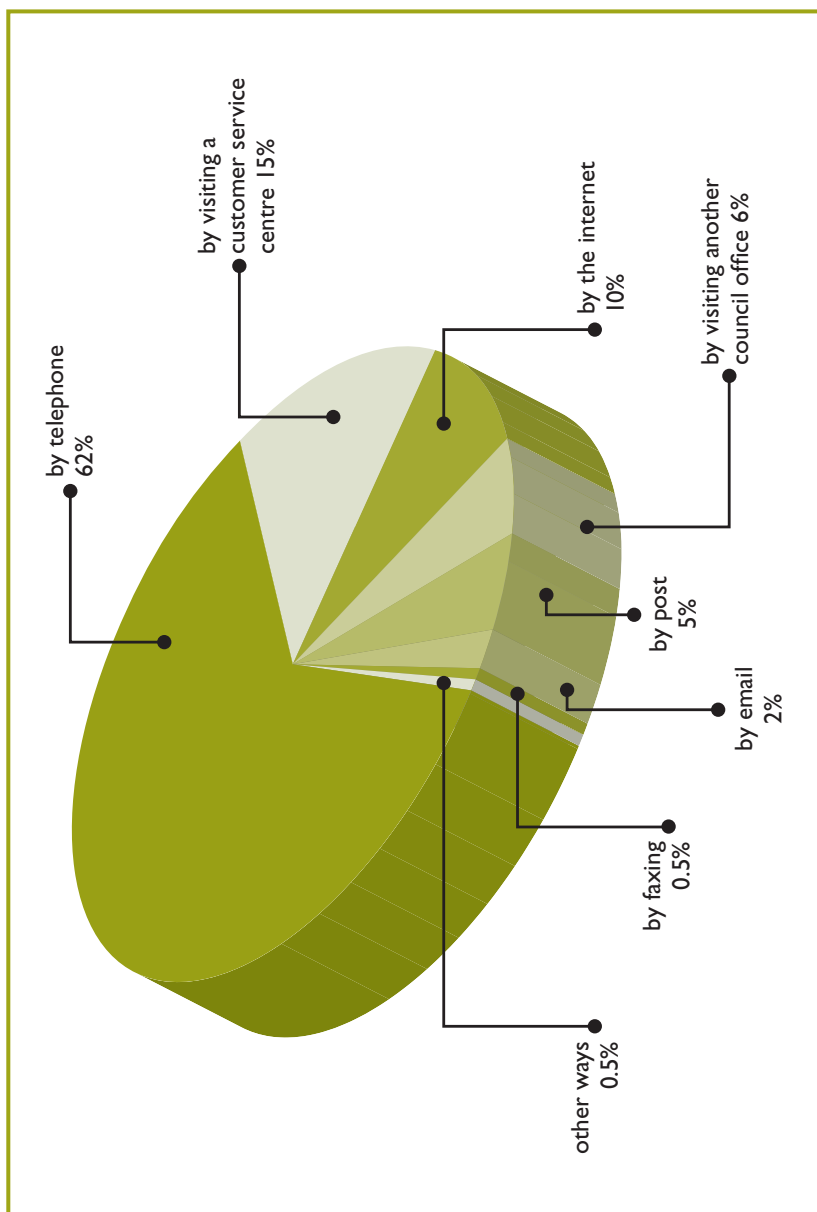
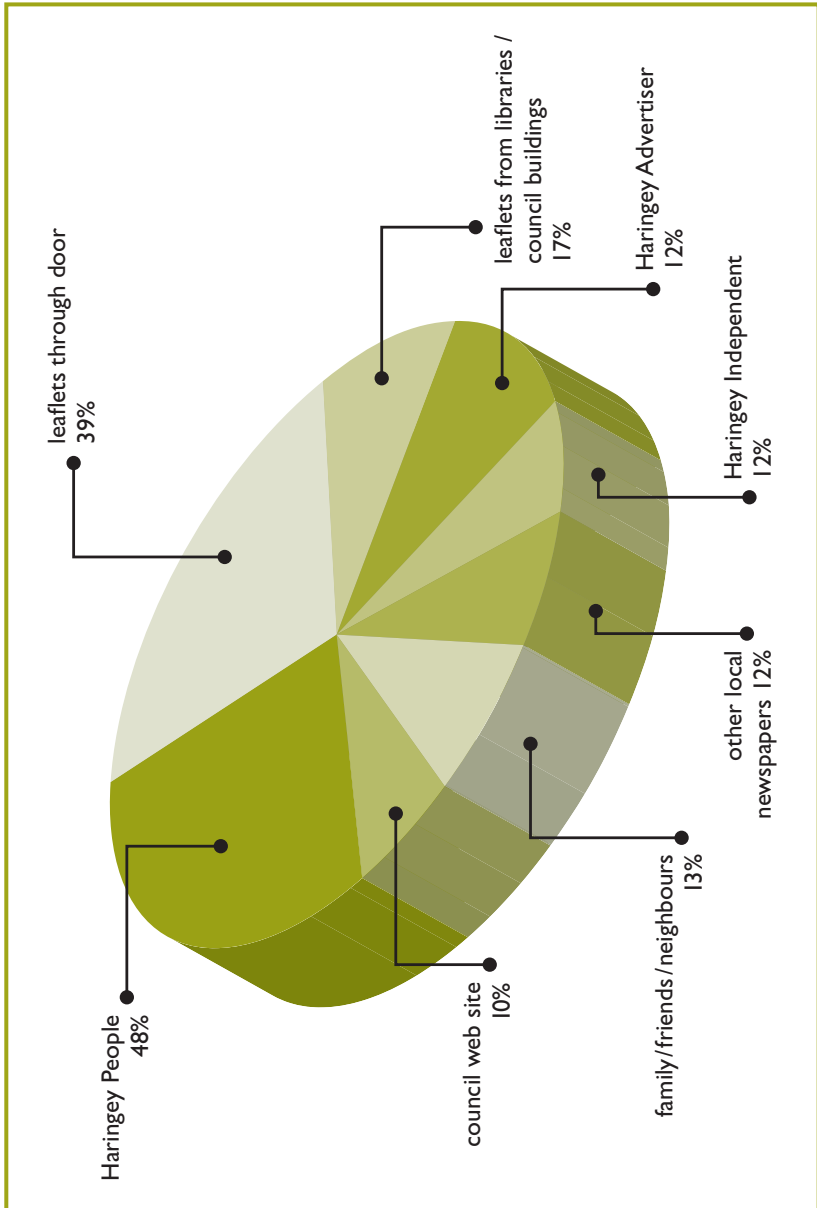


figure 2. **How people gain information about Haringey Council**



- Image of the Borough
- Service delivery and use of services.

The survey is usually conducted in November and December. Over 1000 people are interviewed in-street and in-home at 75 sampling points across the Borough. Quotas are set on gender, age, working status of women, housing tenure and ethnic origin. We can be fairly confident that the information is representative of the perceptions and feelings of the people in the Borough.

For further information or a full set of results contact the Consultation Team at consultationstrategy@haringey.gov.uk
Further information about the work of the Consultation Team can be found in Section 3 of the Handbook.

Haringey Council – the organisation



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This section is aimed at informing you about Haringey Council as an organisation. It provides an overview of the Council's priorities and contains information you will find useful in your role as employers of Haringey's workforce. In addition there is information about the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and Improvement Agenda and the role you play in this.

A separate booklet – ***A to Z of Council Services in Haringey*** – compliments this section to complete the bigger picture of how Haringey is organised.

I Haringey's priorities

The Haringey Community Strategy is the overall strategy for Haringey agreed by the Haringey Strategic Partnership.

Our Council priorities and key policies are developed through a process of strategic planning and we have a large number of policies covering our wide and complex activities that set the framework for the delivery of our services.

Setting priorities means making some hard choices in a particularly difficult financial climate. It is an essential part of community leadership that we define our ambitions, set priorities and communicate them – to our residents, our partners and our staff.

The Councils five key priorities are:

Better Haringey

Better Haringey is a £5 million environmental improvement programme, launched in September 2003, to make Haringey Cleaner, Greener and Safer. Better Haringey is our priority for at least three years and will be key to realising our ambition of being a top-performing London borough.

Raising educational achievement

Our aim is to improve the life chances of all members of the community through education. This is why we are constantly working hard to raise the level of educational achievement in the borough.

Building safer and stronger communities

Our residents want and deserve to live in strong, safe communities, which is why building stronger, safer communities is a high priority for us and the partners we work with.

Achieving excellent services

We have many excellent services – but we want all of our services to be of an excellent standard.

Putting people first

We aim to provide the individual support people need to fulfill their potential, through targeted investment aimed at ensuring no one is disadvantaged because of where they live or their personal circumstances.

A new community strategy is currently in development.

Detailed information about the Haringey Strategic Partnership can be found in Section 4 of the Handbook.

2 Haringey Council's workforce

Most Haringey Council staff reside in the borough with the Council being the biggest single employer in the borough. The Council employs staff from a multitude of different racial and cultural backgrounds, is predominantly female with staff working non-standard hours commonplace. Within the Council overall staff turnover rates stood at 9.3% for the April – September 2005 period. This compares well with local government as a whole at approximately 14.1% and the whole economy at approximately 16%. Overall staffing levels of those from minority ethnic groups are representative of the boroughs residents although those from minority ethnic groups are underrepresented at senior levels.

3 Haringey's Way of Working – our values

Excellent organisations are clear about what they want to achieve, when and why (vision, mission and priorities).

Excellent organisations are also clear about their organisational values – or their Way of Working. These help to:

- clarify what makes us special and different from other organisations

- identify 'how things are done around here' in order to succinctly articulate the beliefs and principles that govern how we work and how we respond to change
- define the organisational culture we aspire to – and the gap between our aspirations and the reality
- clarify the big, essential behaviours expected of the workforce and reinforced and modelled by the organisation's leaders
- set standards and encourage the challenging of unacceptable behaviour and the recognition and rewarding of good.

The Council has long recognised the importance of organisational culture and people's behaviour as a major determinate of our ability to meet our aims and aspirations. In January 2006 the Council agreed the following statements as the 'Haringey Way of Working' – our values:

- **SERVICE** – we work for the good of all our diverse communities
- **INTEGRITY** – we keep our promises
- **IMPROVEMENT** – we strive for excellence
- **PASSION** – we are passionate about our work and proud of what we do
- **ONE COUNCIL** – we deliver by working together

The challenge for 2006/07 is to make these values live at every level and in every corner of the organisation.

4 The Comprehensive Performance Assessment and the Improvement Agenda

The Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) is an Audit Commission framework for measuring the performance and capacity of local authorities. A scoring system is applied and Council's are ranked according to their performance. The CPA has recently been revised to make it more challenging. It is intended to act as an impetus for driving improvement within Council services. Councillors, Council officers and partner agencies all have important roles to play in ensuring that the CPA is successfully used to carry forward the performance agenda in Haringey.

The CPA has three elements:

The service score assessment

In December each year, councils are scored on their performance across services. This is a desk top exercise carried out by the Audit Commission looking at performance indicators in all Councils. In the last service assessment in December 2005 Haringey moved up from 'fair' to 'good'.

The Use of Resources assessment

This takes place annually and considers how well the Council manages its resources and whether services provide value for money. In the 2005 Use of Resources assessment Haringey scored 3 out of 4.

The Corporate Assessment

This is carried out periodically and looks at the capacity of the Council to carry out its objectives, working with partners and the local community. Haringey is currently preparing for a Corporate Assessment which will take place in June 2006. The last Corporate Assessment took place in 2002 and Haringey scored 2 out of 4.

