

Deputy Leader of the County Council

Primary Departmental Links: Links and engagement across all departments of the County Council as required. Additionally, links to partner organisations, business groups and public authorities in Hampshire and the wider South-East area, and at Westminster.

Statutory framework:

By virtue of the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Leader of the Council must appoint one Member of the Executive as Deputy Leader. If for any reason the Leader is unable to act, or the office of Leader is vacant, the Deputy Leader must act in his / her place. This means that in such an event all the Statutory and Constitutional powers of the Leader are vested in the Deputy Leader, including all action to decide, discharge, or implement any Executive Functions of the Leader, plus the power to depute another Executive Member to discharge such responsibilities. In addition, where the Leader is unable to act owing to a conflict of interest, the Deputy Leader is authorised to act, or depute another Executive Member to act. The role, functions and requirements of Deputy Leader are in addition to the individual Executive Member responsibilities held by the Deputy Leader as a Member of Cabinet.

Key outcomes:

The essence of the role is to help and support the Leader, working closely with the Leader to lead and co-ordinate political engagement and to provide political advice and support to the County Council in fulfilment of its extensive statutory responsibilities.

The need for robust, resilient and effective political capacity is critical as the County Council seeks to manage ongoing demand and cost pressures and play its part in the wider South-East and national political arena, and private business sector.

Key Functional Areas:

- To directly support, and where appropriate, act on behalf of the Leader on all aspects of the County Council's work, and wider political, community and business network and economy.
- To support the development of and maintain political links with key partner organisations such as district and borough councils within Hampshire and neighbouring councils and unitary authorities, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority ('HIOWFRA'), the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Hampshire Constabulary.

- To attend with the Leader, deputising for the Leader as required at meetings with other Hampshire district/borough council and unitary authority leaders on the proposed formation of a 'County Deal' for the wider Hampshire area. In addition, promoting the County Deal project with Central Government.
- To attend meetings of other strategic organisations/forums the County Council is represented on with, or on behalf of the Leader, deputising for the Leader as required:
 - County Councils Network (CCN)
 - Enterprise M3 LEP Board
 - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Government Association~
 - Local Government Association (LGA) General Assembly
 - South-East 7 Board
 - South-East Councils
 - South-East Strategic Leaders
 - Southampton Port Consultative Committee
- To attend internal Cabinet and Council briefing meetings, to provide support to the Leader aiding the resilience of the County Council.
- To lead on political projects as directed by the Leader.
- Assist the Leader and wider Cabinet colleagues in making representations as appropriate on areas of regional and national policy development.
- Promoting the County Council's objectives policies and priorities, and associated partnerships as a key contribution to ensuring the welfare and improvement of outcomes residents and communities in Hampshire.

Scale of financial gearing/impact of work undertaken:

The role encompasses a broad range of statutory services requiring engagement across a range of stakeholders.

The County Council has a gross revenue budget of some £2.4bn in 2022/23, which continues to come under increasing demand and cost pressures. The County Council has further savings targets of £80m by April 2023, which must be met on top of the £540m of savings already achieved since 2010. This role of Deputy Leader plays an important part in supporting the County Council's interface with its stakeholders and the public to ensure that decisions on what the County Council can and cannot provide in the future are informed by the views of residents and service users. This applies equally to engagement on new ways of working, as the County Council seeks to maximise the positive innovations arising from the pandemic.

N.B. Context

Hampshire County Council is the third largest Shire County in the country, serving 1.4 million residents.