
REPORT OF HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

ELECTED MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

Reason for this Report

1. To provide the Democratic Services Committee with the following revised Role Descriptions for consideration and approval:
 - Elected Member
 - Democratic Services Committee Chair and Member
 - Scrutiny Committee Chair and Member

Background

2. Elected Members have a wide range of roles and responsibilities which they are expected to undertake, and Member Role Descriptions provide a framework and guidance on the responsibilities, purpose and range of activities that Members undertake.
3. Following the introduction of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the WLGA developed a set of generic role descriptions and person specifications for Elected Members. These were generic to any authority and made available as suggestions rather than prescription.
4. Cardiff Council on 19 December 2013 adopted the WLGA Framework Member Role Descriptions and Person Specifications (October 2012) without any amendments.
5. The framework was updated by the WLGA in collaboration with officers from the Member Support Officer Network (MSO) and the Scrutiny Champions Network and republished in 2015.
6. At its last meeting on 01 October 2018 the Democratic Services Committee agreed to establish a working group to review the generic Role Descriptions and ensure that they reflected the roles undertaken by Elected Members in Cardiff and that they were fit for purpose.

Initial Progress

7. Prior to the first meeting of the working group, Democratic Services Officers reviewed the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Role

Descriptions and considered how the documents could be used to effectively support the Elected Members of Cardiff Council in the array roles they undertake. Consideration was also given to the format of the document, its ease of use and how these documents could be tailored to reflect the roles of each Elected Member of Cardiff Council and those of the Independent Members, Registered Representatives and Lay Members appointed to the Council's Committees.

8. The review of role descriptions would also require consultation with key officers, other Elected Members and Committee Chairpersons. The Role Descriptions identified in Paragraph 1 were prioritised with the remainder to be scheduled for consideration as part of the ongoing review.
9. The cross party Working Group met on 10 December 2018 to consider the proposals and amendments identified by officers to the first tranche of role descriptions. The Working Group agreed some of the proposals and identified other changes that were needed. An overview of the outcomes to the initial stage of the review of Role Descriptions is as follows:

General

10. To show that the Role Descriptions had been revised to reflect the roles undertaken by Cardiff Councillors by including:
 - a. a simple Cardiff Council header be added each revised role description.
 - b. a footer to reflect the version and date the document was updated.
11. The Personal Specifications included with some role descriptions would be revised to reflect that they are "Personal Attributes" which Elected Members may find beneficial when undertaking the specified role.
12. The approved role descriptions would be translated into Welsh and uploaded to the internet. This would raise public awareness of the roles and responsibilities of councillors and provide additional information to those members of the public who may be considering standing for office in the future.
13. To enable the Councillor to access their personalised Role Description a copy of their role description would be:
 - a. circulated to them electronically and linked on their profile page
 - b. updated and recirculated by Democratic Services Officers when roles changed i.e. an Elected Member appointed to a different committee, or became a Chairperson etc.

Elected Member Role Description

14. The generic version of this role description did not include any ward information to which a Councillor was elected or the individual roles each Elected Member undertook. It was agreed that the Elected Member role description would be developed as a template which would allow officers to merge an individual Councillor's information into their own personalised Elected Member role description.

15. This template would enable individual names, ward, committees and outside bodies to which the Elected Member was appointed to be included on their personalised Elected Member Role Description. The roles identified on this document would also be linked to the approved role descriptions ensuring that the most up-to-date role descriptions could be easily accessed and reviewed by the Councillor.
16. A Member appointed to a Committee would have a link to the respective Committee Member role description. If that Elected Member was also appointed as the Chairperson of that Committee an additional link to role description for a Chair of that Committee would be added as both role descriptions would be needed to cover the full remit.
17. It was considered that because all Elected Members are Corporate Parents and have a safeguarding responsibility that this be reflected in the Elected Member Role Description. Lead officers from Corporate Parenting and Social Services were contacted to provide suitable information for inclusion in the document.
18. Attached as Appendix A is the Elected Member role description template which will be used as the basis to compile the personalised role descriptions for each Elected Member.

Chair and Member of Democratic Services Committee

19. The Working Group identified minor changes to the role descriptions for the Chair and Member of Democratic Services Committee which have been attached at Appendices B and C respectively.

Chair and Member of a Scrutiny Committee

20. Following an initial review the Role Descriptions for Chair and Member of a Scrutiny Committee were circulated to the Scrutiny Chairpersons for their comments and views. The documents were revised before being considered by the Working Group who made a few further minor amendments. The Scrutiny Chairpersons considered the updated documents which were then agreed and are attached at Appendices D and E respectively for the Committees' consideration.

Ongoing Progress

21. The Role Descriptions for the Chair and Member of the Audit Committee have been shared with the Audit Manager who has requested minor amendments to better reflect the role of the Committee. These revised documents will be considered by the Committee at a self-assessment workshop on 22 January 2019.
22. The Standards and Ethics Committee have been circulated their respective role descriptions for comments and it is hoped that their initial views and comments can be incorporated into updated role descriptions to be considered at the next meeting of the Working Group.

23. The Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee is planning to review its terms of reference. It has been suggested that it would be beneficial for Democratic Services Officers attend this review and to utilise these discussions to develop a Role Description for the Chairperson/Member of the Committee.
24. The Cabinet Office has been contacted with a provisional plan for the review of the Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Members and Assistant Cabinet Members Role Description between April and June 2019.
25. The following Role Descriptions are planned to be included in this review:
- Chair of the Council
 - Chair/Member of a Regulatory Committee or individual role descriptions for:
 - Licensing Committee
 - Planning Committee
 - Public Protection Committee
 - Leader/ Deputy Leader of the Opposition
 - Local Authority School Governor
 - Local Authority School Governor Panel
 - Member Mentor
 - Chair/Member Constitution Committee
 - Chair/Member Council Appeals Committee
 - Chair/Member Employment Conditions Committee
 - Chair/Member Pensions Committee
 - Chair/Member Appointment Committees
 - Lord Mayor/Deputy Lord Mayor
 - Party Group Whip
26. During this review some of the role descriptions may be amalgamated with others whilst additional role descriptions may be identified which will have to be created because they do not currently exist. A plan is being developed to review update or create all relevant Role Descriptions by March 2020 for approval and adoption by Council.

Legal Implications

27. There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Financial Implications

28. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

Recommendations

29. The Committee is recommended to
- a. Consider and agree the revised role descriptions as set out in Appendices A-E;

- b. Note the ongoing progress that has been made regarding the review of role descriptions;
- c. Recommend the revised Role Descriptions at Appendices A-E be submitted to Council for approval and adoption.
- d. Receive an update on the progress being made regarding the review of Role Descriptions at the next meeting of the Committee

GP JONES
HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
08 January 2019

The following Appendices are attached:

- Appendix A - Elected Member Role Description
- Appendix B - Chair of Democratic Services Committee
- Appendix C - Member of Democratic Services Committee
- Appendix D - Chair of a Scrutiny Committee
- Appendix E - Member of a Scrutiny Committee

Background Documents:

- [Welsh Local Government Association \(WLGA\) Framework Member Role Descriptions and Person Specifications 2015](#)