



BEYOND THE CODE

Tick all the statements which apply to you and use the space on the back page to help you decide what you can do to further develop your role.

FIRM FOUNDATIONS

The chair

- 1 Unrestricted access at any time to the chief executive, the monitoring officer and the leaders of each political group.

- 2 A seat in the council chamber in a place that gives recognition to the importance of the role (i.e. not in the public gallery!)

- 3 The right to address the council on any matter that is considered sufficiently important.

- 4 The right to present a report to council either from the committee or, in case of problems within the committee, from the independent members alone.

- 5 The ability to attend any executive or committee meeting without question.

- 6 The expectation that the chair will be invited to all civic functions that other members of the authority attend.

- 7 Access to the council buildings and services equivalent to those enjoyed by elected members.

- 8 A finely tuned sense of political balance and understanding of how to maintain independence while still being able to talk with individual members. Be careful at social or formal gatherings and remember that the only ones that you can safely be seen chatting with are the chief executive and the monitoring officer!

- 9 Contact with parish councils.

continues overleaf

Independent members

- 1 Always remember that the independents are unelected and that the elected members 'own' the council.

- 2 Although appointed by the council, they must also guard their independence and integrity and be aware of the pitfalls of public life.

- 3 They should try and visit committees to see what is going on, especially those with a direct interface with the public such as planning and licensing, since these are the areas of highest risk.

- 4 Ensure that the council's indemnity insurance covers them.

- 5 One of them should be the vice-chair.

- 6 Encourage them to join a forum for independent members and get the council to authorise expenditure to enable attendance.

- 7 Ensure that no member is inhibited by not being able to meet the cost of attendance; even if allowances are not claimed or available, ensure that expenses can be reclaimed.

- 8 Whether it is necessary to have an overall majority is debatable.

Elected members

- 1 Represent the council as a whole.

- 2 Experienced members who can articulate the problems that face them and their colleagues in carrying out their duties and complying with the Code.

- 3 Have authority within their political group so that they can take back messages from the committee and their colleagues will pay attention.



BEYOND THE CODE

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|----|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | The council's constitution. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | The protocols between members and officers. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | The Code of Practice for members and officers dealing with development control matters. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | The terms of reference of the standards committee. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | Members' indemnity and insurance arrangements. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | The manner in which members are appointed to outside bodies. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | The Audit Commission's Best Value Inspection of Planning Services. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | The Candidates' Briefing for May 2005 local election. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | The planning and implementation of the induction of new members 2005. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | Developing member job profiles and developing and monitoring records of members' attendance. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 | Carrying out an ethical audit of the council. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12 | Reviewing and being included in the council's statement of internal control. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13 | Setting the objectives and methods for the review of ethics and probity in town and parish councils. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14 | Dealing as appropriate with matters arising from the Annual Assembly of Standards Committees and from the local forum of independent members. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15 | Providing an independent member to be an external scrutiniser for the petition for a mayoral referendum. | <input type="checkbox"/> |