



Appointment of Members to Bracknell Forest Independent Remuneration Panel

Information for applicants

August 2011

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1 Introduction

Thank you for your enquiry about Bracknell Forest Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

This pack provides information on the operation of the Council, and the role of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Hopefully, it gives you the information you need to help you decide whether to apply to be a member of the Panel but, if you need any further information, please contact Kirsty Hunt, Democratic and Registration Services, Bracknell Forest Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1AQ.

Tel: (01344) 353108
or email kirsty.hunt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

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2 Background information – Bracknell Forest Council

Management Structure

The Council's Management Team comprises:

Chief Executive	Timothy Wheadon
Assistant Chief Executive	Victor Nicholls
Director of Adult Social Care & Housing	Glyn Jones
Director of Children, Young People and Learning	Janette Karklins
Director of Corporate Services	Alison Sanders
Director of Environment, Culture & Communities	Vincent Paliczka

The Management Team works closely with the Executive to determine and deliver the Council's priorities. A copy will be provided or, it can be viewed on the Council's web site.

Budget

The Council's revenue budget is approximately £60 million (excluding schools) and it employs around 4,200 staff based at the Time Square, Easthampstead House and Seymour House Offices in Bracknell and a number of outlying offices.

Political Composition

Bracknell Forest Council comprises 42 elected Members covering 18 wards.

Councillors are elected to the Council every four years and the next elections are due to be held in May 2015.

The current political make-up is as follows:

Conservative 40
Labour 2

Roles of Councillors

Councillors are democratically accountable to the residents of their ward.

Their roles include:

- collectively being policy makers and carrying out a number of strategic and corporate functions
- representing their communities and bringing their views into the Council's decision making process i.e. becoming the advocates for constituents in resolving particular concerns or grievances
- balancing different interests identified within the ward and representing the ward as a whole
- being involved in decision making
- being available to represent the Council on other bodies
- maintaining the highest standards of conduct and ethics
- participating in training and development to assist them in their role

Role profiles for Councillors can be found at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/your-council/yc-members-of-the-council/yc-members-roles.htm>

The Constitution

The Council has a written Constitution which sets out in detail the procedures which have to be followed to ensure that decisions are made efficiently and in a manner which is transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these processes are required by law, whilst others are a matter for the Council to choose. The Constitution is on the Your Council pages of our website.

The Mayor

The Mayor represents the Borough at Civic and official functions and also chairs meetings of the full Council.

The Executive

The Executive is responsible for most day-to-day decisions. The Executive is selected by the Leader of the Council and is currently made up of eight Councillors. The Executive is responsible for implementing the budget and policy framework approved by the Council. At Bracknell, portfolio holders have executive powers to make decisions on matters affecting their portfolio. The Executive as a whole must consider and make decisions on any matter of importance that affects more than one of the Executive portfolios.

The Leader and Individual Portfolio Holders

The Leader (who is elected by the Council) allocates portfolios to each of the Executive Members. The current allocation of duties is as follows:

Executive Member for Council Strategy and Community Cohesion (Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Executive)

The **Executive Member for Council Strategy and Community Cohesion** is responsible for the following functions, to the extent that they comprise Executive Functions:

- 1 The formulation and implementation of the Sustainable Community Plan.
- 2 Making arrangements for the formulation of proposals for the annual Revenue and Capital Budgets and of proposals for the level of Council Tax.
- 3 The powers and duties of the Council for the collection of local taxes.
- 4 The co-ordination of annual service planning, review and performance monitoring.
- 5 Matters relating to the Local Government Association and regional groupings.
- 6 The management, maintenance, improvement, development and redevelopment of Bracknell Town Centre, insofar as these functions are not the responsibility of the Bracknell Town Centre Regeneration Committee. Authority to vary the Development Agreement with BRP regarding the early transfer of land and property interests acquired under the CPO.
- 7 The appointment of Members to Committees of the Executive, including, where the Executive Member for Council Strategy considers it appropriate, the appointment of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of those Committees.
- 8 The determination of the Terms of Reference of the Committees of the Executive.
- 9 The appointment of Members to external bodies, whose functions are the sole responsibility of Bracknell Forest's Executive.
- 10 To act as Chairman of meetings of the Executive.
- 11 The formulation and implementation of the Community Cohesion Strategy.
- 12 The Council's arrangements for community engagement particularly in relation to young people, vulnerable adults, black and minority ethnic groups and "hard to reach" groups.
- 13 The Council's arrangements to meet the requirements of Equalities legislation.

Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection

The **Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection** is responsible for the following functions, to the extent that they comprise Executive Functions:

- 1 Overall performance and effective operation of the Corporate Services Department (Democratic and Registration Services, Information and Communications Technology, Legal Services and Customer Services.)
- 2 The development and introduction of Information and Communications Technology and its use.
- 3 The Council's powers under Sections 29 and 38 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

- 4 The Council's powers under Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 [the promotion of well-being.]
- 5 The provision, maintenance and development of leisure services and facilities.
6. Community Centres.
- 7 Management and promotion of rights of way and recreational routes for the Borough.
- 8 Nature and Heritage Conservation.
- 9 Tourism information, initiatives and services.
- 10 Recreational Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside.
- 11 Tree management
- 12 Measures to promote the health of Borough residents.
- 13 Arts and Cultural Activities.
- 14 The corporate public relations, marketing and communications function.
- 15 The Coroner's Service, Cemeteries and the Crematorium.
- 16 Overall performance of the Environment, Culture and Communities Department relating to those parts for which the Executive Member is responsible.
- 17 Emergency Planning
- 18 The formulation and implementation of the Safer Communities Strategy.
- 19 Liaison with the South Central Ambulance Services NHS Foundation Trust
- 20 Liaison with the Thames Valley Police
- 21 CCTV systems in public places.
- 22 Liaison with the Town and Parish Councils in the Borough.
- 23 Environmental standards including:-
 - Food and safety control
 - Control and monitoring of pollution and statutory nuisances
 - Infectious disease and pest control
- 24 Trading standards including:-
 - Weights and measures.
 - Fair trading.
 - Trade description.
 - Consumer credit and safety.
 - Consumer complaints.
- 25 Health and Safety including:-
 - Health, safety and welfare of people at, or affected by, work.
 - Promotion of health education and home safety.
- 26 Removal and disposal of abandoned vehicles.
- 27 Any functions under any licensing legislation which are Executive Functions and which do not fall within the remit of any other Executive Member.
- 28 The Library and Information Services.

Executive Member for Education

The **Executive Member for Education** is responsible for the following functions, to the extent that they comprise Executive Functions:

- 1 The Council's responsibilities for schools and related matters including extended schools, admissions and transport.
- 2 The Council's responsibilities for Adult and Community Learning.
- 3 The overall performance of the Children, Young People and Learning Department in respect of these functions.

Executive Member for Planning, Transport and Economic Development

The **Executive Member for Planning, Transport and Economic Development** is responsible for the following functions, to the extent that they comprise Executive Functions:

- 1 The functions of the Council under Town and Country Planning legislation.
- 2 The functions of the Council as Local Highway Authority.
- 3 The functions of the Council as Streets Authority (including on-street parking.)
- 4 The functions of the Council under the Road Traffic Regulation legislation and in respect of road closures.
- 5 The functions of the Council relating to Public Rights of Way, cycle routes and pedestrian ways
- 6 Road Safety
- 7 The parking of vehicles in respect of Council functions and Orders where these relate to the public highway (other than abandoned vehicles and street trading.)
- 8 The functions of the Council under the Transport Act 1985 and making representations and objections in respect of applications under HGV licensing legislation.
- 9 The functions of the Council under the Building Acts.
- 10 The overall performance of the Environment, Culture and Communities Department relating to those functions for which the Executive Member is responsible.
- 11 To represent the Council on regional and sub-regional planning and transportation matters.
- 12 To represent the Council on the Strategic Housing Partnership and the Strategic Transport Partnership.
- 13 The functions of the Council under the Traffic Management Act 2004
- 14 Car Park management and maintenance (including on-street schemes and the provision of car parking solutions.)

