

# Member Champion Appointments

Report of the Leader

## Recommended:

**That the Councillors, as set out below, be appointed to the following Member Champions roles for 2023/24.**

**Armed Forces**

**Councillor I Jeffrey**

**Community Safety and Resilience**

**Councillor P Lashbrook**

### Summary:

The report provides an overview of the Member Champion Scheme to date and proposes the appointment of two Member Champions for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year.

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 In 2017 Cabinet approved the introduction of a Member Champions scheme in order that it could benefit from the experience, knowledge and interests of non-Cabinet members, in particular thematic areas.
- 1.2 The role of a Member Champion is to act in an advisory capacity to Cabinet in respect of specific areas of responsibility and, in particular, in the development of ideas that will help deliver the aims of the Council's Corporate Plan and Corporate Action Plan.
- 1.3 It was agreed that Cabinet would commission Member Champions on an annual basis within their particular area of responsibility to:
  - Research good practice in other Councils and organisations
  - Liaise with external bodies such as the Local Government Association (LGA) to identify relevant research and ideas that could help further the Council's corporate aims.
  - Consider what impact any proposed changes to Council policy and or, services might have on their specific area of responsibility. This might involve liaising with relevant groups within the Borough.
- 1.4 Cabinet members, in consultation with their Cabinet colleagues, have the ability to request that a Member Champion undertakes work, as described in paragraph 1.3 above, on behalf of Cabinet.
- 1.5 If a Member Champion wishes to instigate a piece of work, the matter will be first discussed with the Leader and the relevant Portfolio Holder. If they are in support of the proposal, the Portfolio Holder will discuss the merits of the proposal with the Head of Service and then present the idea to Cabinet members for consideration and discussion.

- 1.6 If endorsed by Cabinet Members the Member Champion, Portfolio Holder and relevant Head of Service will meet to discuss a way forward.
- 1.7 The Member Champions roles were established specifically to support Cabinet although the champions themselves need not necessarily come from the ruling group.
- 1.8 The roles should not encroach on the independent scrutiny role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or indeed into the role of Cabinet members. Member Champions do not have the authority to commit resources on behalf of the Council or to instruct officers to undertake work on their behalf.
- 1.9 The Member Champions are appointed by Cabinet on an annual basis. The role does not attract a Special Responsibility Allowance.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 In June 2022 the following Member Champions were appointed:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| • Councillor Matthews    | Armed Forces                            |
| • Councillor Gwynne      | Climate Emergency                       |
| • Councillor P Lashbrook | Community Safety and Resilience         |
| • Councillor Baverstock  | Culture and Heritage                    |
| • Councillor Hamilton    | Equality and Diversity                  |
| • Councillor Donnelly    | Member Development/Community Councillor |
| • Councillor Andersen    | Voluntary and Third Sector              |

- 2.2 During the year 2022/23, Member Champions actively participated in work in respect of their particular areas of responsibility to help in the development of ideas and to contribute to particular projects.
- 2.3 During the 2023/24 year Member Champions were not reappointed in order to allow time for consideration of appropriate areas of focus in light of the new corporate plan.

## **3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities**

- 3.1 The role of a Member Champion is to act in an advisory capacity to Cabinet in respect of specific areas of responsibility and, in particular, in the development of ideas that will help deliver the aims of the Council's Corporate Plan and Corporate Action Plan.

## **4 Options**

- 4.1 To not appointment Member Champions for the year 2023/24.
- 4.2 To appoint the two Member Champion positions as identified in the report for the remainder of the year 2023/24.

- 4.3 Following consultation with Cabinet Members and in light of the development of the new Corporate Plan, Member Champion roles were not appointed to at the start of 2023/24 in order to allow consideration of appropriate areas of focus with a view to appointments being made in 2024/25.
- 4.4 The two areas of specialism identified below as Member Champion positions, are ongoing areas that contribute to and support the Council's corporate priorities on an ongoing basis.
- 4.5 In order to continue to provide continued knowledge and expertise in two specific areas it is suggested that the following appointments be made for the remainder of 2023/24:-

4.5.1 Armed Forces Member Champion

This role has been key in the Council's work liaising with the military and veteran communities in the borough. The role in chairing meetings of the Civilian Military Forum in particular has been an important one allowing the continued strengthening of the relationship between the military and the borough's communities.

4.5.2 Community Safety and Resilience Member Champion

This role has been successful in providing an ambassadorial role for the area, in bringing communities together and facilitating nationally recognised work in particular for community resilience. The Council is involved in pilot work as part of the Hampshire response to the Civil Contingencies Act with this member champion role being key to facilitating the ongoing work across our communities.

## **5 Option Appraisal**

- 5.1 Member Champions provide valuable insight into their thematic areas providing advice and support to Cabinet Members in particular areas of work and helping to shape and develop projects.
- 5.2 Member Champions ensure that non-Cabinet Members who have specialist knowledge and experience are able to contribute to policy development.
- 5.3 Is it proposed that the two Member Champions identified in the report be appointed for the remainder of the 2023/24 year to allow the continued contribution of knowledge and experience from non-Cabinet Members.

## **6 Risk Management**

- 6.1 An evaluation of the risks indicate that the existing controls in place mean that no significant risks have been identified at this time.

## **7 Resource Implications**

- 7.1 There are no resourcing implications arising from this report.

## **8 Legal Implications**

8.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **9 Equality Issues**

9.1 No equality issues have been identified.

## **10 Other Issues**

10.1 Community Safety -None

10.2 Environmental Health Issues - None

10.3 Sustainability and Addressing a Changing Climate – None

10.4 Property Issues - None

10.5 Wards/Communities Affected - None

## **11 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation**

11.1 The introduction of Member Champions has involved more members in the process of policy development and at the same time has allowed Cabinet to benefit from the experience, knowledge and interests of non-Cabinet members.

11.2 It is proposed that the two Member Champions be appointed for the remainder of 2023/24 to allow the continued contribution of knowledge and experience from non-Cabinet Members.

11.3 Should other champion roles be identified there is the ability to make additional appointments as necessary.

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

[Member Champion Cabinet Report 18 October 2017](#)

[Minutes from Cabinet on 22 June 2022](#)

### Confidentiality

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

No of Annexes:

None

File Ref:

N/A

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Report to:

Cabinet

Date:

28 February 2024