

Wirral Council's

INDUCTION GUIDE

FOR NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS

2023 - 2027

DRAFT

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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The initial welcome and introduction is one of the most important aspects of a new Council Member's induction and so we encourage you to attend our Welcome Meeting on the 10 May 2023 as the first step on your journey as a Wirral Council Member. Your term of office is for four years until May 2027.

Members are crucial to the Wirral Plan 2021 - 2026. You bring with you very different experiences, skills, and knowledge of everyday life. That is why we like to spend time getting to know you and letting you know how we can work as one team to deliver a better future for the people of Wirral.

We have produced this Induction Guide to support you in your first few months as a Wirral Councillor. Our aim is to include the basics of what you need to know: from committee meetings, decision making, and key contacts within the Council, through to the IT that is vital for fulfilling your role.

As a new Member of Wirral Council, you will be offered a range of development opportunities, in a planned and supported way, to help you through your first few months. You will have the opportunity to attend relevant learning and development events to support you in your role as a Ward Councillor and as a Community Leader for Wirral. The Members Learning and Development Strategy has specifically been developed for your cohort to aid your development.



Paul Satoor
Chief Executive

The Councillor's Role

As a democratically elected local representative, you have a unique and privileged position - and the potential to make a real difference to people's lives.

The role of a Councillor means that every day you will be expected to balance the needs of your local area, your residents and voters, community groups, local businesses, your political party (if you belong to one) and the Council. All will make legitimate demands on your time - on top of your personal commitments to family, friends, and workplace.

As the local elected representative, you will engage with residents and groups on a wide range of different issues and take on an important community leadership role. At the Council, your overriding duty is to the Borough as a whole and you will contribute to the development of policies and strategies, budget setting, and be involved in scrutinising decisions. You may also make decisions on planning or licensing applications.

Representing your local area

A Councillor's primary role is to represent their ward and the people who live and work in it.

Councillors provide a bridge between the community and the Council. As well as being an advocate for your local residents and signposting them to the right people at the Council, you will need to keep them informed about the issues that affect them.

In order to understand and represent local views and priorities, you need to build strong relationships and encourage local people to make their views known and engage with you and the Council. Good communication and engagement are central to being an effective Councillor.

As a local Councillor, your residents will expect you to:

- respond to their queries and investigate their concerns (casework);
- communicate Council decisions that affect them;
- know your patch and be aware of any problems;
- know and work with representatives of local organisations, interest groups and businesses;
- represent their views at Council meetings; and
- lead local campaigns on their behalf.

Community leadership

Community leadership is at the heart of modern local government. Councils work in partnership with local communities and organisations - including the public, voluntary, community and private sectors - to develop a vision for their local area, working collaboratively to improve services and quality of life for residents. May 2019 saw the launch of a new model for community engagement that enables Councillors to work in a way that responds to the needs of their local community.

Developing Council Policy

Councils need clear strategies and policies to enable them to achieve their vision for the area, make the best use of resources and deliver services that meet the needs of local communities. As a Member of the Council, you will contribute to the development of these policies and strategies, bringing the views and priorities of your local area to the debate. How you do this will depend on the committees and forums you are appointed to. The policies contained in the Council's Policy Framework must, however, be signed off by the Council on which every Councillor sits.

Further responsibilities

Alongside the opportunities to improve life in your local communities there are additional responsibilities that fall upon you as you exercise your role.

You commit to adhere to a Code of Conduct, you must make balanced and legal decisions, you must adhere to the law when handling personal information, and more.

Our Induction Programme is intended to highlight these potential pitfalls and to protect you from the consequences.

The 21st Century Councillor

A major study has been undertaken looking at the current context and demands on Councillors at a time of budget reductions and the changing public sector landscape.

The study looked at the roles, skills and support needed to enable individual Councillors to undertake their crucial front-line role of making connections with their communities and building a strong democratic place.

We are looking at the themes of the research to contribute to the development of our support for Councillors.

There is also a challenge for Councillors to think about how best you can be supported to be actively engaged in shaping the future.

You can access the full research report at <https://21stcenturypublicservant.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/21st-century-councillor.pdf>

The Local Government Association (LGA) New Councillor Hub

This online resource is designed as a quick reference guide to provide you with the essential information that you need to know as a Councillor: www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/highlighting-political-leadership



THE BENEFITS OF INDUCTION FOR NEW MEMBERS

This section explains more about the induction you will receive as a newly elected Member.

