

## **Chapter 2**

### **Members of the Council**

#### **2.1 Composition and eligibility**

##### **a) Composition**

The Council has 42 members, otherwise called councillors. Three councillors are elected by the voters of each ward in accordance with a scheme drawn up by the Electoral Commission and approved by the Secretary of State.

##### **b) Eligibility**

Only registered voters within the city of Portsmouth or those living, working or occupying land there will be eligible to stand for election and hold the office of city councillor.

#### **2.2 Election and terms of councillors**

The ordinary election of a third of all councillors will be held on the first Thursday in May each year, except in every fourth year when there will be no election. The terms of office of councillors will be four years starting on the fourth day after being elected and finishing on the fourth day after the date of the regular election four years later. In the event that a councillor becomes ineligible to continue serving, for whatever reason, an election for what is known as a 'casual vacancy' will be held, unless the vacancy arises within 6 months of a regular annual election in which case it will be held at the same time.

#### **2.3 Roles and functions of all councillors**

##### **a) Key roles**

All councillors are expected to undertake the following key roles

- i. policy formulation and strategic decision making
- ii. deal with individual casework and act as an advocate for constituents in resolving particular concerns or grievances;
- iii. balance different interests identified within the ward as a whole and to balance the interests of the ward against those of the city as a whole;
- iv. be involved in decision-making;

v. Attending and participating in City Council meetings and supporting the Council's key role of delivering services to the community; and providing strong local governance, in particular:

participating in developing and agreeing the Council's budget and key policies.  
making appointments to committees, and to outside bodies, as the Constitution provides.

vi. Undertaking membership, as required, of City Council regulatory committees.

vii. Undertaking membership SMP and Health Scrutiny

## **b) Rights and duties**

i. Councillors will have such rights of access to such documents, information, land and buildings of the Council as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions and in accordance with the law.

ii. Councillors will not make public information which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the Council or divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a councillor or officer entitled to know it.

iii. For these purposes, "confidential" and "exempt" information are defined in the access to information rules in Part 3 of this Constitution.

## **2.4 Conduct**

Councillors will at all times observe the Members' Code of Conduct and the Protocol on Member/Officer relations set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

## **2.5 Allowances**

Councillors will be entitled to receive allowances in accordance with the members' allowance scheme set out in Part 5 of this Constitution.