

Subject: Role of Ward Councillors

Report to: Scrutiny Committee – 21 November 2013

Report by: Cabinet Secretary

SUBJECT MATTER

To examine the issue relating to the role of Ward Councillors.

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Scrutiny Committee is reminded that a Ward Members Working Group was established to fully examine the issue relating to the role of Ward Councillors.

2. WARD MEMBERS WORKING GROUP

The Working Group has met three times and copies of the minutes of the meetings are attached.

3. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues considered in detail by the Working Group can be summarised as follows:-

- (a) A mentoring/buddying system for Councillors.
- (b) Members' Handbook.
- (c) Members' Equipment.
- (d) Case Work and Engaging with the community.
- (e) Ward Councillors Compact.

4. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the following matters:-

- (i) Members' Handbook – revised version attached .
- (ii) Ward Councillor Compact – attached.

- (iv) To agree a mentoring/buddying system for Councillors.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

EXECUTIVE BOARD OR DIRECTOR CONSULTATION:

Director of Resources, Governance and Growth consulted.

Does this report raise any legal, financial, sustainability, equality, crime and disorder or human rights issues and, if so, have they been considered?	Issues	
	Legal	No
	Financial	Yes
	Risk	No
	Sustainability	Yes
	Equality	No
	Crime and Disorder	No
	Human Rights	No
	Every Child Matters	No

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Subject: Role of Ward Councillors

Report to: Scrutiny Committee – 28 February 2013

Report by: Scrutiny Officer

SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS

To consider the role of Ward Councillors.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Committee in its Work Programme of 2012/13 has included as a matter of review the role of the Ward Councillor.
- 1.2 The role Ward Councillors should play in community leadership and strategic decision making has become a pressing issue for Local Authorities in the context of current policy and legislative changes.

2. KEY POINTS

- 2.1 Many non-Executive Councillors feel distanced from Council decision making and struggle to engage with local strategic partnerships and other structures set up to influence decisions about mainstream service allocation.
- 2.2 Developing an empowered role for Ward Councillors will require major changes to the way Local Authorities, political parties and communities work with elected Members. These are long-term issues, many of which are dependent on changes to the culture of Local Authorities and local political groups.
- 2.3 The development of a Ward Councillor Compact, a voluntary two-way agreement between the Council and elected Members that would help to define the future role, and address issues about support, development and performance standards.
- 2.4 The Ward Councillor Compact would set out the Council's commitment to provide minimum levels of support and training for Members and the Council's expectations of the Ward Councillor role, encouraging basic minimum standards of activity and performance in each of the dimensions and functions of the job.

3. **LEGISLATIVE ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Local Government White Paper published in October 2006 made a strong statement about the importance of Ward Councillors as local political and community leaders. It encouraged Local Authorities to adopt a package of powers and responsibilities to empower Councillors, including new opportunities to act on local issues and to influence mainstream service choices.

4. **ASPIRATIONS FOR CHANGE**

- 4.1 Many Councillors feel distanced from decision making within Councils and disaffection with the “backbencher” Council role is acknowledged.

There are potentially areas for change to the current Ward Councillor function which would reflect their desire to act as “connectors” between communities and the Council

The areas for discussion are:-

(a) **Community Engagement**

Councillors need to be more actively engaged with all parts of the community if they are to be effective leaders. They need to be empowered and supported to engage with residents and community groups using a range of different tools.

(b) **Advocacy**

Councillors need to be able to speak freely and openly challenge the Executive.

(c) **The Political Role**

Councils need to acknowledge and value the political dimension of the role and not see this as a barrier to improving local services.

(d) **Local Action**

Councillors and community organisations want elected Members to be able to tackle local issues directly, especially persistent problems concerning local public spaces such as fly-tipping, graffiti or unkempt parks and green spaces.

(e) **Influence**

Councillors must have real opportunities to influence strategic decisions about how mainstream services are allocated spending, and at a point where local priorities and intelligence can be fully reflected in how services are planned and delivered.

(f) **Local Intelligence and Information**

Members need more and better quality intelligence about local issues in order to make informed decisions and more effectively influence strategic decision making.

5. **DEFINING THE FUTURE WARD COUNCILLOR ROLE**

5.1 The Committee may wish to consider the following aspirations for the role and the skills and attributes future Members would need:-

(a) **Political Representative**

The ability to connect with all parts of the community and represent everyone fairly, and to balance local concerns with the political demands of the group manifesto.

(b) **Community Advocate**

Be a skilled advocate for people from different backgrounds, cultures, and values; have the confidence to speak freely and challenge the Executive.

(c) **Community Leader**

Exercise community development skills – support local projects and initiatives,

and educate people about local participation; be a good communicator – explain what political decisions and structures mean to constituents and community organisations; be sensitive to difference and issues of diversity and equality; have knowledge and skills to engage people in a variety of ways (not just meetings); be a conflict broker.

(d) Service Transformer

Understand the complex business of Local Government and services provided both by the Council and others; have the confidence and ability to hold service providers to account; be able to work in partnership with a range of agencies and interests; ability to understand local problems and use this knowledge locally and strategically in local action planning; setting and monitoring service standards.

(e) Place Shaper

Being a local figurehead/role model that people feel they can turn to; be able to shape the very local environment – ability to identify priorities, work with officers and service providers to address public realm problems, manage delegated locality budgets.

(f) Knowledge Champion

Be the primary source of local intelligence flowing between the community and the Council; have the skills to collect and analyse local information and use it to benefit the community.

6. MEMBER SUPPORT

6.1 It should be recognised that Members will need to develop different skills to make the transition to a more empowered role and will need support to do this. This support could be in the form of better administrative back-up, help with community engagement and training to use ICT.

6.2 Members may wish to give consideration to the identification of a named officer to offer direct support to each Ward Councillor.

7. A WARD COUNCILLOR COMPACT

- 7.1 Members may wish to develop a Ward Councillor Compact which would be a voluntary two-way agreement between the Council and elected Members.