The Corporate Assessment is based on the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) which are a set of detailed standards against which the Council will be judged. The Corporate Assessment focuses on:

- ambition for the community
- prioritisation
- capacity
- performance management.

and achievements within the following areas:

- sustainable communities and transport
- safer and stronger communities
- healthier communities
- older people
- children and young people.

The Corporate Assessment places importance on the role of elected members particularly in the areas of community leadership, performance management, including the role of scrutiny and in working with partners. These areas are discussed in detail in section 1 of the Handbook

5 Consultation and Communications

Haringey Council defines consultation as *a process of dialogue which leads to a decision*. We know that good consultation leads to a greater sense of community involvement and higher levels of customer satisfaction and we make sure that this is put into action.

Carrying out good consultation includes feeding the decisions and actions resulting from the consultation back to the community. The consultation calendar on the web and regular articles in ***Haringey People*** help make sure that people who have been consulted find out what has happened as a result. A recent development is the ‘Have your say Haringey’ section on the website and we are constantly looking for innovative and effective ways of consulting with the people of Haringey.

The key corporate publications for communicating with our residents are:

- ***Haringey People*** – published ten times a year and delivered by direct mail to every household in Haringey. Written in popular style to appeal to our diverse readership and available in translated formats
- ***A-Z of Council Services*** – published annually to give residents an easy-access guide to all services
- ***Residents’ Update*** – published as appropriate to bring residents up to date with progress on service delivery
- ***Website*** – www.haringey.gov.uk our award-winning Triple A (highest level of accessibility) website which

has been the model for many others around the country. Currently receiving some 1.5 million hits a year and accessed by almost 30% of the borough's residents. The website has a mix of immediate news, reference material, on-line transactional items, advice and consultations sections as well as on-line access to agendas and minutes of all public council meetings.

6 e-Democracy

e-Democracy is the provision of any application of technology that enables or enhances the interaction between government and its stakeholders with the goal of raising engagement and participation in democratic processes.

e-Democracy is an important catalyst for change.

e-Democracy can be defined as 'the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT) to provide access to:

- **INFORMATION:** a one-way relationship between policy makers and citizens
- **CONSULTATION:** a two way relationship between policy-makers and citizens, generally initiated by policy makers and public authorities
- **ACTIVE PARTICIPATION:** a collaborative relationship in which citizens and civil society are actively shaping public policy'

(The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development)

e-Democracy can help:

- **Councillors** in their role as decision-makers, in oversight of Council services, scrutiny and representation
- **Council officers** to inform citizens, gather their views and feed back into service delivery
- **Citizens and communities** to have a voice, engage and to organise and campaign.

e-Democracy can play a vital role in enabling the Council to meet our strategic objectives and Haringey is working towards realising the potential and benefits of e-Democracy to bring real and important benefits to Councillors, Council officers and citizens. So far the Council has introduced web casting (video content over the web), Councillor pages for every Councillor and an agenda management system that supports the Council's democratic processes and facilitates awareness and engagement with those processes. More detail of these initiatives are outlined later on in section 6 of this Handbook in 'How members are supported'.

How the Council operates



Haringey Council operates as a modern Council with a leader and Executive (cabinet) type of governance. This arrangement separates the different roles that Councillors have.

The Cabinet style of governance, complimented by a scrutiny role for Councillors, aims to increase the transparency, accountability and accessibility of the Council's decision-making processes, making it easier to find out when decisions are made, who is responsible for making decisions, and how and why a decision was reached.

The governance arrangements aim to:

- Separate more clearly Councillors' Executive, non-Executive and scrutiny roles
- Enable the people of Haringey to have a better understanding of 'how' Councillors represent and engage with the community
- Encourage the people of Haringey to actively contribute views as to how the Council provides services to them
- Enhance the public's understanding of the work of the Council and ensure better provision of services to the people of the borough.

Decision-making in Haringey Council is open and accountable. Decisions will always be made on the best advice, both legal and financial and say clearly what they are intended to achieve. All options that were considered and rejected will be published along with reasons.

I Haringey's Constitution

Haringey's Constitution contains full details of all the Council's democratic systems. It also sets out the roles of members and officers.

The Constitution is divided into sections which set out the basic rules governing Haringey's business. Detailed procedures and codes of practice are provided in separate rules and protocols. The Constitution is a 'living' document and is regularly reviewed and updated. However, only Full Council can agree any changes to the Constitution.

The business transacted at Council meetings and committees of the Council is governed by the Council Procedure Rules or "Standing Orders", as they are known.

The purpose of the Constitution is to:

- enable the Council to provide clear leadership to the community in partnership with citizens, businesses and other organisations
- support the active involvement of citizens in the process of local authority decision-making
- help Councillors represent their constituents more effectively
- enable decisions to be taken efficiently and effectively
- create a powerful and effective means of holding decision-makers to public account
- ensure that no-one will review or scrutinise a decision

- in which they were directly involved
- ensure that those responsible for decision making are clearly identifiable to local people and that they explain the reasons for decisions.

Haringey's Constitution commits the Council to making decisions in an efficient and effective way, giving leadership within the community, working in partnership with others and taking into account local views. It sets out the rights of local people to engage and participate in our democratic processes and how the key parts of the Council operate.

2 Citizens' rights

Citizens have the right to:

- attend any meeting where decisions are being taken, except on those few occasions when confidential or exempt matters are being discussed. This applies to the Executive, all Council committees, meetings of the full Council and Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- to request to speak at any meeting that they attend. Permission will be at the discretion of the Chair
- to inspect reports and background papers, except those relating to exempt or confidential matters, at least five clear days before the decision is taken
- express their views on any matter and for those views to be taken into account
- examine the Council's accounts and contact the external Auditor

- contact any Councillor
- contact the Council officer responsible for the service they are interested in
- look up the Forward Plan of key decisions
- draw up or sign a petition on any matter relating to the Council's business
- tell the Council what they think about Council services, or complain.

3 Full Council

The Council can mean the organisation as a whole, but here we are referring to “Full Council”, which is a formal meeting of all Haringey’s Councillors. It meets approximately nine times a year. Meetings of the Council are normally open to the public.

Full Council is responsible for setting the policy and budget framework for the authority which is the overall policy direction of the Council. This includes a number of plans and strategies required by central Government including the Council’s budget, plus other local priorities required by law. It is the real focus for the whole Council to meet and debate major issues and to ask questions of the Leader and Executive.

As well as a forum for debate on issues of current interest, Full Council considers and approves proposals from the Executive and discusses matters arising from various Council committees. Full Council regularly

receives reports from the Chairs of a variety of Council bodies such as the Executive, Standards Committee, Overview and Scrutiny and other bodies that report into it.

Full Council has a special meeting in May known as the Annual Meeting. At this meeting the Council appoints the Leader and Executive, and the ceremonial positions of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

The Annual meeting decides the size and membership of committees taking decisions and performing functions on its behalf, such as Overview and Scrutiny, Standards, Planning, Licensing, General Purposes and any other committees it wishes to set up to deal with 'non-Executive' decisions. Full Council also appoints Councillors as representatives to sit on the various partnership forums and outside bodies.

The Council year begins in May when the Annual Meeting will consider only business relating to appointing the Mayor, the Leader, the Executive Members and making appointments to various offices and bodies.

4 The Executive

The Executive (Cabinet) is the main decision making body of the Council and has responsibility for strategic management and policy development within the Council.

The Executive is responsible for carrying out all of the authority's functions except those which by law are the

responsibility of Full Council or its regulatory Committees. It takes all Executive decisions within the overall policy and budget framework of the authority, and the Constitution.

The Leader and Executive Members are appointed at Annual Council. The Leader of the Council is also the Leader of the Executive. Each Executive member has a portfolio of responsibilities, rather like a Government minister. Their portfolios either cover service specific areas or thematic, cross-cutting areas of responsibility.

Executive Members and the Executive as a whole have delegated authority to take decisions subject to conditions. These conditions state that decisions must be within the scope of the policies adopted by the Council and advanced notice must be given that a decision is to be taken.

The Executive works closely with chief and senior officers and makes decisions about how the Council delivers its services. Executive meetings are chaired by the Leader. On key strategic matters that are to be determined at Full Council, the Executive will put forward recommendations.

If major decisions are to be discussed with Council officers at a meeting of the Executive, this will generally be open to the public except where personal or confidential matters are being discussed. If the Executive wishes to make a decision, which is outside the budget or policy framework, this must be referred to the Council as a whole to decide.

5 The Forward Plan

Some Executive decisions are described as **key decisions** and must be included in a Forward Plan. Key decisions will include policy development issues which are financially significant, or significant in terms of the interest and impact on communities living and working in the area.

The Forward Plan is in effect the Executive's published work programme and it sets out all major decisions that the Executive will be making in the forthcoming four month period.

The Forward Plan must contain details of what the decision is and when it will be taken, who will be taking it and how to contact that person/body. It must also list the relevant reports and background papers and say how the decision taker plans to involve local stakeholders. Finally, the Forward Plan must explain that any interested party can make representations regarding the proposed decision.

The Forward Plan is published every month. The Leader as Chair of the Executive agrees the plan before it is published.

The Forward Plan is useful to a whole range of people, including:

- the Executive, in planning its work
- the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in exercising overview of forthcoming decisions

- all non-Executive Councillors, in contributing to decision-making
- local residents and organisations, in facilitating their contribution to Council deliberations
- officers, in planning ahead and in working with colleagues from other sections.

6 Urgency

Where a decision is too urgent for inclusion in the Forward Plan, the four month notice period can be waived in exceptional circumstances if the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny committee agrees. Member Services provides a report regularly to Executive meetings on the use of this urgency procedure.

7 Delegated powers

It simply is not practical for Executive Members to take every one of the many decisions that are made weekly, so Council Officers have 'delegated powers' to handle some of these.

Decisions can only be made in line with Council policy and the law. They include for example, spending within certain pre-defined limits, taking legal action, including enforcement, serving statutory notices and signing of some contracts up to a certain value.

These delegated powers to officers are set out in the

scheme of delegation which is contained in the Council's Constitution.

Chief Officers are required to keep records of decisions that they take under delegated authority. Details of significant officer delegations are collated and maintained by Member Services. Member Services then provides regular updates of these decisions to the Executive in a form of a summary report. This process facilitates open and accountable decision making within the Council.

8 Advisory and consultative bodies and member working groups

The Council and indeed the Executive from time to time set up other bodies referred to as 'advisory', 'consultative' or 'member working groups'. Decisions can not be taken by these forums but they are an essential part of the Council's democratic processes.

The advisory and consultative bodies as their names suggest have an advisory or consultative function to formal decision-making bodies and are primarily used by the Executive and Full Council.

Member working groups also play an advisory or consultative function as well as being policy forums and mechanisms for different groups of members to work together. These forums in the main are cross-cutting, are theme based and are an informal mechanism to enable collaborative working at member level. Whether within the Executive or across the Council the member working

groups facilitate the development of new policies, joined up working and corporate ownership of cross-cutting initiatives and Council priorities, to develop policies, and as a means of more in-depth overview on the implementation of major projects, Council performance, policies and strategies and also as a learning and development tool for participants.

9 Overview and Scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny works to ensure and promote open and transparent decision making and democratic accountability. It has the following main roles:

Holding the Executive to account

Scrutiny ensures the decision making process is open and transparent by questioning those taking decisions (the Executive) and getting them to explain and justify the rationale behind decisions, in public.