Why Induction is Important

There are enormous benefits in adopting a structured approach to introducing a newly elected Member to their role as a Councillor. Everyone gains - the Council, the community, and individual members of the public.

Councillors need training and development to carry out their varied and demanding duties. Induction is fundamental to the development of newly elected Members.

Benefits include:

- A speedier contribution by the elected Member in carrying out their ward representative and wider roles.
- Speedier resolution of ward problems and more informed decision making.
- Time saved (things are not learned through trial and error, others are not interrupted at what might be inconvenient times and being informed from the start means less time is taken correcting mistakes).
- Less frustration as Members know what is expected of them.
- Members know where to go for help/action.
- Improved communications between Members and Officers.
- Members who are confident about and can support what the Council does.
- Evidence that we help and support newly elected Members carry out their role in the same way we would an employee.
- Ensuring Members comply with the law - both in decision making and in handling personal information.

The Induction Process

We aim to help newly elected Members to understand their role and carry out their duties effectively. This will ensure that we can all contribute to achieving the Council's vision and pledges set out in the Wirral Plan.

It is important to note and acknowledge that the greatest impact on the confidence of newly elected Members will be the welcome and support they receive from other Members and Officers with whom they come into contact.

The induction process in Wirral will welcome newly elected Members to the Council, outline the support available and provide information to help develop an understanding of:

- How the Council operates;
- The elected Members' roles and responsibilities;
- How this fits in to what the Council is trying to achieve - Wirral Plan;
- Issues facing the Council;
- Codes, protocols and guidance which apply to elected Members; and
- Member support.

THE WIRRAL PLAN

Wirral's strategic ambition and priorities for the Borough were brought together in October 2021 when Wirral Council unanimously agreed the Wirral Plan 2026. The Plan was based on what people told us matter, and in it we set out our stall and commit to what we will deliver over the next five years.

The vision for the Wirral Plan 2021-26 is:

Equity for People and Place:

To create equity for people and place and opportunities for all to secure the best possible future for our residents, communities and businesses.

The Wirral Plan focuses on reducing inequalities across Wirral as we all work to recover from the pandemic, physically, emotionally, financially. We will use this unique point in time to ensure Wirral's recovery is on the right track to create a fairer and more prosperous place for people to live and work; making sure we meet and even exceed our obligations in responding to the Climate Emergency; and tackling inequalities and building a fairer, more prosperous Wirral where anyone can achieve their aspirations and share in the future successes of the borough.

The thematic priorities for the Wirral Plan 2026 are:



High level thematic priorities remain broadly the right ones, but further work is underway to agree short term deliverables for the coming year and align these with the emerging Improvement Plan. Further engagement will take place in Spring 2022 so that Members can shape and agree these specific actions and priorities.

THE PEOPLE STRATEGY

Wirral is a Member led Council, setting the direction with big ambitions for the Borough. Councillors in Wirral serve Wirral residents, helping them raise and achieve their aspirations for the community, supporting wealth, health and quality of life. We recognise that the Council cannot do this alone, and as a Councillor you will act as an ambassador for the Council, influencing and working with our communities and the broader public, private and community/voluntary sectors.

Fundamental to the ambitions of the Council are for all within the Council - both Councillors and Council employees - to work together with residents and partner agencies. We need to continue to develop skills that allow us to work collaboratively, influencing and supporting our partners to work towards our common goals and to deliver better outcomes for our community.

Local Government is set in a fast-changing environment. We recognise that Members need to be provided with the opportunity to develop the tools and skills needed to deliver a challenging agenda. The Member Learning & Development Programme, of which the Induction Programme set out in the following pages is a key part, aims to provide Members with the tools and learning they need to mobilise local communities, grow community capacity, and support local innovation.

Council employees are essential for making the Council's ambitions a reality and achieving the goals, priorities and policies set by Councillors. Our People Strategy sets the direction for how we will enable the delivery of the Wirral Plan through our people.

There are 5 strands to the People Strategy:

Talent - we will seek to attract diverse and talented people and retain them by recognising and rewarding their success and contribution while supporting their personal and professional development.

Leadership - we will continue to develop and invest in our leaders and managers to ensure they have the skills they need to lead the organisation through future challenge. Our leaders will continue to be visible across the Council and will listen, lead and engage with compassion, openness and honesty.