The Ward Councillor Compact could:-

- help to define the future role and address issues about support, development, and performance standards, among others;
- set out the Council's expectations of the role, encouraging basic minimum standards of activity in each of the dimensions and functions of the job, possibly combining specific tasks with suggested approaches, skills and behaviours;
- set out the Council's commitment to provide minimum levels of support and training for Members. This could be based on IDeA's recommendations for all Councillors to have access to a package of basic support measures including a community induction; support for every Councillor to be in e-mail contact from home; enabling Councillors to draw on Council resources to conduct surveys of local opinion; and providing them with a single officer as a channel for complaints.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to recommend to Cabinet that a Working Group of Members be set-up to fully examine the role of Ward Councillors with a view to the possibility of establishing a Ward Councillor Compact in order to develop the current role of Ward Members.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

To be determined.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

EXECUTIVE BOARD OR DIRECTOR CONSULTATION:

Director of Resources, Governance and Growth.

Does this report raise any legal, financial, sustainability, equality, crime and disorder or human rights issues and, if so, have they been considered?	Issues	
	Legal	No
	Financial	Yes
	Risk	No
	Sustainability	Yes
	Crime and Disorder	No
	Human Rights	No
	Every Child Matters	No
	Equality	No
	EqlA Form completed	No

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Ward Councillors Working Group

Minutes

Thursday, 10 October 2013 at 18:00

Attendees:

Mr Graham Plant (Member), Mrs Marlene Fairhead (Member), Mr Jamie Smith (Member), Mr Trevor Wainwright (Member)

Apologies for Absence:

Mrs Mary Coleman (Member), Mr Michael Castle (Member)

Absent:

Mrs Sue Hacon (Member)

Also in attendance at the above meeting were:

Linda Mockford (Governance Group Manager), Robin Hodds (Cabinet Secretary) and Karline Smith (Senior Member Services Officer).

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2013 were confirmed

2 Members handbook

The Governance Group Manager reported as the Group had been through the handbook at the last meeting all of the pictures had now been taken out and this had been reduced from 63 pages to 20 pages. Electoral Ward Information had now been included along with polling station/ward information. Both the Constitution and Corporate Plan documents would be going into the CMIS members information section. The document had also been re-worded in a more user friendly way. A section on where services are located had been included along with information on CMIS.

The organisational structure that had been included on page 23 is the new Council

structure and details from GYB Services could also be included. It was agreed that an A-Z of services should be included along with contact details for NPLaw.

The VIP IT Helpdesk number would be included in the pack.

Councillor J Smith asked for the polling station information to be removed and for the ward boundary information to be left in. It was also agreed that information on GYB Services would be included along with Community Worker information.

It was agreed that the handbook would be sent out to all Councillors for consideration via Scrutiny and then to Cabinet.

3 Youth Engagement in Local Democracy

In the absence of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group Manager the Cabinet Secretary detailed the report.

Councillor J Smith asked if Ward Councillors were aware of how to get involved in the community and the Cabinet Secretary suggested having neighbourhood managers contact numbers in the pack. It was suggested that a community work introduction be carried out by each of the Neighbourhood Managers.

Clarification was sought on the YAB which MAP runs and it was reported that Tracey Jones is the Council lead officer.

Councillor Fairhead stated that it was not clear who to get youths to talk to for example when the french youth visitors came to Great Yarmouth. It was agreed that Rob Gregory attend the November Scrutiny Committee to explain this.

4 Ward Councillor Compact

The Group considered the Cabinet Secretary's amended Ward Councillor Compact.

The Chairman stated that he would like to see skills and training needs identified for Councillors through the LGA.

A discussion then ensued around training for Audit and Risk, Licensing, Standards and Development Control committees and it was agreed that training should be offered to all councilors for these committees after the May 2014 election.

RESOLVED:

That the Ward Councilor Compact be recommended for approval to Scrutiny on 21 November 2013.

5 Members Job Description

It was agreed that the Members Job Description would placed in the members library on CMIS.

RESOLVED:

That the Councillors Job Descriptions be agreed.

6 Any other business

(i) Mentoring System

It was reported that the mentoring system would be implemented, with the seven cabinet councillors being mentored by Robin and the remaining thirty two councilors being split into two groups of sixteen and being mentored between Karline and Sarah. New councillors would also have an experienced councillor as a mentor.

Councillors attendance at meetings should be sent to the leaders of both parties.

The meeting ended at: 19:10

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WARD MEMBERS' WORKING GROUP

4 July 2013 – 6.00 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor J Smith (in the Chair), Councillors Castle, M Coleman and Fairhead.

Councillor Collins attended for Councillor Hacon and Councillor Stone attended for Councillor Plant.

Group Manager – Governance, Group Manager – Neighbourhood and Communities and Cabinet Secretary.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of 24 April 2013 were confirmed.

2. ROLE OF WARD COUNCILLORS

The Cabinet Secretary reminded the Working Group that this Group had been set up as a Sub-Committee of the Scrutiny Committee to fully examine the issue relating to the role of Ward Councillors. Accordingly, following the Working Group's initial meeting on 24 April, Members were now asked to give detailed consideration to the following issues:-

(a) A Mentoring/Buddying System for New Councillors

The Working Group agreed that it would be good practice to have a named officer who would provide a mentoring/buddying system for both new Councillors and existing Councillors. The Working Group also agreed that new Members should receive an induction with regard to community issues.

(b) Members' Handbook

The Working Group was asked to examine the content of the current Members' Handbook issued to newly elected Members.

The Working Group agreed the following recommendations:-

- To make use of the Council's design and print service to make the Members' Handbook more user friendly and also to reduce its size.
- The provision of a named officer who would be able to advise Members on "common" problems.

- The deletion of the List of Members together with their email addresses as this matter was duplicated in the details shown in the Members by Ward section of the handbook.
- Members' details to be linked to the website.
- Outside bodies' details to be amended.
- The inclusion of a comprehensive telephone directory.
- A directory of local groups to be included.
- The future format of the handbook to be A5 rather than A4.
- To investigate whether the handbook could be made available electronically.

The Working Group agreed that the Cabinet Secretary should produce a revised Members' Handbook for consideration by the Working Group at its next meeting.

(c) Members' Equipment

The Working Group discussed what equipment Members needed to carry out their role as Ward Councillors. The Group Manager (Governance) reminded the Working Group that most Members have now been issued with ipads but that in any event other Members would be provided with a laptop. The Chairman suggested that an investigation should be carried out with other local authorities to determine how they provide their information using the new technology available.

The Working Group were of the opinion that as the recent ipad technology had only been issued to Members very recently, it would be more appropriate to review this issue after six months' usage.

