

Member Champions

Member Champion Role

Member Champions are elected Members who act as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business. The main responsibility of each Member Champion is to encourage communication and positive action over the issue they represent.

Appointment of Member Champions

The Council may, from time to time, in cases where a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) is to be paid, appoint an elected Member as a Champion for a particular issue. Currently, such Member Champion positions attracting an SRA are:

- Young People's Champion
- Older People's Champion
- Climate Change Champion

The SRA based Member Champions are members of Scrutiny Board and take an annual report to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Leader may, from time to time, in cases where no SRA is to be payable, designate an elected Member as a Champion for a particular issue. Currently, such Member Champions not attracting an SRA are:

- Armed Forces Champion – Councillor Kevin Foster
- Digital Champion – Councillor Gareth Dadd
- Flooding – Councillor David Jeffels
- Cycling/Active Travel – Councillor Keane Duncan
- Road Safety – Councillor Steve Watson

A register of Member Champions will be kept by the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services.

There is no legal requirement to apply the political balance rules to the appointment of Member Champions and as such they will be made based on skills, knowledge and suitability for the role.

Should such Member Champions wish to issue a press release on matters relevant to their role, they should do so in accordance with the Council's Protocol for Official Press Releases in the Constitution.

Responsibilities of each Member Champion

Each Member Champion will:

- a) represent their area of interest both within and outside the Council in line with Council policy;
- b) contribute to the review and development of policies pertaining to their area of interest;
- c) challenge and question the Council, the Executive Members and the Chairs of Committees on issues relevant to their area of responsibility;

- d) monitor the Forward Plan and seek information from the Leader, Committee Chairs and Officers about forthcoming business and exert influence on behalf of the interest;
- e) keep Members of all parties up to date with activities in relevant to the area of interest;
- f) provide positive support and on occasions constructive challenge to Officers on relevant issues; and
- g) act as the Council's representative on relevant external bodies where appointed to by the Council.

Scope of Member Champion role

Member Champions are entitled to have appropriate access to information held by the Council relating to the interest being championed and also have access to support from senior Officers.

Officers will ensure there is appropriate engagement or consultation with the relevant Member Champion where the issue clearly relates to the interest.

The Member Champion's programme of activities should reflect the Council's overall priorities.

A Member Champion cannot make decisions which bind the Council and must not commit the Council in any way or in a manner that could be interpreted as being contrary to established policy and practice. They may however confirm a position as stated in a published policy.

The Council, Executive, Committee Chairs and Officers will take account of any views offered by the Member Champions prior to making decisions relating to their area of interest.