Policy development and review

Scrutiny ensures that non-Executive Members are involved and can influence and improve the council's performance and approach to public services.

External Scrutiny

Scrutiny enables councillors to fulfil their community leadership role by examining local services not provided by the Council, but which have an impact on the well-being of borough residents.

Adding value

By being actively involved at the earliest possible stage on issues that are a priority to the Council, scrutiny can assist in ensuring that policies and services are delivering on the targets set by the Council.

In Haringey the scrutiny function is independent of the Executive and it is directed by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee consisting of nominated Non-Executive Councillors and co-opted members. The Leader and members of the Executive may attend scrutiny meetings and answer questions but they may not be on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or become members of scrutiny review panels. Membership must reflect the political balance of Full Council i.e. there is proportionality.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee can establish task and finish scrutiny review panels, chaired by one of its Councillor members and containing other non-Executive Councillors, to look at a specific problem, topic or theme. The aim of the scrutiny review panel is to make recommendations to the Executive on possible policy or service improvements. Unless there are special reasons, all scrutiny meetings are open to the public.

For scrutiny to be successful, it is essential that non-Executive Councillors establish good working relationships with Executive Members and senior officers, so that there can be open and positive discussions about what needs to be done to make Haringey's services better.

10 Call-in

One way in which Scrutiny holds the executive to account is through the statutory power of Call-in. Open to all members of the Council, any five members can ask for any decision made, or about to be made, by the Executive or one of its members, or a “key-decision” made by an officer, to be discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, prior to its implementation. The “Call-in” procedure for operating this power is fully explained in the Council’s Constitution.

It is a key requirement of scrutiny that members operate in a bipartisan way and Haringey’s success in this regard is demonstrated by the low number of call-ins, (only one in the last municipal year), and by the fact that four scrutiny review panels, were chaired by members of the opposition party.

11 Regulatory and non-Executive functions

Non-Executive functions are aspects of Council business that the Executive cannot deal with. They tend to include such things as:

- regulatory decisions (e.g. planning and licensing)
- appeals against decisions made by a Council body or officer (e.g. staff appeals)
- elections
- pension funds.

The Council therefore establishes regulatory and non-Executive committees to carry out these functions. Examples of non-Executive committees are General Purposes Committee, Audit Committee and Pensions Panel.

The Council performs a range of regulatory functions, the most notable of which are determining applications for planning permission and certain licenses. The Council appoints members to committees to consider such applications and in doing so the committees have to make their decisions in accordance with the Council's overall policies.

An example of this is when considering a planning application, the committee must do so in accordance with the Council's Unitary Development Plan. Some of the more minor applications can be delegated to officers to determine

The membership of all these bodies must reflect the political balance of the Council.

12 Area Assemblies

Area Assemblies have been introduced to enable the Council and its decision making processes to become closer to the public being served. They are the place for residents to contribute to ideas on how the Council and its partners can improve our local neighbourhoods. They are billed as meetings where residents can talk directly with local Councillors.

Seven Area Assemblies have been established in Haringey and have a membership of all of the Council members for that area. As well as the public, other service providers are invited to participate in the meetings to enable a partnership approach to local service planning. The process referred to as “Community Planning” also enables local views to contribute to borough-wide strategies and plans. Assembly meetings are held in local community buildings, such as schools and libraries. They are informal, so residents do not need to read lengthy reports before coming along or know how local government works.

Discussions take place on the issues local residents consider most important. Regular topics include refuse collection, traffic and public transport, green spaces, regeneration, activities for young people and crime. Our partner agencies are fully committed to the area assemblies.

After each assembly meeting we publish an assembly newsletter to tell residents how the Council is responding to each of the issues that were raised. These newsletters are now regularly displayed in local libraries and public buildings as well being mailed to around 2,000 local residents. They are published under the banner of ‘Better Haringey’ and provide a local focus to balance the borough-wide Haringey People.

The assemblies provide a key component in the new roll-out of neighbourhood management across Haringey, providing the main public forum at area level for debate. They will be working alongside the Neighbourhood

Partnership Boards, providing wider accountability for neighbourhood plans and priority setting.

The highly acclaimed and successful ***'Making the Difference'*** programme operates under the aegis of the area assemblies. Each of the seven areas has been allocated a budget of £50,000 for local improvements suggested by local residents. All ideas are welcome: we have funded street lighting, benches, trees, improvements to play areas, landscaping, equipment for community centres such as computers and furniture, gardening services for the elderly and football for young people. The range is endless, as projects do not need to correlate with borough-wide spending programmes. Each area is different, and the *'Making the Difference'* budgets provide opportunity for local priorities to be met.

Ward Councillors have a key role in ensuring that local residents groups know about the budgets, and have the opportunity to apply. We are very keen to ensure that all neighbourhoods benefit, not just those with strong residents' associations, and that ethnic minority community groups and mothers with young children get opportunities to bid alongside the more established groups.

The *'Making the Difference'* programme provides a key opportunity for local Councillors to exercise their community leadership role, stimulate community development in their neighbourhoods and implement projects that reflect local needs.

I3 Standards Committee

Councils are required to establish Standards Committees, as part of a new ethical framework for public authorities established by the government. The aim is to promote high standards of ethical conduct among elected Councillors. The Standards Committee examines the conduct of Councillors and advises on ethical standards. It is separate from all other Committees.

Made up of both Councillors and external members, the Committee has an independent chair and is responsible for ensuring that members and officers of the Council conduct their business to the highest standards as set out in the Council's Member Code of Conduct.

Further information about Standards Committee and the Code of Conduct can be found in section 5 of this Handbook.

I4 The Haringey Strategic Partnership

The Local Government Act 2000 introduced a programme of reform to strengthen the links between Councils and local people. One of the requirements of this is that each local authority area should be covered by a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) that brings together the public, private, business, voluntary and community sectors to identify the top priorities of the community and to work with local people to address them.

In Haringey a rich mix of large and small organisations and partnerships are hard at work in the local community and seeking to plan future developments in the borough. The Haringey Strategic Partnership brings together all those who have an interest in the future of the borough, from individuals who live or work in the borough, through to voluntary groups and the large statutory organisations.

The members of the Haringey Strategic Partnership includes representatives from:

- Haringey Council
- Metropolitan Police
- Haringey Teaching Primary Care Trust (NHS)
- Job Centre Plus
- Local businesses
- New Deal for Communities
- Learning and Skills Council
- College of North East London
- Middlesex University
- Haringey Association of Voluntary and Community Organisations (HAVCO)
- Community Empowerment Network
- Race Equality Joint Consultative Council
- Faith Communities
- Greater London Authority
- Members of Parliament
- Registered Social Landlords

The Haringey Strategic Partnership's main aims are to:

- to co-ordinate and therefore try to improve the overall delivery of services provided by public bodies and voluntary organisations within the borough
- to consult upon, and approve the Community Strategy and review it annually
- to co-ordinate and add value to the work of the many Partnerships already operating in the borough
- to value the rich diversity of people living and working in the borough and to act in a positive way so that all sections of the community are able to play a part in improving the quality of life in Haringey
- to adopt a structure which is representative of the various stakeholders, with open and transparent decision-making and commitment to community consultation and involvement which is reviewed from time to time to ensure that it is still fit for its purpose
- to co-ordinate consultation by partners
- to recognise the general obligation that public money should be used wisely
- to acknowledge the interests of those whose financial support pays for those services
- to lobby central and regional Government on issues of concern to the partnership.

15 The Community Strategy

A Community Strategy is a plan for the future. It provides a long-term vision and co-ordinates the actions of the public agencies and private and community

organisations to meet the needs and priorities of local communities.

The Haringey Community Strategy is the overall strategy for Haringey agreed by the Haringey Strategic Partnership. This strategy is the overarching plan to improve the borough.

The priorities of the Haringey Strategic Partnership are set out in the Haringey Community Strategy. It identifies five priorities to make the borough a better place.

- **Better Haringey – creating a cleaner, greener, safer borough**
- **Raising educational achievement**
- **Building safer and stronger communities**
- **Achieving excellent services**
- **Putting people first**

The aim of Haringey's Community Strategy is to look forward ten to fifteen years and make plans to enhance the quality of life of our local communities. Its aim is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through action to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Haringey locality and its inhabitants.

There are at least as many strategies and plans as there are partnerships in Haringey! The single content of any strategy can have wider implications beyond its traditional professional boundaries.

Our Community Strategy is a new enterprise – but it

does not start with a blank sheet of paper, as existing plans and strategies have been researched and consulted upon.

Haringey's Community Strategy does not sweep these aside, but looks further ahead, seeking to ensure a consistent approach between the various plans. By considering the long term implications of pursuing current approaches, the Community Strategy encourages agencies to plan and work together to achieve better outcomes for the community.

A new community strategy is currently in development.

16 The Haringey Strategic Partnership theme groups

The Haringey Strategic Partnership has five theme groups reflecting key issues in the Community Strategy and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. These are:

- Children and Young People Strategic Partnership
- Better Places Partnership
- Enterprise Partnership
- Well-Being Partnership
- Haringey Safer Communities Partnership

17 The roles of council officers

Officers work for the whole Council and not just the majority political party. The Council's paid staff is headed up by the Chief Executive together with Assistant Chief Executives and Directors who make up the Corporate Management Team – referred to in Haringey as the Chief Executive's Management Board (CEMB). CEMB oversees the corporate management and operation of the Council's performance and strategic direction.

The Chief Executive has overall corporate management and operational responsibility, including overall management responsibility for all officers. Their role is to provide professional advice to all parties in the decision making process and, together with the Monitoring Officer, be responsible for ensuring proper records are kept of all the Council's decisions. The Chief Executive represents the Council on partnership and external bodies as designated.

As Chief officers, CEMB members each head up a directorate and are supported by Heads of Service who are responsible for the delivery of Council services in line with Council policy. The roles of officers can be seen as two fold:

- The first being to provide services and to the people of Haringey in accordance with the policies and strategies adopted by the Council. In performing these functions, some officers will occasionally take decisions on issues delegated to them from the Executive.
- The second is to support the governance of the Council including supporting Council members on

policy development and review and implementing regulatory functions.

Profiles of the individual chief officers and more information on the Council's services can be found in the Essential Contacts Guide which compliments this Handbook.

18 Specific Councillor roles in decision making

The roles outlined in this section are:

- the Mayor
- the Leader of the Council
- Executive Members
- Chair of Overview and Scrutiny
- Committee Chairs
- Members taking planning and licensing decisions
- Members on appointment and member appeal panels
- Standards committee members
- Members taking part in scrutiny review panels
- Member champion.

The Role of Mayor

The Mayor is the First Citizen of the borough and like every other Mayor in the UK has a specific role in the authority. Many of the rules and regulations that govern the actions of the Mayor are passed by Parliament

The Mayor represents the Council at public affairs, civic

and ceremonial events both in and outside the borough. The office of Mayor is politically impartial.

The Mayor is the Chair of Full Council meetings and ensures that the proceedings are conducted properly and that all shades of opinion are given a hearing, as far as possible. Standing Orders of the Council give certain powers and functions to the Mayor, for example, the Mayor's decision on procedural issues at Council meetings shall be final.

The Mayor takes a lead in matters that concern the life of the borough – be it an appeal for funds for local charities, greeting dignitaries such as royalty, ambassadors and visitors from abroad, presiding at ceremonies and hosting numerous civic and borough-wide events which acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of local people, Council staff and volunteers.