(d) Case Work and Engaging with the Community

The Working Group gave consideration on how to deal with case work and engaging with the community. The Group Manager (Neighbourhoods and Communities) reported that the Neighbourhood Managers would be able to provide Members with on the ground support in order to fulfil their role in the communities. The Working Group discussed the level of support currently being provided for the rural areas and it was acknowledged that the requirements of urban and rural Members was quite different.

The Group Manager (Governance) suggested that a dedicated Member Services Officer could be nominated in order to help with Members' case work.

The Chairman asked whether the recent Cabinet meeting with students from Caister High School had been well received and the Group Manager (Neighbourhoods and Communities) reported that this had been a very successful session and it was agreed that further details of youth involvement should be considered at the Working Group's next meeting.

(e) Ward Councillor Compact

The Working Group was asked to fully examine the proposal to introduce a formal Ward Councillor Compact which would include a rural profile of all Councillors and suggested activities to help Councillors fulfil the compact and their constitutional role.

The Cabinet Secretary pointed out that a significant amount of detail contained within a Ward Councillor Compact was in fact already included as an appendix to the current Council's constitution.

The Working Group agreed to request the Cabinet Secretary to submit details of the current appendix attached to the constitution relating to Members' role for consideration at the

Working Group's next meeting together with the provision of a simpler modified version of a proposed Ward Councillor Compact.

3. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 7.10 pm.

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WARD MEMBERS' WORKING GROUP

24 April 2013 – 6.00 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors Castle, M Coleman, Fairhead and J Smith.

An apology for absence was received from Councillors Hacon, Hanton and T Wainwright.

Mrs L Mockford (Group Manager – Governance), Mr R Hodds (Member Services Manager and Scrutiny Officer) and Miss H Notcutt (Neighbourhood Manager).

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Councillor J Smith be appointed as Chairman of the Working Group.

2. ROLE OF WARD COUNCILLORS

The Member Services Manager and Scrutiny Officer reminded the Working Group that his report on the Role of Ward Councillors had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 28 February 2013. He reported that the role Ward Councillors should play in community leadership and strategic decision making had become a pressing issue for local authorities in the context of current policy and legislative changes.

The Member Services Manager reported that developing an empowered role for Ward Members would require major changes to the way local authorities, political parties and communities work with elected members. These are long term issues, many of which are dependent on changes top the cultural of local authorities and local political groups. He stated that the development of a Ward Councillor compact, a voluntary two way agreement between the Council and elected members would help to define the future role and address issues about support development and performance standards. The Ward Councillor compact would set out the Councillors commitment to provide minimum levels of support and training for members and the Council's expectations of the Ward Councillor role encouraging basic minimum standards of activity and performance in each of the dimensions and functions of the job.

The Working Group gave consideration to tabled papers which set out a draft Ward Councillor Compact, a Role Profile of all Councillors and suggested activities to help Councillors fulfil the Compact and their constitutional role.

In discussing the Scrutiny Officer's report, together with the tabled papers with regard to the Ward Councillor Compact, the Working Group discussed the following issues:-

- A discussion on the “old” committee system whereby the Council’s functions were subject to a committee system with direct reporting to full Council that involved all Members of the Council in the decision making process. This system had been replaced in 1999 with a Cabinet system which had significantly changed the role of elected members in the decision making process.
- The possible appointment of part-time political assistants.
- The introduction of a mentoring/buddying system for new Councillors.
- To issue all Members of Council with an abridged version of the Council’s Constitution to possibly exclude the sections of the Constitution that relate to contractual and financial standing orders.
- The development of Ward Member activity within the community with a possibility of appointing Community Champions. This community engagement role would also include engagement with young people.
- The Working Group’s endorsement to the continuation of the Ward Budget Scheme which allows elected members to engage further with the public through this process.
- The need to enhance and development the Members’ Handbook issued to newly elected Members of Council.
- The issue of equipment required for Members to carry out their Council role effectively bearing in mind the forthcoming proposal to introduce a new Committee Management System which will require Members to use i-Pads/laptops in meetings rather than issue Members with hard copy agendas.
- How to deal with casework and on issues of engaging with the community.

RESOLVED:

(i) That the Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet be advised of the Working Group’s endorsement for the continuation of the Ward Budget Scheme.

(ii) That a further meeting of the Working Group be held to discuss in detail the following issues:-

- (a) A mentoring/buddying system for new Councillors.
- (b) To examine the content of the current Members’ Handbook issued to newly elected Members.
- (c) To discuss what equipment Members need to carry out their role as Councillors.
- (d) How to deal with casework and engaging with the community.
- (e) To fully examine the proposal to introduce a formal Ward Councillor Compact which would include a role profile of all Councillors and suggested activities to help Councillors fulfil the Compact and their constitutional role.

3. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm.



MEMBERS HANDBOOK

DRAFT

REVISED OCTOBER 2013

List of contents
(to be completed)

1. Introduction

This handbook is intended to help newly elected Councillors understand the context in which they will operate as a Member of the Council by:

- Giving a brief description of, and the composition of the Borough.
- Describing the way the Council is structured.
- Explaining the facilities and services available to Members.

It should also act as a useful reference for existing Members.

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 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

3. General information

There are three tiers of local government within the County of Norfolk:

- Norfolk County Council covers the whole county and is responsible for strategic services such as education, highways, social services, libraries and refuse disposal.
- There are seven district/borough councils within the County of Norfolk; Great Yarmouth Borough Council being one of them. Each district is responsible for local services such as council tax and business rates, environmental health, local planning and refuse collection.
- There are a number of Parish Councils within districts (with the exception of Norwich City Council). Parish Councils undertake a limited range of statutory functions and also have a consultative role on many important issues i.e. planning applications.

4. The Borough of Great Yarmouth

Great Yarmouth Borough Council is one of the most popular British seaside resorts with some 80,000 available bed spaces, caters for over five million visitor nights and over three million day visitors each year.

The latest population estimate for the Borough is 97,277 (2011 census) making it the

smallest in the County in terms of population. In terms of area it is the second smallest, after Norwich city, covering 67.2 square miles.

As well as the Tourism industry, which is a major employer, Great Yarmouth is also a centre for supporting the energy industry, traditionally oil and gas and more latterly the renewable sector. The other main economic driver for the town is the port. With the completion of the deep water outer harbour, the prospects for new business for the port are starting to be realised.

The council area is a mixture of urban and rural areas

5. Electoral wards

Councillors are democratically accountable to the residents of their Wards. Whilst their overriding duty is to the whole community they also have a special duty to all their constituents including those who did not vote for them.