Values, behaviours and performance - we have a clear set of values and behaviours that our people bring to life in their work. We will ensure that all our people understand how their role contributes to delivering the best outcomes for our residents and are motivated to perform at their best.

Embracing change - we will develop opportunities for people to collaborate, problem solve, and innovate across the Council and involve our workforce and stakeholders in shaping the future. We will equip managers to value our people and help them to embrace change.

Wellbeing - we will continue a two-way conversation to create an environment where our staff feel happy, motivated and healthy at work. Our leaders and managers will have the right skills and tools to embed health, safety and wellbeing across the organisation and we will ensure all staff have the right training to do their job safely.



SKILLS FOR WIRRAL COUNCIL MEMBERS: MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME

This induction programme is intended to best equip councillors whilst maximising the degree to which they can work effectively as a Leader. The Programme places Councillors as Community Leaders and at the heart of effective delivery.

The training sessions detailed below will be provided as part of the Induction programme for the cohort of Members who are newly elected in the May 2023 Local Elections.

Some of the courses are open to all elected Members, while others provide mandatory training for membership of certain committees such as Planning and Licensing.

These are indicated as ● New Members, ▲ All Members, and ■ Committee Specific Training.

- **Microsoft Teams Training**
- **Being a Councillor - Code of Conduct**
- ▲ **Finance Training**
- ▲ **Members' Portal - Casework Management**
- ▲ **General Data Protection Regulations Training**
- ▲ **Social Media Training**
- ▲ **Personal Safety and Member Welfare Training**
- ▲ **Committee System and Decision Making Training**
- ▲ **Wirral Council's Declared Environment and Climate Emergency**
- ▲ **Mental Wellbeing and Welfare**
- ▲ ■ **Planning Committee Training**
- ▲ ■ **Licensing Training**
- ▲ ■ **Audit and Risk Management Committee Training**
- ▲ ■ **Pension Committee Training**
- ▲ ■ **Corporate Parenting Training**

Accessing the Training Library and Members Portal (Flo):

To access the Library, first log in to your Members' Portal account. You can access the Members Portal from the intranet, or by scrolling to the very bottom of the Council website and clicking the 'Councillor Portal' hyperlink. Once on your Portal homepage, scroll down to the 'Tools & Resources' section and click on the 'Training for Councillors' icon.

When you click on this icon, you will be taken through to 'Flo' whereby you can access a collection of training videos and resources. If you have any issues accessing Flo or have further questions, please contact Vicky Simpson, Senior Members Support Officer, who will be happy to help.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Professional • Accountable • Customer Focused • Ambitious

The Chief Executive and the Chief Executive's Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) provide leadership, professional advice and support to Members and wider council officers.

The Strategic Leadership Team leads the delivery of the Council's policies and procedures in accordance with the strategic aims and objectives agreed by the Council.

Chief Executive of Wirral Council is Paul Satoor

Email: paulsatoor@wirral.gov.uk

Assistant Chief Executive is David Armstrong

Email: davidarmstrong@wirral.gov.uk

Director of Neighbourhood Services is Nicola Butterworth

Email: nicolabutterworth@wirral.gov.uk

Director of Children's Services is Simone White

Email: simonewhite@wirral.gov.uk

Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) is Jill Travers

Email: jilltravers@wirral.gov.uk

Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) is Matthew Bennett

Email: matthewbennett1@wirral.gov.uk

Director of Resources is Shaer Halewood

Email: shaerhalewood@wirral.gov.uk

Director of Adults' Care and Health and Strategic Commissioning is Graham Hodkinson