A summary of the Mayor's roles and functions are as follows:

- to uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and to interpret the Constitution when necessary
- to preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of the Councillors and the interests of the community
- to ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which Councillors who are not members of the Executive or hold Committee Chair

positions are able to hold the Executive or committee chairs to account

- to promote public involvement in the Council's activities
- to be the conscience of the Council
- to attend such civic and ceremonial functions as the Council and he/she determines appropriate.

The Role of the Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council's key role is to promote the Council's community leadership role and to ensure that the Council contributes to the economic, social and environmental well being of the borough.

The Leader also provides political leadership for the Executive and the Council. The scope of the leader's responsibilities spans across all portfolio holders, to ensure a coordinated and coherent approach to the Council's decision making.

The Leader agrees the Council's Forward Plan which sets out when decisions are to be made by the Executive. They also have an important role working with the Council's partners in other statutory bodies, the voluntary sector and business community by chairing Haringey's Strategic Partnership.

The Leader is an important figure in respect of the Council's relationships with central Government and various public and private sector partners

Key activities for the Leader of the Council include:

- to provide political leadership for the Executive and the Council

- leading the Council's Executive and the integration and co-ordination of its decision making and partnership work
- ensuring the development of the overall strategic direction for the Council
- ensuring the delivery of appropriate and effective Council services
- providing political accountability for the Council's performance
- promoting partnership working between the Council and its partners
- representing and acting as ambassador for the authority and representing the views of the Council to external bodies and partnerships, including central government and the GLA
- ensuring collectively (with partners, member and officer colleagues) and individually the delivery of the community plan and its priorities
- overseeing the development of the Council's financial strategy
- exercising individual decision making where necessary
- managing the performance of the Executive and Executive members and ensuring that Executive delivers on Council priorities and objectives
- that all members receive appropriate learning and development to enable them to perform their roles.

The Role of Executive Members

There are currently 10 members of the Executive, including the Leader and Deputy Leader. Each Executive Member has a responsibility for a specific portfolio.

Executive members provide political leadership and are responsible for driving the implementation of agreed policies by taking responsibility, individually, or collectively, for the portfolio they have been allocated. This includes:

- to provide political leadership both collectively and individually within portfolio area
- as a member of the Council's Executive, actively participating in the integration and co-ordination of its decision making and partnership work
- providing a lead on and proposing new policy
- programming strategy development and contributing to the development of the overall strategic direction for the Council
- ensuring the delivery of appropriate and effective Council services
- providing political accountability for the Council's performance individually as a portfolio holder and collectively with Executive colleagues
- representing and acting as ambassador for the authority and representing the views of the Council to external bodies and partnerships, including central government and the GLA
- ensuring collectively (with partners, member and officer colleagues) and individually the delivery of the community plan and its priorities
- monitoring budget and service standards
- leading performance reviews
- working as a team with other members of the Executive on cross-cutting activities
- taking responsibility for the strategic allocation of resources

- acting as a representative and spokesperson within and outside the Council for their service/function
- to conduct relations with overview and scrutiny within agreed principles and to participate in scrutiny reviews as required
- exercising individual decision making where necessary.

The Role of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny

- to champion the scrutiny function within the authority
- to ensure that Overview and Scrutiny takes an independent leadership role in the Council's efforts to improve the performance of its services and the functions, policies and strategies within which they operate
- to chair Overview and Scrutiny committee in an impartial, non-partisan manner and facilitate the Overview and Scrutiny committee towards the successful achievements of its terms of reference
- to develop and propose to the Overview and Scrutiny committee a programme of work devised in consultation with non-Executive members and senior management which achieves a balance of service interests, and broad coverage across all services over time
- to propose arrangements for the involvement of community or other non-Councillor representatives
- to own and oversee the presentation of outcomes from scrutiny reviews to the Council, Executive or another committee, including any minority views which might be reported separately
- to take responsibility for agreeing Special Urgency

Decisions, and decisions for urgent implementation

- to report annually to Full Council on the activities of the Overview and Scrutiny committee
- to champion rights of access to information
- to promote the scrutiny function within and beyond Haringey
- to maintain an awareness of developing best practice in scrutiny nationally, and practices in other authorities, and to work with officers to ensure that Haringey is at the leading edge in scrutiny practice
- to take steps to ensure that briefings and member development opportunities are available to the members of the Overview and Scrutiny committees and reviews to develop and maintain those skills which are particularly relevant to scrutiny.

General Role of Chairs of Meetings

(Including chairs of scrutiny review panels, area assemblies and public meetings)

As the chair of a meeting your role is to:

- ensure that meetings are conducted in a fair and orderly fashion
- ensure that everyone has the opportunity to contribute to discussions
- promote consensus where it is possible. Where required, to concisely summarise the debate and bring the meeting to a resolution
- ensure that meetings begin, end and are conducted to and on time, and that the business of the meeting is completed

- liaise with the officers supporting the committee/forum to plan the agenda (and work programme where relevant) and ensure action items are followed up after a meeting, including signing letters on behalf of the committee where appropriate
- ensure that the appropriate advice and information are available and decisions are taken in accordance with the principles of decision making
- to present reports to Council, and respond to questions at Full Council, where appropriate
- to take steps to ensure that briefings and member development opportunities are available to the members of the committee/forum to develop and maintain committee/forum members' skill basis
- to promote public engagement with the work of the committee, area assembly or forum as required.

The role of Members taking planning and licensing decisions

As a member taking planning and licensing decisions you have very specific responsibilities given that you are acting in a quasi-judicial role. You also have to undergo training in order to do this job effectively and even to be permitted to determine planning/licensing applications.

Being a member of the planning and licensing committee(s) requires you to:

- come to meetings with an open mind
- listen impartially to the applicant, officers and objectors
- act independently and conscientiously in forming a

view on an application taking into account the appropriate relevant advice

- take decisions on the basis of evidence and advice
- support the chair of the committee in ensuring meetings are conducted in accordance with natural justice
- identify any possible conflicts of interest, or bias which could affect the decision, and to seek legal advice where necessary and take it into account
- ensure that reasons for decisions are provided as and when required
- attend presentations arranged by planning and licensing staff
- develop and maintain a working knowledge of relevant planning and/or licensing policies, the law and statutory guidance
- you will also need to learn how to handle any lobbying from applicants or objectors. Special training and advice will be arranged to help you deal with these issues.

Members sitting on Appointment and Member Appeal Panels

Members sitting on these panels also require specific training.

You must:

- develop and maintain a knowledge of the Council's policies and procedures with respect to recruitment and human resources management (including but not limited to the Officer Employment Procedure Rules)

- comply with the Council's requirements for appointment panels by attending the necessary recruitment training
- take appropriate steps if lobbied by individual officers
- review disciplinary and capability dismissals.

Members and Independent Members sitting on the Standards Committee

If you become a member of the standards committee you must:

- develop and maintain a detailed working knowledge of the Haringey's Members' Code of Conduct and the Member/Officer Protocol
- promote high standards of conduct by Councillors through modelling the highest standards of personal conduct, and acting as a resource to members seeking advice on ethical issues.

In addition, as a member hearing references from the Standards Board and considering allegations of misconduct you must:

- support the chair of the committee in ensuring hearings are conducted in accordance with natural justice
- exercise independent judgement, and act conscientiously in forming a view on a case, taking decisions on the basis of evidence and advice.

The role of Members of Overview and Scrutiny Review Panels

Scrutiny reviews are a fairly new feature of local government. In Haringey there is an Overview and

Scrutiny Committee which oversees scrutiny reviews and appoints to 'task and finish' scrutiny panels.

Practices and procedures are developing within the Council and within local government generally. As experience in Haringey and elsewhere develops, the role of Overview and Scrutiny Members – all non-Executive Members may develop accordingly. However, if you are currently a Member of Overview and Scrutiny Committee or take part in a scrutiny review, your role is to:

- conduct in-depth analysis of policy issues
- conduct research, community and other consultation to assist in the analysis of policy issues and possible options
- consider and adopt mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options
- question members of the Executive and chief officers about their views on issues and proposals affecting policy areas
- liaise with other external organisations operating in the scrutiny review remit / policy area, whether national, regional or local, to gain the benefits of collaborative working
- work collaboratively with the Executive
- provide positive support, and on occasions constructive challenge, to officers in driving forward the Council's agenda on the issue.

Member Champion

A member champion can be an Executive or non-

Executive member and may be appointed to champion a particular theme or initiative at member level and corporately across the Council.

Member champions can play a key role in raising the profile of particular issues and signalling to the relevant groups, the Council's commitment to the issue being 'championed'. Member champions also foster the engagement of a wider range of Members in the issue and promote effective communication and positive working relationships both within the Council and among relevant partners, stakeholders and community groups.

Member champions act in respect of the whole range of relevant issues and be mindful not to focus upon a pet interest when carrying out their role.

Becoming a member champion can be very rewarding and in addition can be a worthwhile contribution to your ongoing learning and development as a Councillor.

Your key responsibilities as a member champion are to:

- work collaboratively with the relevant Executive Member, Overview and Scrutiny and relevant committees and forums
- foster cross-party co-operation and to engage with relevant outside groups and officers. To understand and express the opinions and priorities of those groups
- be sensitive and mindful of Council priorities and ways of working
- represent all of those people who are covered by the

position and ensure that their needs are identified, recognised and met where possible by the Council and other relevant bodies, including the voluntary sector, partners and external agencies

- act as spokesperson to promote the positive aspects of the Council's work among those on whom the Champion's interest area impacts
- identify and represent needs of groups and individuals who are at the moment not represented or part of the existing processes
- promote a joined-up approach between the activities of the Council and the work of other organisations, in supporting activities for the Champion's interest area and involving them in developing services
- encourage people to play a fuller role in shaping the policies relevant to the Champion's interest area and to participate with statutory and voluntary organisations that are planning, making decisions on and delivering services that affect them
- encourage the statutory and voluntary organisations to actively seek out and engage with other bodies in planning, defining and delivering services which effect them
- provide positive support, and on occasions constructive challenge, to officers in driving forward the Council's agenda on the issue
- be available to be the Council's nominee on appropriate outside bodies and to attend relevant conferences, learning and development and briefing opportunities
- to keep up to date on issues relevant to the Champion's interest.

19 Statutory officers

Local authorities are required by law to designate a senior manager as the 'head of paid service'. In Haringey this is the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive as head of paid service is responsible to Councillors for the staffing of the Council, ensuring the work of the different departments is co-ordinated, and making sure the organisation runs efficiently.

There must also be a Monitoring Officer, who is responsible for warning Councillors about anything the Council does which is likely to lead to legal action or to a finding of maladministration by the ombudsman. In Haringey the Monitoring Officer is the Head of Legal Services.

The Council must have a Section 101 Officer (also referred to as Chief Financial Officer). In Haringey this role is undertaken by the Director of Finance. The role of this officer is to monitor all the expenditure and financial dealings of the Council. This officer has the power to stop the Council from spending money if they think it is unwise or unlawful.

All three of these posts are statutorily protected, which means that the post holders cannot be sacked without an independent inquiry.

Ethical governance



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Haringey places the up-most importance on sound ethical governance.

This section of the Handbook covers ethical governance issues. The guidance contained in this section will be further supported by training and learning events and guidance as part of the Member Induction Programme and throughout the Administration.

Training and development on ethical governance is overseen by the Council's Standards Committee. The Monitoring Officer (Head of Legal Services) advises the Standards Committee and also gives direct advice to elected members and officers on ethical governance related issues. More information about the role of the Standards Committee is contained further on in this section.

