

CHAMPIONS IN GWYNEDD COUNCIL

Purpose of the Document

Several Councils have appointed councillors as champions in various fields – the most common is the older people’s champion. From time to time a request is received from various special interest groups for the Council to nominate one of its members as a champion and there is not always consistency between what is expected of the various champions. The purpose of this document is to try to define the meaning of a champion in Gwynedd Council.

Why have a champion?

The purpose of having a champion is to:

1. Speak for cohorts that would not otherwise be fully represented
2. Keep some issues at the forefront of the Council’s work although no councillor or committee is responsible for them
3. Assist a Cabinet Member with his/her portfolio by maintaining contact between special interest groups and the Cabinet and bringing specialist information to the Cabinet Member

Who selects a champion?

Where the field in question is an ‘executive’ matter i.e. a field within the responsibilities of the Cabinet, then the relevant Cabinet Member will appoint the champion. It is expected that a champion will be appointed from amongst members that are not members of the Cabinet.

Where the field in question is a matter for the Council, a champion will be designated by virtue of the post of Chair of the relevant committee and if there are more than one, it will be expected for them to agree amongst themselves who will be the champion.

What is the role of a champion?

These are the usual duties of a champion:

- Promote the field and raise awareness of it within the Council
- Ensure that the field is considered when drawing up policies or when making decisions
- Draw attention to the field and ensure that the Cabinet Member and other councillors are aware of the good practices
- Engage with outside bodies involved with the field
- Engage with other officers and councillors regarding the role

- Engage with community groups involved with the field
- Provide reports to the Cabinet Member on the steps that have been taken

The attached job description encompasses the main duties of a champion although there could be minor variations, depending on the field.

To whom is the champion accountable?

The champion is accountable to whoever has appointed him/her and is accountable to the Council in general. It is expected that the champion provides regular reports on the work to the relevant Cabinet Member and more generally to the remainder of the councillors by means of information bulletins.

In order to avoid overlap and duplication, the champion should represent the Council on relevant outside bodies.

Job Description of a Champion

- 1. Accountable to**
The Cabinet Member
The Full Council

- 2. Purpose and Functions**

- 2.1 In the Council**

- Promote the field in question in relation to the corporate priorities and services of the Council
- Convey the opinions of organisations and stakeholders in the field in question to the Cabinet and the Council (by means of annual reports or information bulletins)
- Promote the needs of the cohort in question amongst those making decisions on behalf of the Council
- Collaborate with those responsible for the Council's decision-making to draw up strategies, policies and work programmes for the field in question
- Be aware of every issue involved with the field
- Contribute to good practice and improve services/functions involving the field at all times
- Provide specialist information to the Cabinet Member regarding the field in question
- Engage with councillors regarding the field in question, such as attending meetings of overview and scrutiny committees, the Cabinet and the Full Council
- Raise awareness of the field and take a prominent role in training councillors and officers where relevant to that field

- 2.2 In the community**

- Draw attention to the field in the community
- Establish regular and effective engagement arrangements with citizens and community organisations on issues involved with that field
- Lead and maintain local enterprises involved with the field in question
- Represent the Council on outside bodies involved with the field in question
- Convey and explain the opinions and decisions of the Council to stakeholders and organisations in the field in question
- Become familiar with the field in question, its needs and priorities in order to weigh up the various requirements and offer advice on the implications of any action

- 3. Values**

Commit to the Council's values and the values of public office:
Maintain and exhibit high standards of conduct.