

3. How the Council operates

Councillors are democratically accountable to residents of their electoral ward. The overriding duty of councillors is to the whole community, but they have a special duty to their constituents, including those who did not vote for them.

Councillors have to comply with a code of conduct to ensure high standards in the way they undertake their duties.

All councillors meet together as the Council. Meetings of the Council are normally open to the public. Here councillors decide the Council's overall policies, and set the budget each year. The Council elects a Leader, who then appoints a Deputy Leader and between two and eight other members who together with the Leader of the Council form the Cabinet. The Leader and Cabinet are responsible for implementing the policies decided by the Council within the budget. Functions of the Cabinet and individual Cabinet members are decided by the Leader. The Council is required by law also to appoint Overview and Scrutiny Committees to assist in policy formulation and to hold the Cabinet to account for its performance.