I Haringey's Member Code of Conduct

Once they take up office, all Members of the Council are required to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct, as laid out in the Council's Constitution. The general principles are:

Selflessness

1. Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity

2. Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity

3. Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

4. Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness

5. Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal Judgement

6. Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

7. Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They

should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

Duty to uphold the law

8. Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship

9. Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

10. Members should promote and support these principles by Leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

2 Abiding by the Code

As an elected member you must abide by the Code of Conduct whenever you are acting on behalf of the Council. With the exception of interests (see below), the code does not affect you when outside your member role.

In summary, the following six rules must be followed:

- You must promote equality and treat others with respect
- You must keep confidential information confidential but not conceal other material

- You must not bring your office into disrepute
- You must not use your office improperly to give a benefit to or disadvantage anyone, or for political purposes
- You must have regard to all relevant advice before taking a decision
- You must report breaches of the code of conduct by yourself or other members to the Standards Board

3 Standards Committee

The Standards Committee examines the conduct of Councillors and advises on ethical standards. It is separate from all other committees.

The Standards Committee is composed of eight Councillors (who may not include the Leader or the Mayor) and four other people (“the independent members”), none of whom may be Councillors or officers of either this Council nor any other body having a Standards Committee of its own.

The chair of the Standards Committee is one of the independent members.

Councils are required to establish Standards committees, as part of a new ethical framework for public authorities established by the Government. The aim is to promote high standards of ethical conduct among elected Councillors.

The role of this committee is to advise the Council on the adoption of a local Code of Conduct for Councillors, update and monitor the Code as necessary and be responsible for implementing the Code and providing learning and development for members on ethical conduct.

4 The Standards Board

The Standards Board for England is responsible for promoting high ethical standards and investigating allegations that Members' behaviour may have fallen short of the required standards. Its aim is to help build confidence in local democracy which it does by promoting the ethical behaviour of members and co-opted members who serve on a range of authorities through receiving and investigating allegations that members may have breached the Code of Conduct.

You can read more about the Standards Board for England on www.standardsboard.co.uk

5 Register of Interests

The Code of Conduct requires that members, within 28 days of election, register certain interests with the Monitoring Officer. These include a members' employment (or office, trade or profession), land and property ownership, contracts with the authority, and interests in the securities of a company that trades or owns land in the area of the authority.

They also include membership or control of a range of organisations, including a trade union, a professional association and any body whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy.

6 Declaration of Interests – personal and prejudicial interests

If you have a **personal** interest in a matter for decision you must disclose it at the meeting that is considering that issue. Personal interests are defined in the Members' Code of Conduct and include, among other things, professional and personal relationships.

If an interest is **prejudicial** then in general a member must withdraw from the room where the meeting is taking place and not seek to influence a decision about that matter. A personal interest may be prejudicial if the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest. The Code of Conduct includes a series of exemptions. In addition, the Standards Committee may, in limited cases, be able to grant a dispensation.

Any member concerned that he/she might have a prejudicial interest should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

You must also tell the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of any change to your interests.

7 The Register of gifts and hospitalities

Within 28 days of receipt, Members are required to register any gifts or hospitality received worth more than £25 and offered in connection with your role as a Councillor.

8 Council Tax and housing rent arrears

Any member who has arrears of Council Tax that have been outstanding for two months or more is prohibited from voting at any meeting of the Council or other Council body on any matter that effects the level of Council Tax. This is a very broad prohibition and applies, in effect, to any spending or saving decision.

In addition, any Councillor who is in such arrears and is present at a meeting where such decisions will be considered must disclose this fact at the start of the meeting, stating that he/she will be abstaining on such items for that reason.

There is an additional prohibition pertaining to Councillors who are also Council tenants. Any member who has housing rent arrears of two or more months is prohibited from voting at any meeting of the Council, or a committee, sub committee or other Council body when any matter concerning rents of local authority housing is to be discussed, shall disclose this fact and not

vote. This is a very broad prohibition and applies, in effect, to any spending or saving decision.

It is a criminal offence not to comply with these requirements.

9 Members' access to information, council documents and data information

Members often require access to information to carry out their work in decision making, scrutiny, and representing their constituents. Officers should always process such requests promptly. They are required to ensure that the information required can be released. In some cases they will need to consult their managers or third parties who may hold the information, which may cause some delay.

The process for obtaining information is set out in the access to information rules in the Council's Constitution. Advice on the legal framework can be obtained from the Monitoring Officer.

The common-law right of members is based on the principle that any member has a *prima facie* right to inspect Council documents so far as his/her access to the documents is reasonably necessary to enable the member properly to perform their duties as a member of the Council. This principle is commonly referred to as the "need to know" principle and it is well established that a member has no right to "a roving commission" to

go and examine documents of the Council. The crucial question is the determination of the “need to know” and this question must initially be determined by the particular chief officer whose department holds the document in question (with advice from the Monitoring Officer).

In some circumstances (e.g. an Executive or scrutiny committee/sub-committee member wishing to inspect documents relating to the functions of their portfolio/committee/sub-committee) a member’s “need to know” will normally be presumed, and also where the member is representing a constituent within his ward. In other circumstances (e.g. a member wishing to inspect documents which contain personal information about third parties) a member will normally be expected to justify the request in specific terms, possibly in writing.

Guidance on holding and processing data to comply with the Data Protection Act and your rights under the Freedom of Information Act are outlined below.

10 Data Protection Act (1998)

As a Member of the Council, you will handle and have access to personal information about members of the public and employees of the Council. This information is subject to the Data Protection Act (1998), which came into force on 1st March 2000.

The Act regulates how personal information about any living person is held and handled by others. It covers all

information held either on computer or in manual form. People handling personal data are referred to as “data controllers” and are required to notify the Information Commissioner of details of the information processed. The Information Commissioner enters the information in the Register of Notification, which is accessible to members of the public.

The Information Commissioner has published guidance for elected Members in a “Compliance Advice” booklet, which is accessible online at www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk.

Members are advised to decide in which capacity they handle personal data and to submit a notification where appropriate. Haringey Council is a data controller and has submitted notification.

Members are covered by the Council's notification if they handle information in the exercise of its functions: for example, if a Member had access to information as a member of an appeals panel or decision-making body in respect to members of the public or employees.

Members are not covered by the Council's notification when they act on their own behalf. Members must notify the Information Commissioner and comply with the eight data protection principles. Members are acting on their own behalf when, for example, they arrange a surgery appointment or handle complaints made by local residents.

11 Freedom of Information

Most types of Council information are now available to local people following the introduction of a general right of access to public information enshrined in the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The right, subject to certain exemptions, allows residents to look at most (non-personal) forms of Council information, including minutes of meetings, leaflets, reports, working papers, etc.

In exercising your rights under the act, the Council has a duty to:

- provide advice or assistance to you if you need help identifying specific information that you require
- provide advice or assistance to you if you need help with exercising your rights under the Act
- respond to your request for information (by letter, fax or e-mail only) within 20 working days or give reasons why the request cannot be satisfied.

Information requests must be made in writing (online, by letter, fax or e-mail). Haringey will respond to information requests within 20 working days.

12 Member Correspondence

In general, correspondence from one member should not be copied to, or discussed with, another member without

the member's consent. If a member has sought advice from an officer and included a circulation list at the bottom of the letter, it can be assumed that the officer's response can be circulated to those people on the circulation list for the original letter, even if that list includes other members.

This does not prevent officers copying letters to each other about casework across ward or interest boundaries in order to respond to a member enquiry. Points of general interest to all members may be converted into general advice, and circulated (within the limitations set down in the Data Protection Act).

A chief officer is also able to advise a relevant Executive member in general terms of an issue raised with the chief officer in correspondence, or otherwise, by another member.

Letters that create obligations or give instructions should not be sent out in the name of a member.

How Members are supported



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To be efficient and effective, Councillors need a variety of support from officers of the Council. In this section we give you an overview of the type of support you can expect from us and how you can make best use of the services we provide.

The majority of direct support services to members are provided by Member Services.

I Member Services

Member Services is a composite service area, made up of the Committee Secretariat, Leader and Executive support, Member and Business support and political support.

The Committee Secretariat supports the overall decision making process; Member and Business support provides services to support and assist Councillors in their more general areas of work; The Leader and Executive team provide high level direct support to the Executive; the political officers provide political support and assistance to party groups.

While our direct customers and service are largely Councillors and officers we are here to guide anyone who wants access to local democracy in Haringey, either through the decision making process or their local Councillor.

Member Services leads on member development which seeks to facilitate the improvement of member capacity

through development and learning. It is also the lead service in relation to member learning and development strategies and programmes. The aim of the service is to support the Council in operating high standards of corporate governance including supporting members in carrying out the various aspects of their role as a Councillor.

In addition to Member Services, the following services also provide direct support provision to Councillors:

2 Scrutiny Services

A small dedicated team of officers within the Improvement, Performance and Scrutiny business unit advises and helps non-Executive Councillors carry out their scrutiny role. The work includes advising on scrutiny issues, preparing detailed scoping documents for reviews, carrying out research and writing scrutiny reports. Scrutiny works closely with Member Services to provide an effective support service to Councillors.

3 Political Assistants

The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 gives Councils the power to appoint political assistants to qualifying political groups. Haringey Council currently employs political assistants to the political groups on the Council. Political assistants are Council officers who are employed to assist members of a political group, “in the discharge of any of their functions as Members of a relevant authority.” Unlike other officer appointments, the

political affiliations and preferences of the political group for whom the assistant is hired can be taken into account in the selection process. They provide a useful means of broadening the base of advice to members.

The act also restricts the work that political assistants can do. A political assistant's role is to provide assistance to members in carrying out their duties as members of the authority, and not in any additional political or other activity. For example, political assistants are not employed to work on election campaigns.

Political assistants hold politically restricted posts under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and therefore also face restrictions on their personal political activity.

The political assistants report to the Head of Member Services.

4 Neighbourhood Management

The Neighbourhoods business unit within the Chief Executive's service advises and supports all Councillors in carrying out their neighbourhood and community leadership role. The work includes neighbourhood management, supporting the area assemblies and supporting Councillors in engaging with Haringey's local communities and partners. Neighbourhood Management works closely with Member Services in relation to enabling and supporting Councillors in their role, ward Councillors, community leaders and community champions.

Councillors make many different types of decisions and recommendations that have far-reaching consequences for the communities they represent and on Council staff. They also have a leadership role that requires them to engage with and advocate on behalf of local people.

5 The Role of Officers in providing support to Councillors

The role of officers is to assist councillors in discharging their role as members of the Council for Council business and in their role as advocates for local communities. Officers should not be used in connection with party political campaigning or for private purposes, and this includes the support offered by political assistants.

Support to members is a resource that is subject to the same budgetary pressures as any other. Given its importance to how effective members can be, it is essential that its allocation is agreed to be fair and in proportion to the duties of all groups of members.

6 Correspondence and use of resources

Preparation and postage of correspondence are a significant part of the support given to members. The content and purpose of letters, leaflets, and other correspondence must relate to the member's role in the

authority. The Head of Member Services will arrange for monitoring arrangements to be put in place, and will refer doubtful cases to the Monitoring Officer.

Council resources (for example, stationery and photocopying) may only be used for Council business or where such use may be seen as calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of the functions of the authority or of the office to which the member has been elected or appointed.

Use of Council resources includes the use of Council owned facilities. Outside of Council meetings, political groups may use meeting rooms for private meetings of their group that will include ordinary group meetings and training sessions. Otherwise facilities must be hired under the Council's normal conditions of charging.