The borough is divided into 17 borough electoral wards, 21 parishes and 9 county electoral divisions. The urban areas of Great Yarmouth and Gorleston-on-sea do not have parish councils.

There are 39 councillors representing the 17 wards of the Borough. Councillors are elected for a four year period and elections are held annually, so a third of the Council is elected each year.

A map of the Borough is shown on page x. More detailed maps of each Ward are available from the election teams (contact Denise Harvey, 01493 846548/ email: elections@great-yarmouth.gov.uk)

6. Parish Councils

Most of the parishes have parish councils with the exception of Ashby with Oby and West Caister. Parish councils appoint a clerk who is responsible for ensuring that the Council as a whole conducts its business properly and provides independent, objective, professional advice and support.

Contact details for parish clerks are available on the council website (www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk)

7. How the Council operates

Following consultations with the Borough's residents in 1999, it was decided that this authority would operate with a Leader and Executive (Cabinet) type of Governance.

Decisions are taken by the Full Council, the Cabinet, individual Cabinet members and Officers.

A list of the powers delegated to each of these is included within the constitution.

8. The Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan lists Great Yarmouth Borough Council's key priorities and plans. The Council has identified a number of key priorities including supporting economic development, tourism and the heritage of the Borough, as well as creating jobs and wealth for local people.

The plan sets out how the Council intends to deliver on the priorities with a focus on enterprise and ambition and raising the profile of the place and the Council. The Corporate Plan is available on the Council's website: www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk

9. The Council's Constitution

Great Yarmouth's Constitution contains full details of the Council's democratic systems and also sets out the roles of members and officers. The purpose of the Constitution is to enable decisions to be taken efficiently, effectively and lawfully. The full Constitution is available on the Council's Website: www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk.

The constitution includes Standing Orders which govern the way in which business is transacted at meetings. Business is conducted very formally at Full Council with the Standing Orders governing the nature of motions to be discussed and limiting the length of speeches.

Proceedings at committee and sub-committee are less formal than at Council meetings but nevertheless rules of procedure need to be followed. The Chairman, advised by the member services officer present, is responsible for ensuring that those rules are properly observed. However, members do not stand to speak and in addition to debating issues there is an opportunity to ask questions of officers in attendance.

10.Full Council

The Full Council of 39 Members meeting together is responsible for determining the Council's overall policies and set the budget and level of council tax each year.

The full Council will appoint the Mayor (and Deputy Mayor) who will chair meetings of Council, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members, all other Committees, all Members to serve on outside bodies and Chief Officers and Heads of Departments (or make alternative arrangements for such appointments).

Full Council meetings will also include the provision for members of the public to ask questions during an allotted period at the commencement of each meeting and in accordance with the Council's agreed procedure for such questions. The protocol for Full Council meetings is attached on page x.

11.The Cabinet

The Cabinet is the main decision making body of the Council. It is responsible for

carrying out all of the authority's functions except those which by law are responsibility of Full Council or its regulatory committees (i.e. Audit, Licensing, Planning and Standards).

The Cabinet consists of the Leader and Cabinet members, and these are appointed at Annual Council. Each Cabinet member has a portfolio of responsibilities, rather like a Government minister. Their portfolios cover service specific areas or thematic, cross-cutting areas of responsibility.

12.Delegated Powers

It is not practical for Cabinet 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.

The delegated powers to officers are set out in the scheme of delegation which is contained in the Council's constitution.

13.Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny works to ensure and promote open and transparent decision making and democratic accountability. The role and functions of the Scrutiny Committee are as follows:

- to review or scrutinise existing policy, and develop new policy for approval by the Cabinet or Council.
- to review or scrutinise existing services or functions of the Council.
- to hold cabinet decision makers to account by the call-in of decisions made, but not implemented, or by a review or scrutiny of decisions already made.
- to influence the Cabinet and Council through reports and recommendations in connection with any of the above, or in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions or any other matter affecting the Borough or its inhabitants.

14.Call-in

One way in which Scrutiny holds the Cabinet 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 Cabinet or one of its members, or a 'key decision' made by an officer, to be discussed by the Scrutiny committee, prior to its implementation. The Call-in procedure for operating this power is explained in the Council's Constitution.

The Call-In procedure does not apply to regulatory non-Executive functions.

15. Development Control Committee

Development Control is responsible for dealing with local authority planning applications.

There is a scheme of delegation in place which gives officers power to deal with certain planning applications and these are listed in the Constitution. Major planning applications and applications where officers decline to exercise their delegated authority are referred to Development Control.

The committee has power to act.

16. Licensing Committee

Licensing Committee is responsible for the licensing and safety functions of the Council. These include taxis, private hire vehicles and drivers and environmental health licensing and safety functions.

Licensing Sub committee is responsible for determining applications for alcohol and gambling premises.

Members of Licensing Committee act in a quasi-judicial capacity and can be deciding matters which may have very important implications for an individual's livelihood. Members will need to listen carefully to the evidence and arguments which are put forward by the parties and to determine the matter only on relevant considerations. If Members fail to do so the decision may be challenged in the court which is why a Solicitor or other experienced person acts as clerk in order to give guidance.

There is a scheme of delegation in place which gives officers power to deal with licensing applications (these are listed in the Constitution). Applications for premises licences are referred to a sub-committee when representations are received. Applications for taxi licences or other matters are referred to Licensing committee where officers are minded to refuse applications or they do not wish to use their delegated powers.

Licensing Committee and Licensing sub have power to act.

17. Standards Committee

The aim of the Standards Committee is to promote high standards of ethical conduct among elected councillors. The Standards Committee examines the conduct of councillors including parish councillors and advises on ethical standards. It is separate from all other committees.

Made up of both councillors and external members, it 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.

18. Audit and Risk Committee

The purpose of the Audit and Risk committee is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, review annual Governance Statement, and to oversee the financial reporting process.

19. Appeals Committee

The role of the Appeals committee is:

- to consider appeals against disciplinary decisions from employees of the authority in accordance with the provisions of the Council's disciplinary procedure
- to consider unresolved grievances from employees under the Council's grievance procedure
- to deal with grading appeals from employees in accordance with the Council's agreed procedure for regrading applications

The Committee has full power to act.

20. Housing Appeals

The Housing Appeals committee considers appeals on housing management decisions other than decisions on Eviction and Nuisance Orders.