Executive Member for the Environment

The **Executive Member for the Environment** is responsible for the following functions, to the extent that they comprise Executive Functions:

- 1 Waste and recycle collection
- 2 Public cleansing, including street sweeping, cesspools and private sewers.
- 3 Bracknell Market
- 4 Public Conveniences
- 5 Climate change (mitigation and adaptation)
- 6 Weighbridges
- 7 Rural hedges and ditches
- 8 Environmental Improvement Schemes
- 9 Waste disposal and recycling
- 10 Grounds maintenance, other than countryside maintenance and excluding tree management.
- 11 The overall performance of the Environment, Culture and Communities Department relating to those functions for which the Executive Member is responsible.

Executive Member for Children and Young People

The **Executive Member for Children and Young People** is responsible for the following functions, to the extent that they comprise Executive Functions:

- 1 The Council's responsibilities for children's social care and related matters.
- 2 The Early Years and Childcare Service.
- 3 Children's Centres.
- 4 To represent the Council on the Berkshire Adoption Panel.
- 5 To represent the Council on the Bracknell Forest and Windsor and Maidenhead Joint Fostering Panel.
- 6 Liaison with other providers of services to children and young people.
- 7 Overall performance of the Children, Young People and Learning Department in respect of these functions.
- 8 Communicating with, liaising with, and championing the needs of looked after children in the borough.

Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing (currently also Deputy Leader of the Council)

The **Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing** is responsible for the following functions, to the extent that they comprise Executive Functions:

- 1 The Council's functions as a Housing Authority.
- 2 The overall performance of the Adult Social Care Department.
- 3 Liaison and joint commissioning with providers of health care services.
- 4 To represent the Council on the Supporting People Commissioning body
- 5 To represent the Council on the Health and Social Care Partnership Board
- 6 To represent the Council as a member for the South East Councils with Adult Services responsibilities

Executive Member for Finance, Resources and Assets (currently also Vice Chairman of the Executive)

The **Executive Member for Finance, Resources and Assets** is responsible for the following functions, to the extent that they comprise Executive Functions:

- 1 The formulation of the Council's annual revenue budget, and its implementation following its approval by Council.
- 2 The formulation of the Council's annual capital budget, and its implementation following its approval by Council.
- 3 The maximisation of the assets and revenue of the Council via contributions under Section 106 arrangements.
- 4 Financial (including investment and insurance) Management.
- 5 To act as lead Member in relation to risk management.
- 6 Major capital projects
- 7 The realisation of capital resources
- 8 The management of all property and land owned by the Council other than that which is used as operational property for functions which are allocated to another Executive Member.
- 9 Strategic and planned maintenance of all Council properties other than schools and the Council's housing stock.
- 10 The provision of, maintenance and management of the Council's central fleet of vehicles and mechanical equipment and plant.
- 11 To act as deputy chairman at meetings of the Executive.
- 12 Overall performance and effective operation of the Corporate Services Department (Corporate Property, Financial Services and Human Resources)

Overview and Scrutiny

The main role of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission is to ensure that robust and efficient arrangements for the delivery of the overview and scrutiny function in Bracknell Forest are put in place.

The main task of the overview and scrutiny panels is to conduct in-depth policy reviews identified in the work programme, but they will also monitor the performance of one or two allocated directorates.

There are five O & S committees in Bracknell Forest:

- Overview and Scrutiny Commission
- Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel (run in partnership with Slough Borough Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead)

Each Panel is responsible for setting its own work programme for the year.

Other Committees

The following committees etc have been appointed by the Council to exercise its regulatory functions and those functions which are not exercisable by the Executive.