While this is not an exhaustive list, the use of Council resources in the preparation and postage of the following kinds of post are **not** likely to be appropriate:

- Mail shots to all inhabitants of a ward
- Letters sending out information (about timing of planning applications, refuse collections etc), which it is the task of officers to publicise, but requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis
- Letters that criticise other groups and their members or praise the writer or their political group.

Where members are uncertain as to whether a communication or publicity is appropriate they should seek advice from the Head of Member Services, the Head of Communications and Consultation or the Monitoring Officer.

Nothing in this protocol prevents the Chief Executive from approving the issuing of constituency wide mail shots, informing constituents who their ward Councillors are, how they can contact them and other general information on the member, for the purposes of raising the profile of ward Councillors generally.

Incoming mail for Councillors is delivered to their home address by a Council courier once each day, Monday to Friday. Individual locked mailboxes are located in the Post Room on the Podium floor of River Park House.

7 Accommodation and Facilities

Most of the services that Members will use are located either at **Haringey Civic Centre or River Park House**. Both buildings are on Wood Green High Road, N22.

River Park House is directly opposite Wood Green Underground Station and the Civic Centre is 3-4 minutes walk from Wood Green Underground Station. The Civic Centre has car parking facilities.

Most formal business of the Council takes place on the **Civic Floor** (first floor) of the Civic Centre.

Full Council and the Executive meet in the **Council Chamber**. Other Committees, the Overview and Scrutiny, Planning or Licensing may meet in the Council Chamber, in the committee rooms or (in the case of

scrutiny review panels and area assemblies) in outside venues.

A notice board in the Civic Centre foyer lists the time and location of all meetings that day and an electronic diary of meetings is published on the Website.

Designated **Members' Rooms** are located at the Civic Centre and River Park House. These rooms are for the exclusive use of councillors and they are kitted out with computer and printing equipment, telephones and fax machines as well as tea and coffee making facilities. Daily newspapers, periodicals, Council publications and reference guides are provided in the member rooms as well as notices and publicity such as forthcoming training courses and events.

The Member Services Information Officer will be happy to source any relevant reference material you would like to see provided in the member rooms and your comments and suggestions as to how member facilities could be reasonably improved are always welcome.

No smoking policy

For health reasons, the Council has decided not to allow smoking in any part of the Civic Centre or River Park House. Member Services and Facilities Management staff will advise members on the application of the Council's no smoking policy which applies to both Councillors and officers.

8 Casework and Member Enquiries

(also refer to guidance on Access to Information and the Data Protection Act Ethical Governance Section of this Handbook)

Definition of a Members' Enquiry

'Any enquiry from an elected member requesting information about an individual or community group, and/or in relation to a Council policy, where the member is entitled to that information.'

Targets and timescales

The Council's standard is to respond to 90% of enquiries within ten working days, and to send a holding reply within ten days when a full response is not possible.

Acknowledgements

The Council's standard is to acknowledge all enquiries within two working days of receipt.

The Members' Enquiries Officer and the Central Feedback Team are responsible for providing effective support to members in the overall handling of their enquiries and are committed to providing a professional, efficient and personal service that responds to members' needs, as well as enquiries.

How members make an enquiry

Current procedure is to send in your enquiry by email, fax, post, telephone, or drop by during office hours.

You can send it to the designated contact officer for the

service, the Chief Executive, the relevant Director or Assistant Director, or the Head of Legal Services.

You can also send enquiries to other service officers, but please copy in the designated contact officer, so he/she can log it and monitor progress. Officers who receive enquiries direct from members should also inform the designated contact officer.

What officers do when they receive an enquiry

The designated contact officer for the service logs and actions the enquiry. Within two working days he/she will send to you, and to your constituent where appropriate, a letter acknowledging that we have received your enquiry.

The designated contact officer will pass the enquiry to the appropriate officer in the Council for investigation. This officer is called the 'responding officer'.

The designated contact officer will continue to monitor the progress of the enquiry. The responding officer will prepare a draft response for the Chief Executive, Director or Assistant Director, or Head of Legal Services, who will send the final response to you.

Our targets and timescales for reply

Our target is to respond to 90% of enquiries within ten working days of receiving them. If we need longer, we will send you a letter informing you of the delay within the ten working days.

Data protection and personal information

Members are not entitled to personal information about an individual without his/her consent. Where the member is acting on behalf of a constituent, and it is not sensitive personal information, consent may be presumed. We state this in the acknowledgement letter to the constituent.

Where the information is of a particularly sensitive kind, the constituent may object to the disclosure. In the acknowledgement letter to the constituent we notify them that in some cases we may need to pass relevant sensitive personal information to their Councillor, and we ask them to notify us if they object to this.

Role of Members' Enquiries Officer and Central Feedback Team

The Members' Enquiries Officer and the Central Feedback Team are responsible for providing effective support to members in the overall handling of their enquiries. This includes tracking progress of outstanding enquiries, and ensuring that cross directorate cases are effectively handled.

We analyse the enquiries to form a picture of what constituents are concerned with, locally and Borough wide. We report regularly to the Executive on this and our performance in meeting the targets and timescales. An analysis for your ward is available on request.

Helpful tips when receiving member enquires and casework from constituents

Constituents often contact Members as their elected

representatives when they have specific problems or concerns. The problems and issues people raise with Councillors are known as ‘casework’ or ‘members enquires’.

Member casework comes from:

- letters, telephone calls, and emails
- surgeries and advice sessions
- doorstep calls
- campaigning and other political activity.

When dealing with casework it is important to make sure that you note the constituent’s details and a brief description of the problem. You will need to ask questions and also take time to listen. If you do not understand an aspect of the explanation fully, do not be afraid to ask for more details. If you have been approached in writing, sometimes it is helpful to phone, email, visit, or write back to get the full picture before pursuing the casework enquiry.

As a Councillor you should give people as much information and help as you can but you should be careful of giving the impression that you can solve all their problems or change Council policies or procedures on your own. Constituents may have explored all avenues before approaching you as a Councillor, and you may find sometimes that there is not much you can do to help.

When receiving casework enquiries you should be specific about what you can do to help and who you

will contact, letting people know when you will get back to them.

Sometimes, people contact their local Councillor because they are intimidated by the prospect of taking on authority figures themselves or because they do not know the right person to contact. Councillors should offer to:

- give contact details so that people can take the next steps themselves
- make calls to set up meetings
- accompany residents to meetings and help them explain their case.

When, as a Councillor, you decide to take action on a constituent's behalf, you may need to contact officers of the Council or other outside bodies.

Members should always inform their constituent of action they take. You may find it useful to keep a casework log where you note down when a case came to you, from whom and what action you took about it. This will help monitor progress on the issue.

If the initial response from officers resolves the issue and the constituent is satisfied, the case can be closed – with a note of thanks to the officer concerned. If a situation is not resolved, you should consider your next steps. If in your view the response to your enquiry is unsatisfactory, you should raise your concerns with the relevant chief officer, the Chief Executive, fellow Councillors, the relevant Executive member(s) or the Leader of the Council.

9 e-Democracy initiatives

(also refer to section 3 of this Handbook ‘Haringey Council – the organisation’ to find out more about e-democracy and its benefits)

Web casting

The Council Web casts the proceedings of the majority of its public meetings including meetings of the full Council, the Executive, Planning Applications Sub-Committee, Licensing Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Web casting has also been utilised for Council launches and presentations and the system also facilitates the placing of pre-recorded video material on the Council’s website.

We provide training for all members in presentation and media skills as well as chairing meetings and public speaking.

Agenda and Meeting Management System

Haringey has recently implemented an electronic system to support and streamline the management and administration of the Council’s democratic processes, committee meetings, documentation and decision tracking, and including the on-line publishing of minutes and agendas.

The benefits of this package include a structured framework for the management of meeting attendees, dates and documentation, a structure to manage an electronic Forward Plan, and delivery of a platform upon which further business efficiency improvements can be

realised. The system also handles the publication of Council meeting documentation to the external Council website and Intranet.

Further system functionality will come on line as it is developed. Some examples are:

- report drafting – draft review and sign-off mechanism
- e-enabled call-in
- allowing web-based information submission in relation to decision-making processes
- management reporting modules
- public-facing ‘subscribe to updates’ facility which will enable members of the public to register and self-manage what types of published material they would like be notified about
- colour-coded decision tracking – enabling easier tracking of documents
- outlook calendar integration – meeting dates and links will appear in attendees Outlook calendar automatically
- subscribe to updates – You will be able to subscribe to a list of issues which you are interested in. At any time when information is published on those topics, an email is automatically generated and sent to you with a link to the information
- actions tracking reports will be available to enable users to know the exact stage an approved decision is from physical completion.

Training will be available to all Councillors on the agenda management system to enable you to access information

on-line thereby reducing the amount of paper you have to carry around.

Councillor Web pages

Each Councillor has a page specifically dedicated to them on the Council website. The Councillor web pages greatly improve Members' visibility to the general public and raise awareness of the role of Councillors.

Haringey's Councillor pages include:

- A photograph of each member
- Surgery details and contact information
- Committee and outside body appointments
- Links to the declaration of meetings, register of interests and gifts and hospitality databases (via the agenda management system)
- a biography.

Haringey's website also enables members of the public to search for their ward Councillor by typing in their postcode or area.

The information contained in the web pages must not be explicitly party political and is in relation to Councillors' formal and civic roles as elected representatives and community champions and leaders. This is in accordance with Council publicity rules and regulations.

In summary these are:

- the introduction of content that may result in actions for libel, defamation or other claims for damages processing personal data other than for the purpose stated at the time of capture
- the promotion of any political party or campaigning organisation

- the promotion of personal financial interests or commercial ventures
- personal campaigns
- using the site in an abusive or hateful manner.

We are looking to develop Haringey's Councillor web pages still further. For example, to provide the following information, some of which will be produced by ward Councillors themselves:

- links to news of ward developments
- links to information about schemes and initiatives within the ward
- 'day in the life' features

I0 Information Communications Technology (ICT) facilities

ICT offers Councillors a fast and efficient means of keeping in touch with the local community. It also gives access to the information you need to influence or make decisions. Ongoing training and support will be provided to Councillors to this end.

A number of technology and communications services are available to Members. These are delivered through a range of equipment options. This section describes these options and the associated support services. Members can choose the services and equipment most appropriate to the manner in which they wish to work.

For details of equipment operation please refer to the IT Members Information Pack.

Equipment

Laptop and PC facilities

Members are offered a laptop with docking station, mouse, keyboard and carrying case; an external monitor is available if required. The laptop is equipped with an external back-up drive that automatically takes copies of all data stored on the internal drives. A colour printer with integral fax, scanning and copier capability is also provided.

Desktop PCs are provided for Members to use in the member rooms in River Park House and in the Civic Centre. Docking facilities are also provided in these rooms for Members wishing to use their Council laptops.

All Member machines are loaded with Microsoft Office 2003 and XP operating system and provide access to the Internet and to Harinet, the Council's intranet.

Additionally the laptops are equipped with firewall and virus protection software and a 'safe boot' facility which, through an encrypted password, prevents unauthorised use of the laptop.

Mobile phone

A choice of two devices is available. One device provides full PDA functionality, including touch screen and GPRS access to emails. The second device is smaller and lighter but does not include touch screen input.

The mobile phone is expected to last 3 years; after then Councillors may request a replacement.

Rental charges are paid for by the Council; Members are expected to pay all call charges.

Services

Access to Council IT infrastructure

Each Member is allocated a log-on id and password which will allow secure access to the Haringey Council IT infrastructure; an email account is also provided.