Members of Housing Appeals act in a quasi-judicial capacity and can be deciding matters which may have very important implications for an individual's livelihood. Members will need to listen carefully to the evidence and arguments which are put forward by the parties and to determine the matter only on relevant considerations. If Members fail to do so the decision may be challenged in the court which is why a Solicitor or other experienced person acts as clerk in order to give guidance.

The Committee has full power to act.

21. The Gorleston and Yarmouth Area Committees

The two area Committees provide for better and more co-ordinated local services by enabling local elected members, residents and their communities to get involved in the work of the Council and other services.

22. Outside Bodies

The Council has links with many different bodies and, as part of this, the Council annually appoints members to a number of outside bodies.

The Council provides a general indemnity to members when serving on outside bodies. There may be some situations which the indemnity does not cover. It is

therefore advisable for members to check that the outside body has adequate insurance in place.

23. The role of Council Officers and Council structure

To be efficient and effective, Councillors need a variety of support from officers of the Council. Officers work for the whole Council and not just the majority political party. The Council's paid staff is headed by the Chief Executive Officer who together with three directors make up the Executive Management Team (EMT). EMT oversees the corporate management and operation of the Council's performance and strategic direction.

The Council currently operates under the following structure:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Directors
- Group Managers

A copy of the structure and contact details for EMT and group managers are on pages

24. Statutory Officers

By law, local authorities are required to designate the following officers:

- Head of Paid Service, who 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. The Chief Executive Officer, Jane Ratcliffe, is designated the Council's Head of Paid Service.
- 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. Chris Skinner, from NP Law is the Council's Monitoring Officer.
- Section 151 Officer, who monitors all the expenditure and financial dealings of the Council. Seb Duncan, Head of Resources, Governance and Growth is the Council's Section 151 Officer
- Electoral Registration Officer, who is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the register of electors and absent voters in the borough
- Returning Officer, who is responsible for the conduct of all elections in the borough. The duties of the Returning Officer are separate from their duties as a local government officer. The Returning Officer is directly accountable to the courts system as an independent statutory officer holder. The Chief Executive Officer, Jane Ratcliffe, is appointed the Council's Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer.

25. Members Code of Conduct

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

Selflessness: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

26. 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.

27. 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 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.

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

28. The register of gifts and hospitality

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 councillor.

29. 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.

Any member who is a Council tenant and who has housing rent arrears for 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.

30. Access to information

The Access to Information Act requires that notice is given of all meetings of Council at least five working days prior to the meeting.

The press and public have the right to attend unless the meeting is discussing an issue containing confidential or 'exempt' information as defined in Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972 and a resolution is passed to exclude them during the discussion of the item. 'Exempt' information includes details regarding an individual employee; terms proposed in negotiations, security etc and a full list is given in the Council's constitution.

Members of the public also have rights to see background papers used in the preparation of reports to meetings. As a Councillor you have additional rights to see papers which are not available to the general public providing access to the documents is reasonably necessary to enable the member properly to perform their duties. This principle is commonly referred to as the 'need to know' principle.

31. Data Protection

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.

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.

Great Yarmouth Borough 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 and are required to complete a separate notification. Geoff Jones, the Council's Information Manager will arrange this for members.

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

32. Accommodation

Services are located in the following buildings:

Services	Building
Reception, Corporate Unit, Elections, Licensing, Member Services, Civic and Events, Communications, Finance, IT, Markets, Environmental Services, Planning, Planning Policy	Town Hall, Hall Plain, Great Yarmouth, NR30 2QF
Customer Services, Revenues and Benefits, Housing	Greyfriars House, Greyfriars Way, Great Yarmouth, NR30
Car Parking/civil parking enforcement, Property, asset management, Economic development, Construction & facilities,	Novus House, The Conge, Great Yarmouth, NR30
Tourism	Maritime House, Marine Parade, Great Yarmouth, NR30
Neighbourhood and Communities	ComeUnity office, King Street, Great Yarmouth, NR30

33. Agenda and Meeting Management System (CMIS)

Great Yarmouth uses an electronic committee management system (CMIS) 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 agendas and minutes.

Members will receive emails informing them of committee dates which can be saved into electronic calendars. A further email will be sent with a link to the agenda for the meeting.

The agenda will be the one available on the website; if there are any confidential items, members will need to login to the system to view confidential papers. Members will be given login details and training on the system by the Member Services team (contact details, page x).

34. Councillor Web pages

Each councillor has a page specifically dedicated to them on the Council website (via CMIS). The Councillor web pages greatly improve Members' visibility to the general public and raise awareness of the role of Councillors. Great Yarmouth's Councillor pages include:

- A photograph of each member and contact information (telephone number and

- Council email)
- Committee and outside body appointments
- Declaration of meetings, register of interests and gifts and hospitalities
- A biography (if a member provides one)

A biography must not be explicitly party political and is in relation to Councillor's formal and civic roles as elected representatives and community champions and leaders.

An up to date list of all Councillors' details are available on the council website (www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk)

35. Information Communications Technology (ICT) facilities

Members will be provided with 3G Wi-Fi Ipads in order to access emails and the website (which will be required to be able to access agendas). Members will also be able to access the electronic telephone book via Citrix (see paragraph 36 below).

Details of the security policy relating to mobile devices will be given separately as Members need to understand data security requirements.

Councillors will be given a Council email address which they will need to use for Council business. This email address will be published on the website to enable constituents to contact you.

Members will expected to use their own broadband but a monthly allowance will be payable (see paragraph 37 below).

36. Citrix

Access to the Council's intranet system, containing information such as the Council's electronic telephone book and contact details for officers in NP law, is done via Citrix.

To log into Citrix, members need to use their Council email, their network password and the key fob that has been issued to them. Member services officers will be able to provide training on Citrix and the information available to members.

37. Members' allowances

All members will receive a basic allowance of £3,579 which is paid monthly via payroll. A monthly allowance of £15 per is payable towards the cost of councillors' broadband per household. Where councillors are living at the same address, only one councillor can claim this allowance. Members can also claim for mileage when on Council business and attending meetings. All payments are subject to income tax and national insurance (if applicable).

In addition to a basic allowance, extra payments referred to 'special responsibility allowances' are paid to those who take on additional responsibilities such as the Leader, cabinet members and committees chairs. Again this allowance is paid monthly.