- Appeals Committee
- Education Governor Appointments Committee
- Employment Committee
- Governance and Audit Committee
- Licensing and Safety Committee
- Licensing Panels
- Planning and Highways Committee

3 Bracknell Forest Independent Remuneration Panel

In 2001 it became statutory for councils to appoint an independent review panel to make recommendations to the council as to the amount of certain allowances and expenses payable to elected members. The Panel bases its report on evidence it receives on councillor roles and responsibilities and submits its recommendations to the council. Copies of previous reports of the Panel can be viewed on the Council's website. While statutory the Panel's recommendations are in most part advisory but the Council must pay regard to the Panel's recommendations in determining its scope and levels of allowances and expenses received by Councillors.

Remit of the Panel

To make recommendations to the council on:

- the amount of basic allowance that should be payable to its elected members
- has to pay regard to regional/national salary rates or average allowances paid in similar authorities, etc.
- the responsibilities or duties which should lead to the payment of a special responsibility allowance and as to the amount of such an allowance
- the duties for which a travelling and subsistence allowance can be paid and as to the amount of this allowance
- the amount of co-optees' allowance
- whether the authority's allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants and if it does make such a recommendation, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined
- whether any allowance should be backdated to the beginning of a financial year in the event of the scheme being amended
- whether annual adjustments of allowance levels may be made by reference to an index, and, if so, for how long such a measure should run
- which members of an authority are to be entitled to pensions in accordance with a scheme made under section 7 of the Superannuation Act 1972
- treating basic allowance and special responsibility allowance as amounts in respect of which such pensions are payable

Composition of the Panel

The Panel for Bracknell Forest comprises of five independent members.

At Council on 27 February 2008 it was determined that these appointments should have differing terms of office in order to maintain experience on the panel:

There is currently two vacancies.

Remuneration

Membership of the Panel is not a salaried position but Panel Members will be paid a day session fee to cover their expenses and time commitment. This day session fee is based on the mean male non-manual wage, as set out in the annual New Earnings Survey.

4 Role of Parish and Town Council Independent Remuneration Panel

In addition, the Bracknell Forest Independent Remuneration Panel may be called upon to make recommendations on remuneration in respect of Parish and Town Councils within the Borough. Such reviews would be scheduled to coincide with a review relating to Bracknell Forest Council to minimise the impact upon Panel Members time.

Remit of such reviews:

- The appropriateness of a Parish Basic Allowance and whether this should apply to just the Chairman or all Parish Councillors
- Travelling and Subsistence Allowances for Parish Councillors
- Provision for suspension of allowances under certain circumstances
- Suitability of an index for allowances and what that index may be

5 Role of Panel members

As a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel you will be responsible for making recommendations on Members' Allowances for consideration by Full Council.

As a Panel member you are likely to be expected to attend two one-day meetings each year; read papers and reports; give careful consideration to evidence and information provided at meetings by councillors and officers and ask questions.

Bracknell Forest will provide administrative support to research and collate information required to inform the work of the Panel. This will include information on the role of councillors in the authority and the way in which the authority operates and discharges its functions. Members will be provided with the current guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances. Interview sessions will be organised based on the availability of Panel Members and interviewees. An appropriate venue and refreshments will be provided for the duration of the review. The report of the Panel's recommendations will be prepared by the Chairman.

6 Disqualifications

Panel members cannot be:

- a member of Bracknell Forest
- anyone who would be disqualified from being an elected member
- a member or co-opted member of any committee or sub-committee of Bracknell Forest
- an employee of the council

It is preferred that Panel members do not have strong links to any particular political party as there is a risk that this may impact upon effective discharge of the panel's functions.

The council reserves the right to remove a discredited member from the panel. For example if a member of the panel may become discredited due to being found guilty of a criminal offence.

