



## ***FULL COUNCIL REPORT***

Date Written	7 <sup>th</sup> March 2018 *
Report Author	Ann Taylor
Service Area	Democratic Services
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non exempt
Committee Date	4 <sup>th</sup> April 2018

*To: Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **Member Champion Responsibilities**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 A decision of Full Council on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017 initiated an exercise to determine whether there was an overlap or duplication in the Member Champion roles.
- 1.2 The review recognised that there was an opportunity to rationalise and monitor the Champion roles, but there was also a requirement to establish a system of support, accountability and public communication.
- 1.3 Following appraisal, a series of documents has been produced to provide Member Champions with an understanding of their role and a means of monitoring how significant the Champion function has been in providing a voice for issues which need to be kept at the forefront of Council business.
- 1.4 Procedures will also be introduced to support Members in achieving the best possible outcomes for these roles and communicating the results and achievements with the public.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS THAT:**

- 2.1 The requirement for support and accountability be introduced to the role of Member Champion be approved.
- 2.2 The documents supporting the role of a Member Champion be approved.
- 2.3 The representatives as set out in Paragraph 5 of the report be agreed.

- 2.4 Significant events are shared with the Corporate Communications department about the work undertaken by Member Champions.
- 2.5 An annual report be brought to Full Council providing feedback on the monitoring of Champion functions.

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Councillor Champions exist to provide a voice for traditionally under-represented groups or issues which need to be kept at the forefront of Council business, although they may not be the responsibility of an individual or committee.
- 3.2 In addition to their other council responsibilities, Member Champions ensure that the issue or group that they are championing are taken into account when council policy is being developed and decisions are made.
- 3.3 Councillors can act as Champions in a number of areas, the list is not exhaustive and they are appointed by the Leader of the Council.
- 3.4 In September 2017 questions were asked about the existing Member Champion roles, where they originated, was there legislative requirement for them and whether or not the nominated Councillors were expected to provide feedback on the work they had been involved with.
- 3.5 A review into their background found that most of the Champion roles were created in response to requests from officers or Councillors who recognised that the authority needed to raise the profile of a particular issue. However, there are currently no procedures in place to monitor the effectiveness of the role or publicise Member Champion involvement.
- 3.6 The review also determined that not all Councillors were aware of the accountability of the roles and were therefore hesitant about taking them on without adequate support.

### **4.0 REVIEW PROCESS AND OUTCOMES**

- 4.1 Officers across the authority were provided with a list of Member Champions and asked whether the post was statutory and whether they had close links with the Councillors in post. They were also asked whether, in their opinion, any of the roles could be combined.
- 4.2 Using this feedback, the Wellbeing objectives and the Cabinet manifesto, the Leader agreed to:
  - 4.2.1 combine the Equalities and Diversity Champion roles;
  - 4.2.2 combine the Mental Health Champion and Time to Change Wales – Mental Health Champion roles;

- 4.2.3 Remove the Fire Safety Champion and the Super-Fast Broadband Champion roles on the understanding that any one of them be reinstated if it became apparent that the post had a fundamental Champion function.
- 4.2.4 Introduce a Homelessness Champion, a Tourism Champion and a Disabled Persons Champion (to incorporate the role of the existing Visual Impairment Champion).
- 4.3 Whilst an evaluation of the existing Member Champion titles was fundamental to the review process, research also showed that providing Councillors with a description of their accountabilities was pivotal to them succeeding in that role.
- 4.4 A series of documents has therefore been drafted (see Appendix) that describe what is expected from a Member Champion, what their role is and how they would typically go about providing a voice for issues which need to be kept at the forefront of Council business, by engaging with different groups and raising the subject profile.
- 4.5 It also outlines the support available from the Democratic Services department which will provide a reporting template to assist the Member Champions with the new monitoring processes introduced to give the Council a clear understanding of the effectiveness of the Champion role going forward.
- 4.6 Alongside the reports from Member Champions, feedback will also be requested from external bodies and community groups in each specialty. This is not to scrutinise the work of the Member Champions, but rather to gauge the effect the additional support role has had.
- 4.7 All of this information will be collated and passed to the Corporate Communications department which will ensure that the public are made aware of what it is their elected representatives are doing for the County Borough.

## 5.0 REPRESENTATIVES

Anti-Poverty Champion	Councillor S Jago
Armed Forces Champion	Councillor A Barry
Biodiversity Champion	Councillor M Colbran
Carers Champion	Councillor D Hughes
Children's and Young Persons Champion	Councillor C Davies
Dementia Champion	Councillor J Thomas
Disabled Persons Champion	Councillor A Barry
Domestic Abuse Champion	Councillor C Tovey

Energy Champion	Councillor D Hughes
Equalities & Diversity Champion	Councillor C Davies
Heritage Champion	Councillor T Skinner
Homelessness Champion	Councillor D Hughes
Member Champion	Councillor A Barry
Mental Health Champion	Councillor D Sammon
Older Persons Champion	Councillor H Barrett
Open Spaces Champion	Councillor L Davies
Risk Management Champion	Councillor K O'Neill
Safeguarding Champion	Councillor D Hughes
Tourism Champion	Councillor G Thomas
Welsh Language Champion	Councillor C Davies

## 6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

6.1 There are no financial implications.

## 7.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full assessment is not required at this time. The form can be accessed on the Council's website/intranet via the 'Equality Impact Assessment' link.