38. Insurance

When on Council business, members are indemnified under the Council's insurance policy. However, this does not extend to when members are driving to meetings or to Council business.

It is legal requirement, to have adequate insurance cover; therefore Members will need to ensure that their motor insurance cover includes commuting and business use for their role of councillor. Member services officers will check councillors various driving documents as part of health and safety requirements.

39. Member Services and Corporate Support

Member Services and the Corporate Unit support Members in general and the overall decision making process. The role of member services 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.

Robin Hodds is the manager of these services and is also the Cabinet Secretary and Deputy Monitoring Officer. He and the Member Services Officers can advise on all constitutional matters. The member services officers should be the first port of call for councillors' queries.

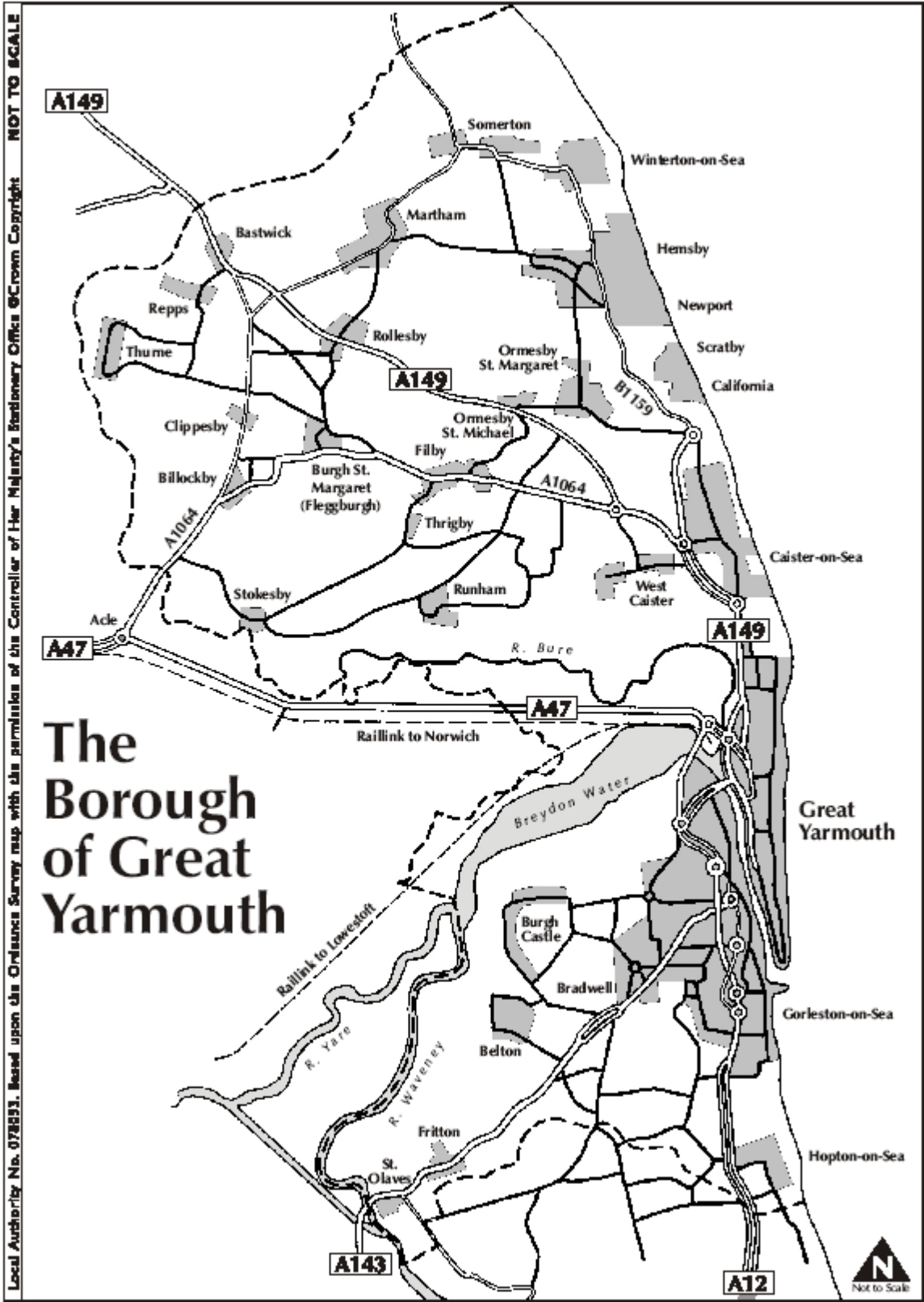
Contact details of all officers in Member services and the Corporate Unit are below:

Name	Title	Telephone	Email
Robin Hodds	Cabinet Secretary and Deputy Monitoring Off.	01493 846325 07919 592383	rh@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Sarah Davis	Member Services Officer	01493 846307	sed@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Karline Smith	Member Services Officer	01493 846309	ke@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Christina Webb	PA to Chief Executive Officer and the Leader	01493 846301	clw@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Ria Day	PA to Corporate Directors	01493 846	rjd@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Colin Rowland	Corporate Policy and Performance Officer	01493 846168	crr@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Geoff Jones	Information Manager	01493 846855	geoff@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Ashlie Southey	Member services assistant	01493 846321	ajs@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Marian Newrick	Clerical assistant	01493 846634	mn@great-yarmouth.gov.uk

40. Council Services

Members may need to access a range of services on behalf of their constituents. To assist members, contact details of officers from Neighbourhood and Communities, GYB services and an A-Z of services are included on pages x

Map of the Borough



Quick Guide to Full Council meeting protocol

Asking Questions

Any member may ask the Leader or Chair of a Committee a question without giving notice if the item is on the agenda and is being received or considered.

Any member may ask the Mayor, Member of the Cabinet or Chair of a Committee a question with 10 working days notice if the issue is not on the agenda. If the item is urgent the Mayor, providing the question is received by 11am on the day of the meeting, or the responder may waive this requirement.

The member may also ask one supplementary question of the responder. This question must relate directly from the original questions reply.

Motions

Motions must be about matters for which the council has responsibility.

Written notice of a motion must be signed by at least 5 members and submitted not less than 10 days before the meeting.

Some Motions can be raised without notice these are listed in section 12 of the constitution.

Rules of Debate

No speeches allowed until the motion has been seconded.

When seconding, a Member may reserve their speech until later in the debate.