Broadband

Broadband is optionally available to Members that do not have this facility or do not wish to use their own broadband. Installation is arranged by the Council and all costs incurred are paid by the Council.

Members wishing to use their own broadband facilities can claim reimbursement of costs, up to the value of the Council supplied line, on production of the supporting invoices.

Council supplied laptops can be used on Members' own broadband services.

Other services

A web mail facility is available which provides access to the Council email system from any PC with a web browser and a minimum software configuration. This means that Members can use their own PC, or any other suitable machine, to access Council emails.

This method of accessing emails from non-Council hardware is strongly recommended as emails stay within the Council infrastructure and will not encounter the delays that can be associated with external email providers.

Minutes, agendas and other documentation associated with Council meetings are currently available via Harinet using Council supplied equipment: laptops or desktops in Council offices.

The ability to access this material from non-Council supplied hardware is currently under development.

Policies for IT equipment and service usage

Access to Council information does incur certain responsibilities under the Data Protection Act and Members must ensure they are aware of, and comply with, the provisions of this Act.

Email and Internet usage are subject to the same acceptable usage policies as Council employees.

Additional policies apply in respect of access to mail and other information from non-Council supplied equipment.

Support

IT Services will arrange installation and demonstration of the equipment and will support all Council supplied equipment. However, they can not provide support for Members own equipment.

11 Members' Allowances

The payment of Members Allowances is governed by The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations. Decisions on Haringey's member allowance scheme take account of recommendations from the Association of Local Government (ALG) Independent Panel on the Remuneration of Councillors and any further government advice or instruction

All Councillors are entitled to an allowance, which reflects their level of responsibility and the amount of time they devote to Council affairs. Within Haringey's current member allowance scheme, which is agreed and adopted in March of each year by full Council, all members are entitled to the basic allowance of £8,500 per annum, which includes any travel expenses within the M25 area and mobile telephone costs.

In addition to a basic allowance, extra payments referred to as 'special responsibility allowances' are paid to those members who take on additional responsibilities. – such as the Leader of the Council, Executive portfolio holders, committee chairs, opposition leaders and other lead member positions. Haringey's Member Allowance scheme provides full details of special responsibility allowances and is contained in the Council's Constitution.

If a member of the Council does not serve as an elected member for the whole 12 months period or becomes disqualified, they will only be entitled to pro-rata payments for the period(s) during which they were actually a serving member of the Council.

The allowances are all subject to income tax. Some incidental costs – such as use of a home office, telephone and so on – may be deducted before calculating the tax to be paid.

The administration of the Members' Allowance scheme is overseen by Member Services.

12 Member Learning and Development

A dedicated section on member learning and development is contained within this Handbook. Please refer to section 7.

13 Members Monthly Newsletter

Every month the Council produces a newsletter specifically for Councillors. The newsletter provides an opportunity for the Council to share information, inform and advise Council members on major news relevant to them (whether local, regional or national) and brief members on key developments, corporate and ward based initiatives.

The newsletter aims to provide members with information in an easily digestible format about developments concerning their direct support services such as member learning and development events and member enquiry processes and contacts. Councillors can contribute articles to the newsletter if they so wish and

are actively encouraged to provide input and ideas as to how the newsletter can be continually improved to meet members' information needs.

14 Reports

Officers draft reports for members for decision and they should contain clear, evidence-based advice as to why a course of action is being recommended.

From time to time corporate advice is given to officers on report writing and guidelines are issued. A report should lay out all relevant factors for the decision maker and examine all alternatives in an even handed way. Officers are required to include even unpopular options if they feel they are relevant because, if they do not and the decision is later challenged or proved to be the wrong decision, they may find themselves personally and professionally liable.

Members can refuse to agree recommendations and table amendments to any recommendations. The member should be clear about the reasons for making alternative recommendations, and any amendments or recommendations proposed at a meeting should have a clear and rational basis, which is accessible to the public.

Where there is disagreement about the right course of action, it is always best practice for this to be open with both opinions available for discussion. Sometimes, in the course of preparing reports, these disagreements can be reconciled. However, it is always poor practice to bring

pressure to bear on officers unwilling to amend their professional judgement, and in some cases this could be construed as bullying.

In relation to action between meetings, it is important to remember that the law only allows for decisions (relating to the discharge of any of the Council's functions) to be taken by the Executive, an Executive Member, a committee, a sub-committee or an officer.

Member learning and development



Haringey Council recognises that the continuous development of its elected members is a key contributing factor to the borough's successful delivery of excellent services. Haringey is committed to enhancing the capacity of its elected members by providing a varied and effective Member Learning and Development Programme.

The Member Learning and Development Strategy sets out a framework for the Council's delivery of an on-going programme of learning and development opportunities which reflects its vision and overall community strategy.

I Member Learning and Development Strategy

The Council's vision is to improve the quality of life for everyone in the borough – putting people first, being bold in dealing with issues for the benefit of all.

The key priorities are:

- **Better Haringey**
- **Raising educational achievement**
- **Building safer and stronger communities**
- **Achieving excellent services**
- **Putting people first**

The Member Learning and Development Working Group takes a strategic overview of the Council's learning and

development resource and steers the way in which the service operates. This is underpinned by the guidelines set out in the London Member Development Charter.

Member Learning and Development comprises a combination of key activities which serve to contribute towards building the overall capacity of elected members of the Council.

The Member Learning and Development Working Group

The Member Learning and Development Working Group is a cross party group with strategic responsibility for ensuring that the Council provides an excellent learning and development service which is member driven, accessible to all members and compliant with the CPA key lines of enquiry and Investors in People.

The Group meets approximately every six weeks and its core role is to plan, approve and evaluate the programme and associated initiatives aimed at improving member capacity. Its main priorities, although not exhaustive, are outlined in the terms of reference, as follows:

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

The Member Learning and Development Working Group will:

- Develop a formal strategy for Member Learning and Development
- Agree a rolling programme of Member Learning for the remainder of the current administration

- set the agenda for new member induction following the local elections 2006 including specific induction for Executive Members, Scrutiny Chairs and other members with chairing responsibilities
- monitor and evaluate implementation of the Member Learning and Development Programme and the Member Learning and Development Strategy
- monitor Member attendance at internal learning sessions and to aim to improve overall attendance in accordance with CPA key lines of enquiry
- develop a protocol for Members attending conferences and other external learning events including a mechanism for feedback and knowledge sharing
- look at the range of providers for skills learning including our own members
- explore potential external sources of funding.

The Member Learning and Development Working Group comprises the Leader, the Executive Member for Community Involvement, two Members from the Majority Group (one of whom also sits on the Standards Committee), the Leader of the Opposition Group, the Chief Executive, the, the Head of Member Services, the Head of Organisational Development and Learning and the Member Services Learning and Development Consultant.

The Member Learning and Development Working Group is chaired by the Executive Member for Community Involvement.

The London Member Development Charter

In common with the regional employers associations, the Association of London Government has launched a Charter for London which sets out a framework for good practice in member development. The Charter comprises five elements for which the participating Councils must provide evidence that satisfies accredited assessors from outside their Council.

To be awarded and maintain the Charter, participating Councils must:

1. demonstrate a commitment to member development
2. have a strategic approach to member development
3. have a member learning and development plan in place
4. demonstrate that learning and development is effective in delivering capacity
5. ensure that member development promotes work life balance and citizenship.

The core principles of Haringey's Member Learning and Development Strategy follow the guidelines set out in the Charter. It is our stated intention to achieve Charter status at the earliest opportunity and to use this as a foundation on which to build and promote excellence in the provision of member learning and development.

The Member Learning and Development Programme

There are two primary strands to the formal Member

Learning and Development Programme, one being skills and the other knowledge. A four year cyclical approach will be applied to the strategic planning of the programme, with heaviest investment at the start of a term of administration, focusing on pre-election events for prospective new members followed by a comprehensive induction plan for those elected.

A foundation skills programme, aimed primarily at new members but open to all, will be scheduled closely following local elections and throughout the first year of office. Priority areas such as Chairing Skills, Media Awareness and Community Engagement will be repeated at suitable intervals throughout the cycle to ensure that all members have equal access to learning opportunities. The essential skills programme will be based on the I&DeA's Modern Member model though not necessarily provided by them.

Running alongside the skills courses will be a rolling programme of knowledge-based sessions comprising mandatory training for all members such as, Standards, and those associated with committee responsibilities such as Planning and Licensing. Supplementing these will be a regular flow of briefings related to emerging issues including legislative changes, organisational developments and wide-ranging knowledge based matters. Targeted technology training will be provided to members on a one-to-one basis as required and when equipment is updated. Resources for the knowledge programme will be a mixture of in-house, external providers and external partner organisations.

Pre-election events

In order to promote a greater engagement in local democracy, the Council will organise informative open events for prospective Councillors from all political parties, as well as prospective independent candidates. The aim will be to give potential members the opportunity to learn how the Council operates, what will be expected of them in their role as Councillors and how the Council will support them in achieving this. The pre-election events will also serve as a publicity agent for the induction programme for successful candidates thus allowing them to plan their diaries well in advance.

New member induction

The Council will provide an extensive induction and on-going support programme for newly elected and re-elected members. Scheduled to launch in the week immediately following election, the induction programme will include a range of activities aimed at providing members with the familiarisation, knowledge, tools and techniques they will need to be effective in their roles. As far as is practical and economical, sessions will be timed and repeated to assure complete access to all members. An on-going programme of learning and development events will continue throughout the term of administration.

Executive development and leadership

A comprehensive development and support programme for newly appointed members of the Executive will run from the start of each Municipal year and continue for as long as is useful. New Executive members will be guided through the responsibilities of their assigned portfolio

and the role of an Executive member in general and focus will be given to priority skill areas not covered in the general programme.

Development of the Executive as a whole will continue with facilitated strategic workshop sessions at regular intervals throughout the year and joint events with the Council's Management Board.

Access to places on the Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA) Leadership Academy and other leadership programmes will be available to members nominated through the member learning and development working group.

Where desired, individual mentoring programmes will be arranged for the Leader and members of the Executive.

Personal Development Plans

At the start of each municipal year the Member Services Learning and Development Officer will conduct a personal development planning exercise individually with each member. A discussion will take place regarding the member's objectives for the coming year in respect of their role as a ward Councillor and any additional appointment(s) they have undertaken and, as far as is practical, agreement will be made as to a suitable development schedule to assist in achieving these objectives. The Member Services Learning and Development Officer will hold a mid-year personal development plan review with each member. The personal development planning process will be strictly confidential.

Individual member commitment to learning

Collectively through the Member Learning and Development Working Group, and individually, through Personal Development Planning, Members will be asked to make a commitment to fully utilise the learning and development opportunities the Council offers to enhance their performance as community representatives and local leaders and to ensure maximum value for money from the training programme.

Members will be encouraged to be involved in the development of fellow members where appropriate by leading workshops, disseminating expert knowledge and offering mentoring. Such activity will be considered as contributing towards the delivering member's own development and can be recorded in their Personal Development Plan as such. Other activities including attendance at conferences, personal briefings and research undertaken in preparation for speech delivery can also be recorded in Personal Development Plans.

External training opportunities

In line with the associated protocol, the Council will pay registration and, where appropriate, travel and accommodation (i.e. outside the area covered by the member allowance scheme), for learning and development events such as conferences and seminars organised by external sources. The member must demonstrate how the event is relevant to their portfolio or area of responsibility and how it will contribute to their individual learning objectives. They must also undertake to feedback to their group the knowledge gained by attending the event.