Email: grahamhodkinson@wirral.gov.uk

Director of Regeneration and Place is Dave Hughes

Email: davidhughes@wirral.gov.uk

Director of Public Health is Dave Bradburn

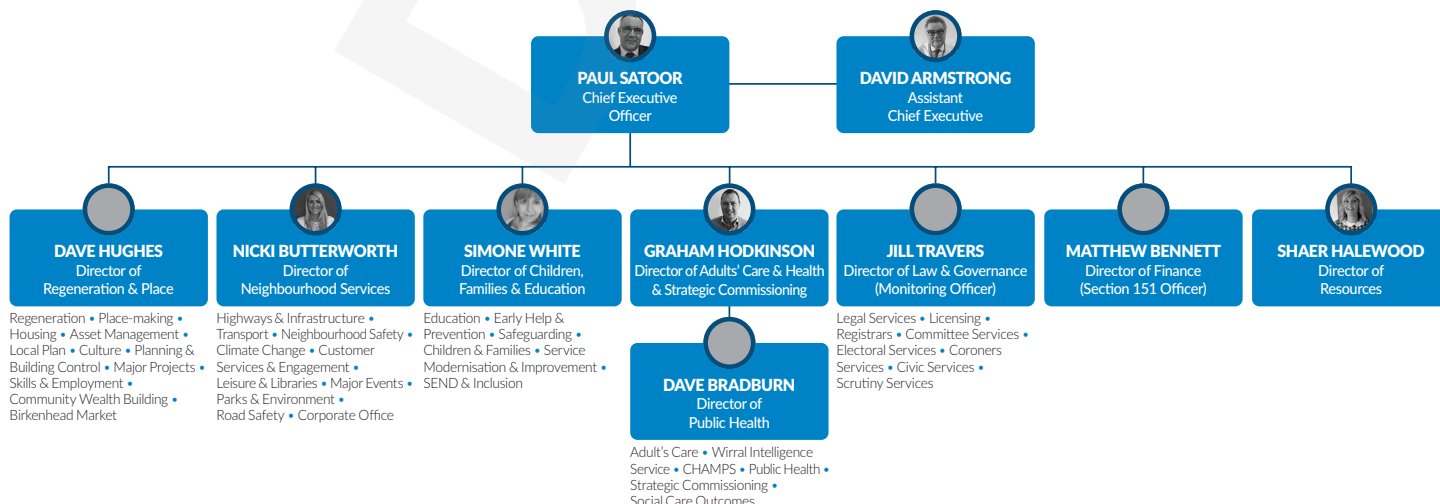
Email: davebradburn@wirral.gov.uk

Our Vision:

To secure the best future for our residents, defined by the community prosperity we create and supported by our excellent people and services.

We are working together to deliver:

Inclusive Economy. Sustainable Environment. Safe & Pleasant Communities. Brighter Futures. Active & Healthy Lives



Key Service Contacts

**Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service),
Paul Satoor**

Email: paulsatoor@wirral.gov.uk

Assistant Chief Executive, David Armstrong

Email: davidarmstrong@wirral.gov.uk

**Director of Law and Governance
(Monitoring Officer) is Jill Travers**

Email: jilltravers@wirral.gov.uk

Resources

**Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer),
Matthew Bennett**

Email: matthewbennett1@wirral.gov.uk

**Director of Resources,
Shaer Halewood**

Email: shaerhalewood@wirral.gov.uk

**Director of Merseyside Pension Fund,
Peter Wallach**

Email: peterwallach@wirral.gov.uk

**Assistant Director: Human Resources &
Organisational Development, Tony Williams**

Email: tonywilliams@wirral.gov.uk

**Assistant Director: Finance & Investment,
Daniel Kirwan**

Email: danielkirwan@wirral.gov.uk

Neighbourhoods

**Director of Neighbourhood Services,
Nicola Butterworth**

Email: nicolabutterworth@wirral.gov.uk

**Assistant Director: Parks & Environment,
Colin Clayton**

Email: colinclayton@wirral.gov.uk

**Assistant Director: Highways & Infrastructure,
Simon Fox**

Email: simonfox@wirral.gov.uk

**Assistant Director: Neighbourhood Safety &
Transport, Mark Camborne**

Email: markcamborne@wirral.gov.uk

**Assistant Director: Leisure, Libraries & Customer
Engagement, Andy McCartan**

Email: andrewmccartan@wirral.gov.uk

Children, Families & Education

**Director of Children, Families & Education,
Simone White**

Email: simonewhite@wirral.gov.uk

**Assistant Director: Children & Families,
Kerry Mehta (acting)**

Email: kerrymehta@wirral.gov.uk

**Assistant Director: Early Help & Prevention,
Elizabeth Hartley**

Email: elizabethhartley@wirral.gov.uk

**Assistant Director: Education,
James Backhouse**

Email: jamesbackhouse@wirral.gov.uk

Adults' Care & Health and Strategic Commissioning

Director of Adults' Care & Health and Strategic Commissioning, Graham Hodgkinson
Email: grahamhodkinson@wirral.gov.uk

Assistant Director: Care & Health Commissioning People, Jason Oxley
Email: jasonoxley@wirral.gov.uk

Director of Public Health, Dave Bradburn
Email: davebradburn@wirral.gov.uk

Assistant Director: Consultant in Public Health, Elspeth Anwar
Email: elspethanwar@wirral.gov.uk