Speeches must be directed to the question, personal explanation or point of order. No speech may exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the council.

A member may only speak once during a debate unless they are speaking on an amendment, exercising a right of reply, raising a point of order or giving a personal explanation.

An amendment cannot negate a motion or introduce new subject matter. Only one amendment can be discussed at one time. If an amendment is carried the Mayor will read out the amended motion before accepting further amendments or putting it to the vote.

A member may raise a point of order at any time and it will be heard immediately, a point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of council procedure or law. The ruling of the Mayor is final.

Voting

Unless the Constitution states otherwise, any matter will be decided by a simple majority of

those Members voting and present in the room.

If there is equal numbers for and against the Mayor has a second casting vote. There is no restriction on how this is used.

Member Conduct

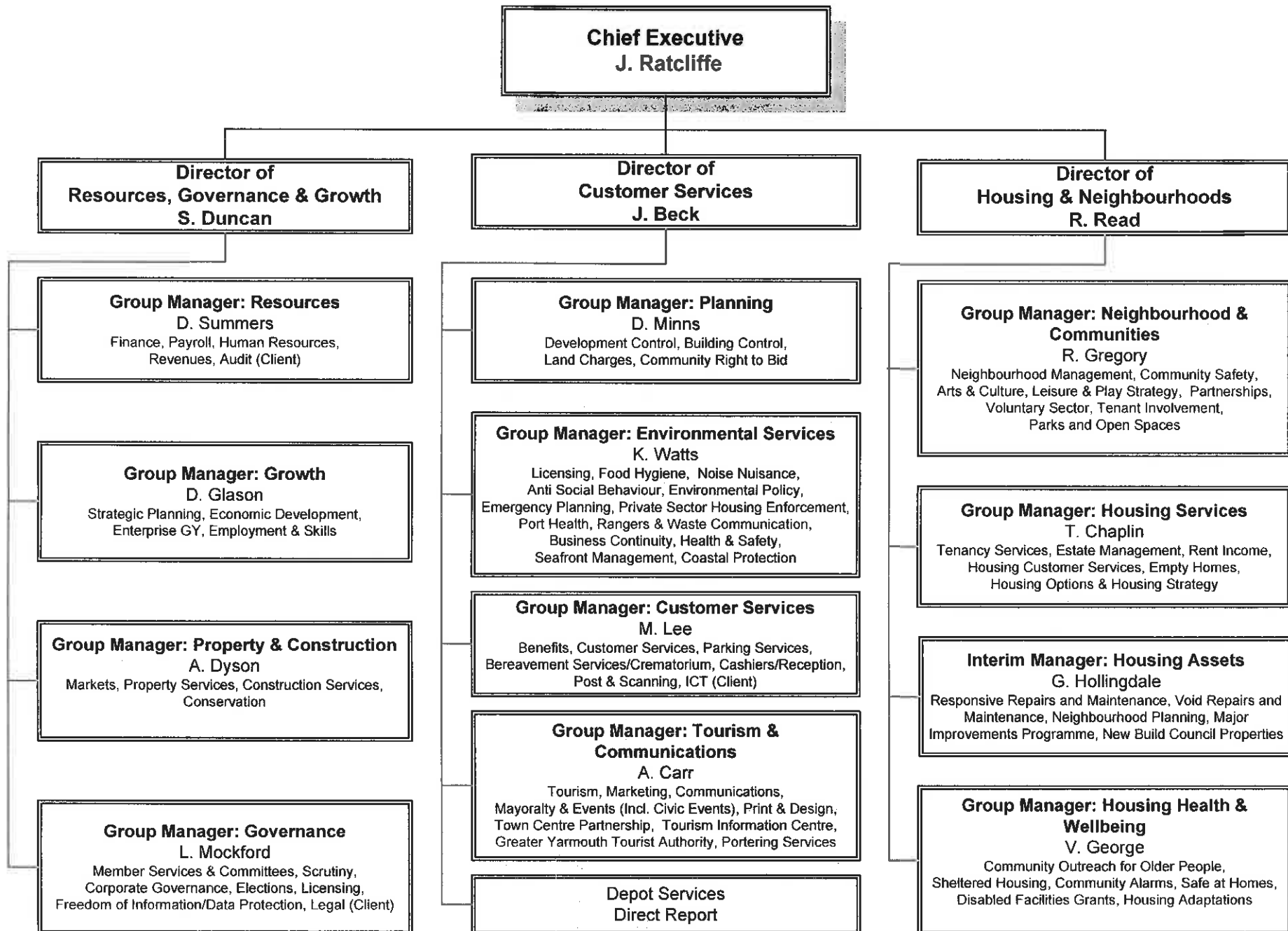
When a member speaks at full council they must stand. If more than one member stands the Mayor will ask one to speak and the others must sit.

Members must remain seated whilst another member is speaking unless they wish to make a point of order or personal explanation.

If the Mayor stands the member speaking must stop and sit, the meeting must be silent.

If a member persistently disregards the Mayor the Mayor may move that the member not be heard further. If this is seconded it is voted on without discussion.

If a member continues to behave improperly after such a motion has been carried the Mayor may move that the member leaves the meeting or the meeting is adjourned. If seconded it is voted on without discussion.



Executive Management Team

Name	Title	Telephone	Email
Jane Ratcliffe	Chief Executive Officer	01493 846301	jratcliffe@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Seb Duncan	Director of Resources, Governance & Growth	01493 846206	sgd@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Jane Beck	Director of Customer Services	01493 846418	jeb@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Robert Read	Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods	01493 846278	rr@great-yarmouth.gov.uk

Group Managers

Name	Group Manager	Telephone	Email
Alan Carr	Tourism & Communications	01493 846341	aac@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Trevor Chaplin	Housing Services	01493 846279	tcc@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Andy Dyson	Property & Construction	01493 846440	aad@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Vicky George	Housing Health & Wellbeing	01493 846653	vic@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
David Glason	Growth	01493 846643	dcg@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Rob Gregory	Neighbourhood & Communities	01493 845921	rg@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Miranda Lee	Customer Services	01493 846536	mvl@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Dean Minns	Planning	01493 846420	dam@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Linda Mockford	Governance	01493 846308	lmc@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Donna Summers	Resources	01493 846339	dsummers@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Kate Watts	Environmental Services	01493 846547	kaw@great-yarmouth.gov.uk