Targeted programmes such as the I&DeA Leadership Academy will be offered to members nominated by the Member Learning and Development Working Group.

Alternative learning methods

The Council recognises that Constitutional and community responsibilities as well as personal and professional commitments can place enormous constraints on members' availability to attend formal learning and development events. It is also appreciated that different people learn in different ways and may not always respond to conventional delivery styles. In order to address these issues, the Council will seek to widen the scope of member learning and development by providing learning opportunities through a variety of methods. Where practical and within budgetary constraints, the intended range will include, presentations, workshops, individual coaching, mentoring, video presentations, e-learning, on-line resources and self-directed learning.

Equality of opportunity

The Council is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and access to learning and development for all members. As well as providing the range of learning methods described above, due regard will be given to the needs of individual members in the scheduling and timing of formal training events. As far as is practical, sessions will be repeated at alternative times to facilitate complete access to all members.

Budget and Funding

A discrete budget in respect of Member Learning and

Development will be allocated each year and the Council will provide dedicated officer resource to administer and deliver the Member Learning and Development Programme. Full advantage will be taken of any central government funding sources in relation to member capacity. Where practical, and to ensure maximum value for money in the delivery of member learning and development, consideration will be given to collaboration with neighbouring boroughs in the organisation of suitable core events.

Evaluation

In order to monitor the effectiveness and value for money of the Council's learning and development provision, Members will be asked to complete a training evaluation form after each event attended and also an annual survey soliciting their views on the Member Learning and Development Programme as a whole. Members should be constructive and honest in their feedback so that constant monitoring can take place and corrective action taken where needed. The results of the evaluation process will be collated and reported annually.

Publicity and communication

Member Learning and Development events will be advertised widely as far in advance as possible. Notification of the complete schedule and each individual session will be sent to members by email and in writing, followed up with reminders as the date of each event approaches. Regular updates will be posted on Harinet and in Member publications and flyers and posters will be displayed in all members' rooms.

2 Framework Capacities for Elected Members

(from the I&DeA Political Skills)

The Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA) has developed a comprehensive framework of skills and competencies as a guide to what makes a good Councillor. This will help you set out your own goals and will form the basis of the personal development plan you will draw up with your Member Learning and Development Consultant.

Elected Members

Community Leadership (CL) Engages enthusiastically and empathically 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.

Positive Indicators

- Engages proactively with community, canvasses opinion and seeks new ways of representing others
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge of community & issues of local concern, drawing on information & resources from diverse sources & people
- Approachable, demonstrates empathy & understanding & encourages trust
- Provides a voice for all sections of the community & acts to develop partnerships inside the Council & with external organisations,
- Mediates fairly & constructively between people with conflicting needs

Negative Indicators

- Fails to engage in community activities, waits to be approached & is difficult to contact (e.g., says 'I'm not your Councillor')
- Maintains low visibility or public profile & is not easily recognised by members of the community,
- Is exclusive in approach focusing unequally on community groups or issues
- Lacks detailed understanding of local issues & needs
- Focuses on Council processes & meetings rather than constituents

- Campaigns with enthusiasm, courage & persistence on behalf of others.

- Unrealistic about what can be achieved & fails to deliver on promises.

Regulating and Monitoring (RM) 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.

Positive Indicators

- Evaluates arguments according to evidence, makes independent & impartial judgements
- Chairs meetings effectively, follows protocol & keeps process on track
- Follows legal process, balancing public needs & local policy
- Monitors performance & intervenes as appropriate to ensure progress
- Seeks feedback on own performance & engages in self-directed learning
- Understands & acts on judicial role in order to meet legal responsibilities (e.g., duty of care, corporate parenting).

Negative Indicators

- Fails to declare personal interest & makes decisions for personal gain
- Does not check facts or consider all sides of a story, makes subjective & uninformed judgements
- Leaves monitoring & checks on progress to others
- Makes decisions without taking advice or considering regulations & wider development frameworks
- Fails to recognise or address limits of own knowledge & expertise
- Misses deadlines, leaves business unfinished & lacks balance between Council work & other commitments.

Scrutiny and Challenge (SC) Acts as a critical friend by seeking opportunities for scrutiny and providing constructive feedback. Analyses information quickly and presents arguments in a concise, meaningful and easily accessible way.

Positive Indicators

- Seeks new methods & topics for critical challenge & scrutiny
- Quickly analyses & assimilates complex information taking account of the wider strategic context

Negative Indicators

- Does not prepare thoroughly or check facts, uses selective information & draws subjective or biased conclusions
- Overly reliant on officers & tends to

- Presents arguments in a concise, meaningful & easily accessible way
- Inquisitorial, asks for explanations & checks for implementation of recommendations
- Objective, rigorous & resilient in challenging process, decisions & people
- Acts as a critical friend, provides constructive feedback & acknowledges the success of others.

- back down when challenged
- Fails to recognise or engage in scrutiny as part of their role
- Assimilates new information slowly, focuses on detail & does not distinguish between important, irrelevant & inaccurate information
- Adversarial in style, aggressive & confrontational when challenged
- Prefers political 'blood sports' to working collaboratively for the good of the Council, abuses scrutiny processes for political gain.

Communication Skills (CS) Listens 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.

Positive Indicators

- Communicates regularly with community via newsletters, phone calls & local media
- Listens sensitively, checks for understanding & adapts style as necessary
- Builds relationships with local media & creates opportunities for communicating key decisions, activities & achievements
- Speaks clearly & confidently in public, uses accessible language & avoids jargon or 'Council-speak'
- Provides regular feedback, keeps people informed & manages expectations
- Uses appropriate language to

Negative Indicators

- Interrupts, appears not to listen & uses inappropriate or insensitive language (e.g., shouting, being rude or abusive)
- Communicates reactively & is slow to respond when approached by others (e.g., public, colleagues, officers or media)
- Fails to listen to other's views & presents rigid & inflexible arguments,
- Uses information dishonestly to discredit others & is unwilling or unable to deliver unpopular messages
- Fails to participate in meetings & lacks confidence speaking in public
- Presents subjective & confused

communicate key points verbally & in writing (e.g., letters, reports, interviews & presentations).

arguments using poor language & style.

Working in Partnership (WP) 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.

Positive Indicators

- Builds good relationships with colleagues, officers, & wider community
- Achieves goals by co-ordinating others, maintaining task focus & persisting in the face of set-backs
- Empowers others to take responsibility, knows when to delegate or provide support
- Makes others feel valued, trusted & included, recognises & is inclusive of people from different backgrounds
- Patient, takes a long term view in developing networks & partnerships
- Maintains calm & focus when criticised or under pressure.

Negative Indicators

- Uses status & position to exert control or impose solutions, fails to involve people in decisions
- Exclusive in approach, fails to utilise diverse skills & perspectives of others
- Unable to work across political divide & places political gain before collaborative working
- Acts alone rather than seeking help or working as part of a team
- Uses divisive tactics to upset relationships, Council policies & decisions
- Defensive when criticised, blames others for failure & does not admit to being wrong.

Political Understanding (PU) 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.

Positive Indicators

- values through decisions & actions

Negative Indicators

- Demonstrates inconsistent political

- Helps develop cohesion within the group & contributes to healthy communication between the group & the Council
- Communicates political values through canvassing, electoral campaigning & by identifying new ways of engaging the public
- Committed to developing own political intelligence & understanding of local & national political landscape
- Acts ethically, understands & communicates political values to others
- Works across group boundaries without compromising political values.

- values, lacks integrity & tends to say what others want to hear
- Has poor knowledge of group manifesto, values & objectives
- Puts personal motivations first, goes native or changes beliefs to accord with those in power
- Acts alone & fails to support group colleagues in public forums
- Fails to translate group values into ways of helping the community
- Lacks understanding of how central government policy impacts on local issues & Council functioning.

Cabinet Members

Providing Vision (PV) Creates a shared Council vision by establishing strategic policies and prioritising actions. Actively encourages involvement of others in policy formation and works collaboratively to analyse information and promote understanding. Open to new ideas and ways of doing things.

Positive Indicators

- Establishes strategic policies & prioritises actions based on local needs, manifesto & regional opportunities
- Works with officers to collate & analyse information & inform budget priorities & performance plans
- Actively encourages involvement of stakeholders in policy formation

Negative Indicators

- Takes short-term 'quick fix' approaches to policy formation, focuses on day-to day issues rather than future needs & fails to see beyond the next election
- Excludes members, officers & public from decision making & is overly selective in use of information to guide policy decisions

- Creates & communicates a shared Council vision, providing clear direction & promoting understanding
- Open to new ideas & adapts innovatively to a changing environment (e.g., e-government)
- Acts to broaden perspective & enhance effectiveness by learning from others & sharing best practice (e.g., other Councils, IDEA).

- Resistant to change, prefers 'old ways' of doing things & fails to draw on the experience of others (e.g., Councils, peer support)
- Fails to identify or act on opportunities to promote the Council or influence national & regional agendas
- Inward looking, fails to communicate & explain Council vision & policies
- Does not work within CPA guidelines or act on recommendations.

Managing Performance (MC) Works closely with others to develop, promote and achieve objectives and represent Council at a strategic level. Encourages scrutiny, monitors performance and responds positively to feed back and ideas.

Positive Indicators

- Works closely with senior officers to develop, agree & implement portfolio strategies
- Sets & communicates realistic & achievable objectives, monitors performance & acts to address deficits
- Develops knowledge of Council systems & inputs Council views at area specific meetings (e.g., planning, licensing)
- Emphasises a team approach & shares responsibility for success & failure
- Encourages scrutiny & responds positively to feedback, challenge & ideas

Negative Indicators

- Uses support inconsistently or ineffectively, fails to consult or is too reliant on officers or external support
- Inflexible & resistant to scrutiny, alternative views & solutions
- Creates a 'them & us' attitude to officers, opposition, non-cabinet members or external Councils & agencies
- Operates in secret & fails to open processes and decision making to others – 'tells' rather than 'sells'
- Overly focused on process & debate, fails to reach conclusions
- Fails to integrate own portfolio with wider cabinet agenda.

- Represents electorate & Council at a strategic level through links & partnerships at local, regional & national levels.

Leaders

Community Leadership (CL) Engages enthusiastically and empathically 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.

Positive Indicators

- Provides visionary & charismatic leadership, inspires trust in others & gains commitment to policies & decisions
- Shapes a culture of excellence & acts as a role model for appropriate behaviour, ethical practice & democratic process
- Builds strong relationships with senior officers & cabinet based on open communication, co-operative working & trust
- Acts as the public face of the Council & champions Council needs in regional & national debates
- Works across political & Council boundaries to foster communication & encourage co-operation
- Well prepared & able to troubleshoot, judges what to get involved in & when to say “No”
- Committed to learning, developing others & sharing best practice
- Effectively ‘juggles’ numerous, potentially conflicting, responsibilities.

Negative Indicators

- Maintains personal control by imposing views & being directive
- Demonstrates partiality for own party members & uses position to promote party agenda to the detriment of wider Council needs
- Defensive, avoids making difficult or unpopular decisions & unwilling to admit mistakes
- Lacks clear parameters between own role & that of CEO, fails to delegate or make use of others’ strengths
- Overly reactive, fails to plan ahead or foster a sense of mission
- Fails to encourage communication with community or promote the Council, lacks public recognition as a figurehead
- Inconsistent in style & behaviour, fails to ‘walk the talk’ or set an example for others
- Lacks detailed knowledge of different Council sectors & fails to integrate information to provide an overview of Council functioning.

Notes and additional information





2005-2006
Getting Closer to Communities



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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