7 Skills profile

Set out below are some of the key skills, which are considered important to carry out the work of the panel. The ability to:

- read and assess information and identify key points/issues
- listen to information and identify key points and issues
- ask questions in order to obtain information and open up discussion
- analyse information and use it to form opinions and conclusions
- work as part of a team
- communicate effectively with a wide range of people

It would be helpful if you have an understanding of

- local government
- the functions of/and how the council works
- the roles of councillors
- the regulations and guidance which apply to members' allowances

These skills are desirable but not essential. The council will provide some training in order to help you to develop the skills required.

8 Application and selection process

The application and selection process set out below has been prepared to ensure that the Bracknell Forest Independent Remuneration Panel is truly independent, well qualified to discharge the functions of the panel and representative of the diversity of the communities in Bracknell Forest.

The Council delegated authority at Council on 27 February 2008 to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Independent Chair of the Panel, Dr Declan Hall, to make appointments to the vacancies and to determine each appointee's term of office.

In relation to the 2 remaining positions, ideally, the Authority would like a representative from a Public Organisation, the Community and Voluntary Sector and the Private Sector. It was thought appropriate to previously seek expressions of interest through advertisement for candidates in local papers and asking particular stakeholders e.g. the voluntary sector or the local business community, if they wish to put forward candidates. This has also been pursued through the Local Strategic Partnership to achieve a degree of local accountability.

Application

If you feel that you have the experience, personal skills and qualities required, please apply by completing the application form at page 16.

Please send completed application forms to
Kirsty Hunt, Democratic and Registration Services, Bracknell Forest Council,
Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1AQ
or via email to kirsty.hunt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Selection

Selection for this appointment will be based on an assessment of how applicants meet the key skills set out in the person specification at appendix 1 by the Head of Democratic and Registration Services on behalf of the Chief Executive with regard to advice from the Independent Chairman Dr Declan Hall. You should therefore ensure that you include information on how you meet the attributes required when completing the application form.

Short listed candidates will be invited to an informal discussion on the role and remit of the panel.

9 Further Reading

New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances available via www.communities.gov.uk

Members remuneration – Models, issues, incentives and barriers available via www.communities.gov.uk

Appendix 1 - PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge, Skills & Experience	Essential/ Desirable
Ability to	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• read and assess information and identify key points/issues	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• listen to information and identify key points and issues	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ask questions in order to obtain information and open up discussion	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• analyse information and use it to form opinions and conclusions	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• work as part of a team	E
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• communicate effectively with a wide range of people	E
Understanding of	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• local government	D
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the role and work of a Unitary Authority Council (including a knowledge of the decision making process)	D
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the roles of councillors	D
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the regulations and guidance which apply to members' allowances	D
Understanding of the importance of being seen to be working independently of the Council	E
Ability to consider detailed information about the roles of Councillors, the operation of the Authority and the discharge of its functions and other relevant information from other authorities and independent remuneration panels	E
Personal Circumstances	
You should live or work in Bracknell Forest	E
You must not be politically active to the extent that a reasonable person would conclude that this activity would influence your judgement	E
You must not be an elected member of any Council (par parishes) or co-optee	E
You must not be an elected member of Bracknell Forest Council or employee	E

- | | |
|---|---|
| You must have no personal, legal or contractual relationship with Bracknell Forest Council, its members, co-opted members or employees | E |
| You must not hold any office or employment that is subject to confirmation by the Council | E |
| You have not been adjudged bankrupt or have made a composition or arrangement with your creditors | E |
| You have not, within the last 5 years, been convicted of an offence for which you have served a term of imprisonment of not less than 3 months without the option of a fine | E |

Appendix 2 – Application Form

Appointment of Members to the Independent Remuneration Panel

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Mobile:	
Email:	
Are you disqualified from election as a Councillor?	Yes/No
Are you a relative or close friend of a present Bracknell Forest Councillor?	Yes/No
Please explain how you meet the criteria laid out in the key attributes. Give examples from your work or other experience to demonstrate how you can demonstrate them.	
Cont.	

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Signed

Date

Appendix 3 – Current Members' Allowances Scheme

This is available on line at <http://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=527&info=1&bcr=1>