Neighbourhood and Communities

Name	Title	Telephone	Email
Holly Notcutt	Neighbourhood Manager	01493 418295	hnotcutt@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Marie Hartley	Culture Sports and Leisure Manager	01493 846354	mlh@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Julie Woods	MESH Neighbourhood Manager	01493 604739	jwoods@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Ellie Marcham	Neighbourhood Manager	01493 845922	emarcham@great-yarmouth.gov.uk

GYB Services

Name	Title	Telephone	Email
Graham Jermyn	Managing Director	01493 742146	graham.jermyn@ncsgrp.co.uk
Amanda Haldron	Support Services Officer/PA	01493 742145	amanda.haldron@ncsgrp.co.uk
Peter Stockwell	Head of Operations	01493 742143	Peter.stockwell@ncsgrp.co.uk
Simon Mutton	Head of Policy and Strategy	01493 742190	simon.mutton@ncsgrp.co.uk
Phil Turner	Waste and Recycling Manager - Operations	01493 742168	phil.turner@ncsgrp.co.uk
Phil Carter	Cleansing Manager	01493 742168	phil.carter@ncsgrp.co.uk
Graham Carpenter	Car Clear Co-ordinator	01493 742162	graham.carpenter@ncsgrp.co.uk
Sheryl Naylor	Assistant Manager - Operations	01493 742156	sheryl.naylor@ncsgrp.co.uk
Lisa Chandler	Support Services Manager	01493 742152	lisa.chandler@ncsgrp.co.uk
Michael Stephenson	Assets Manager	01493 742191	Michael.stephenson@ncsgrp.co.uk
Paul Kelf	Grounds and Leisure Manager	01493 742181	Paul.kelf@ncsgrp.co.uk
George Jarvis	Engineering and Building Manager	01493 742163	George.jarvis@ncsgrp.co.uk
Patrick Tabor	Tree and Landscape Officer	01493 742182	Patrick.tabor@ncsgrp.co.uk

A-Z of services

All the numbers you need if you're living, working or visiting Great Yarmouth.

Most popular

Benefits 01493 846291
Council Tax 01493 846244
Customer & Business Enquiries 01493 856100
Environmental Health 01493 846478
Housing Options 01493 846140
Housing Rents 01493 846233
Housing Repairs 01493 846381
Planning 01493 846430

Lines are open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5pm

Rubbish Collection 01493 742200
Street Services 01493 742200

Lines are open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

Emergency Out of Hours 01493 330369
Email us enquiries@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Fax us on 01493 846285
Send a text message to 07760 166366
Find lots of information on our website
www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk

Advice and Benefits

Council Tax Support/
Housing Benefit 01493 846291

Business

Business Start-up Advice 0800 458 0146
Business Rates Enquiries 01493 846244
Tourism Business Advice 01493 846492
Business Development & Promotion 01493 846108

Communications

Media Enquiries 01493 846513
General Communications 01493 846512
Web Communications 01493 846814
Council and Democracy
Councillor Info/Committee Dates 01493 846307/846309
Freedom of Information 01493 846855
Elections/Register of Electors 01493 846327

Council Tax

Council Tax Enquiries 01493 846244
Payment Line 01493 846117
Cashiers 01493 846266

Environment

Abandoned Vehicles 01493 742200
Clinical Waste 01493 742200
Conservation Areas 01493 846195
Cemeteries and Crematorium 01493 441974
Emergency Management 01493 846478
Flooding 01493 846478
Flytipping 01493 846478

Food Complaints

Food Complaints 01493 846478
Hazardous Waste 01493 846478
Licensing Enquiries (alcohol, entertainment, gambling & taxis) 01493 846530/846201
Pest Control 01493 846478
Pollution (Air, Noise & Water) 01493 846478
Recycling 01493 846409
Refuse Collection 01493 742200
Septic Tank Emptying Service 01493 742200
Trade Waste 01493 742200
Wheeled Bins 01493 742200

Homes and Housing

Yare Care
Alarm Service 01493 330369
Older Person's Community Outreach Service 01493 846655
Disabled Adaptations 01493 846190
Empty Homes 01493 846113
Housing Advice/
Homelessness/Housing Register 01493 846140
Greyfriars House Area Housing Office 01493 846529
Gorleston Area Housing Office 01493 846839
South Yarmouth Area Housing Office 01493 846825

Leisure and Culture

Arts Development 01493 846436
Marina Centre 01493 851521
Phoenix Swimming Pool 01493 664575
Sports Development 01493 846354
Leisure 01493 846354
Play Development 01493 846365

Neighbourhood Matters

Anti-Social Behaviour 0845 605 2222
Community Cohesion 01493 845920
Comeunity (Yarmouth) 01493 845920
Make it Happen (Southtown/Cobholm) 01493 418295
MESH (Gorleston) 01493 604739
Norfolk Rural Community Council 01362 698216

Planning

Applications/Enquiries 01493 846430
Building Regulations 01493 846430
Enforcement 01493 846430
Land Charges 01493 846650
Listed Buildings 01493 846419
Strategic Planning 01493 846626

Transport and Streets

Concessionary Bus Passes 01493 853915/0344 8008020
Car Parks 01493 846358
Street Naming and Numbering 01493 846432

Mayor and Events

Mayor's Secretary 01493 846125
Tourism Enquiries 01493 846346
Event Safety Advisory Group 01493 846343

Norfolk County Council Services

Education or Schools information 0344 800 8001
Highway Safety & Maintenance 0344 800 8009
Library and Museums General Enquiries 0344 800 8006
Registrar of Births, Deaths & Marriages 01493 846646
Social Care 0344 800 8014
Street Lighting 0344 800 8008
Consumer Helpline 08454 04 0506

GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

WARD COUNCILLOR COMPACT

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Compact is to set out the Council's expectations of the role and to define best practice for Ward Councillors.

2. Expectations

The main expectations of the role of Ward Councillor relate to:-

- communication with the public
- identify training needs
- identify areas for scrutiny
- to promote public and community engagement
- be an advocate for local residents
- to be the link between Council officers and local communities.

3. The Council's Commitment

The Council will:-

- provide basic induction training
- provide IT equipment and support to enable Councillors to undertake their role.

4. Role Profile / Job Descriptions

The role profiles and detailed job descriptions for Councillors, Mayor, Leaders, Deputy Leaders, Portfolio Holders, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen and Group Leaders is detailed in Part 7 of the Council's Constitution.