Assistant Director: Consultant in Public Health, Jane Harvey
Email: janeharvey2@wirral.gov.uk

Regeneration & Place

Director of Regeneration & Place, Dave Hughes
Email: davidhughes@wirral.gov.uk

Assistant Director: Special Projects, David Ball
Email: davidball@wirral.gov.uk

Assistant Director: Chief Regeneration Officer, Sally Shah (acting)
Email: sallyshah@wirral.gov.uk

Assistant Director: Asset Management & Investment, (vacant)
N/A

Assistant Director: Housing, (vacant)
N/A

Assistant Director: Chief Planner, Kathleen Lawless (interim)
Email: kathleenlawless@wirral.gov.uk

Assistant Director: Culture & Visitor Economy, (seconded)
N/A

Organisational Support - Legal and Democratic & Member Services

Legal and Democratic & Member Services advise the Council on matters relating to Members' conduct and the Members' Register of Interests, Member support and matters relating to Council decision-making arrangements, and the recording of decisions.

Committee Services support the practical arrangements for meetings of the Council and its Committees. Any member of the team can be contacted with enquiries about forthcoming meetings.

The team maintains Wirral Council's Calendar of Meetings which can be accessed via the Intranet.

Here you will be able to find out about the various Council Committees. You will also be able to find out about the Committees you have been appointed to sit on and examine agendas and minutes of any meeting.

Jill Travers

Director of Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Email: jilltravers@wirral.gov.uk

Vicki Shaw

Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Email: vickishaw@wirral.gov.uk

Steve Fox

Head of Democratic & Member Services

Email: stevefox@wirral.gov.uk

Daniel Sharples

Democracy Business Manager

Email: danielsharples@wirral.gov.uk

Anna Perrett

Principal Democratic Services Officer:

Policy Support & Member Support

Email: annaperret@wirral.gov.uk

Mike Jones

Principal Democratic & Member Services Officer

Email: michaeljones1@wirral.gov.uk

Ward Surgeries / Ward Meetings

Details of any Ward Surgeries that you hold should be passed to Committee Services so that they can advertise them on the Council website.

Organisational Support - General

Member Support Officers

Political Groups have been allocated Council Officers to act as support to the political groups.

The Member Support Officers acts as a point of first contact and provides a range of administrative and support services.

Member Support Officers, (vacant x2)

N/A

Contacts

Leader of the Council and Largest Group

Please contact Gill Pinch through Teams or on

Tel: 0151 691 8068

Email: gillpinch@wirral.gov.uk

Second Largest Group

Please contact Andrea Shillinglaw on

Tel: 0151 691 8652

Email: andreashillinglaw@wirral.gov.uk

All Other Groups

Please contact Vicky Simpson on

Tel: 0151 691 8271

Email: victoriasimpson@wirral.gov.uk

Accessibility For Disabled Councillors

The Council has a legal duty under The Equality Act 2010 to make any reasonable adjustments you need to carry out your work as a Councillor. You will be asked upon your election if you require any reasonable adjustments to be made in order for you to effectively carry out your work as an elected member. Examples of this may be access to specialist equipment or adaptations to your working environment.

You are not responsible for the costs of any reasonable adjustments. The document below supplied by the Local Government Association provides further information.

https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Improving%20access%20to%20local%20government%20elected%20office%20for%20disable%20people_0.pdf

Identity Card

You will be provided with a council identity card, which will also act as a means of entry to appropriate council buildings.

ICT

You will be provided with ICT equipment in order to fulfil your role and will have the opportunity to attend relevant training were necessary. You will be required to sign a declaration for all equipment provided stating that you abide by the Council's ICT requirements.

The Council now holds paperless meetings. Unless it has been agreed for Members to receive paper copies of reports because of medical or other reasons, you will receive all your agenda papers for meetings by a link to the Council's intranet via email.

However, the Council is required by regulations to seek your consent to the forwarding of the summons/agenda for meetings by electronic means. The summons/agendas for a meeting must specify the time and place of the meeting, along with detail of the business to be transacted. The reports accompanying summons/agenda are not covered by these Regulations.

You will be requested to sign a form to provide confirmation of your consent to receive the summons/agenda for meetings by electronic means.

Postal Service

Any correspondence relating to your Council role can be mailed and the cost of the postage will be borne by the Council. However, please remember to affix the correct postage for any personal or non-council related mail you may wish to send.

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