**GARETH CHAPMAN**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**COUNCILLOR ANDREW BARRY**  
**PORTFOLIO MEMBER FOR GOVERNANCE**  
**AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
No Background Papers		
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		<b>No</b>

*Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.*

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council**  
*Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN*

# ELECTED MEMBER CHAMPIONS



# ACCOUNTABILITIES

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**Councillor Champions provide a voice for issues which need to be kept at the forefront of Council business that may not be the responsibility of any individual or Committee**

In addition to their other Council responsibilities, Member Champions make sure that the issue or group that they are championing are taken into account when Council policy is being developed and decisions are made.

Councillors can act as Champions in a number of areas and the list is not exhaustive. Councillor Champions are appointed by the Leader of the Council.

Typically, the Councillor Champion will:

- Ensure that their area of interest is taken into account when developing policy or making decisions;
- Ask questions about performance and resourcing for the area;
- Raise the profile of the area and make the authority aware of good practice;
- Engage with external bodies who work in the area;
- Engage with other officers and members in relation to the role;
- Engage with community groups with an interest / stage in the area;
- Report action to the Councillors via committee, other relevant body or electronically.

## ELECTED MEMBER CHAMPIONS

# FEEDBACK

## TITLE OF CHAMPION

<u>Champion:</u>	Councillor <b>Name</b>
<u>Wellbeing Objective:</u>	<b>Title of Objective</b>
<u>Contact Officer(s) (not exhaustive):</u>	<b>Name (Role) Tel: 0000</b> <b>Name (Role) Tel: 0000</b>
<u>Known Groups (not exhaustive):</u>	<b>List of known groups working in this area</b>
<u>Portfolio Member:</u>	Councillor <b>Name</b>

### REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Beginning in November 2018, an annual report will be taken to Full Council which will provide feedback on the work that each Member Champion has undertaken to support their role.

Democratic Services will circulate a template a few weeks before the report is due to be presented to Committee. The intention of introducing a template is to make it easier for the Member Champion to provide a straightforward account of the work they've done, but also to make the reporting consistent across each Champion role.

A copy of the draft template is attached for information so that Members will be aware of what they will be expected to report on at the end of the year. **N.B.** if a Member Champion does not return a report, the title will still be listed on the report to Full Council advising "no updated provided".

## **FEEDBACK FROM OTHER SOURCES:**

Alongside reports from Member Champions, feedback will also be requested from external bodies and community groups that the Champion has engaged with during the year.

A list has been provided above of some of the groups who are known to the authority but please note that this list is not exhaustive and a Champion may make new associations with other bodies. Any new contacts should be provided in the annual report.

This information will not initially be put into the public domain, but it will be used by Cabinet Portfolio Members to assess the value of the role for future years. If intentions change and the information is to be shared with the public, then Member Champions will be advised in advance.

## ELECTED MEMBER CHAMPIONS

# REPORTING TEMPLATE

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Champion Title: Councillor **Name**

Champion: Councillor **Name**

Portfolio Member: Councillor **Name**

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**1. Have you made connections with officers and other members in relation to your role?**

Yes or No *(please delete as appropriate)*

Please give a list of individuals you engage with and an account of the type of engagement. If you answered 'No', please state why:

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**2. Have you made connections with external bodies and/or community groups with an interest in the area?**

Yes or No *(please delete as appropriate)*

Please give a list of groups you engage with and an account of the type of engagement. If you answered 'No', please state why:

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**3. Please give examples where the profile of your area of interest has been raised.**

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**4. Has performance and/or resourcing improved?**

Yes or No *(please delete as appropriate)*

If 'Yes', please provide more detail:

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**5. Can you give examples of when your area of interest has been taken into account when the authority has made decisions or developed specific policy?**

Yes or No *(please delete as appropriate)*

If 'Yes', please provide more detail:

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**6. Have there been any financial implications directly arising from the work you have carried out as Champion?**

Yes *or* No *(please delete as appropriate)*

If 'Yes', please provide more detail:

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## ELECTED MEMBER CHAMPIONS

# EXTERNAL REPORTS

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council appoints Elected Member Champions who prove a voice for issues which need to be kept at the forefront of Council business that may not be the responsibility of an individual or Committee.

In addition to their other Council responsibilities, Member Champions make sure that the issue of group that they are championing are taken into account when Council policy is being developed and decisions are made

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**WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD PLEASE COMPLETE THE ATTACHED FEEDBACK FORM RELATING TO YOUR WORK WITH THE **\*\*TITLE\*\*** CHAMPION**

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1. **Have you had contact with the Elected Member Champion for **\*\*title\*\***?**

Yes or No *(please delete as appropriate)*

Please give an account of the type of contact. If you answered 'No', please state why:

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2. Are you aware of any instances where the role of Champion has raised the profile of **\*\*title\*\***?

Yes or No *(please delete as appropriate)*

If 'Yes', please provide more detail:

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5. Can you give examples of **\*\*title\*\*** being taken into account when the authority has made decisions or developed specific policy?

Yes or No *(please delete as appropriate)*

If 'Yes', please provide more detail:

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