

CONSTITUTION GLOSSARY

Interpretation of the Constitution and Glossary

This Constitution, and all its appendices, is the Constitution of Chelmsford City Council.

Throughout this Constitution references to the masculine gender shall be taken to mean both the masculine and the feminine genders and expressions in the singular shall include, where appropriate, the plural.

Term – What it refers to.

Background Papers- Documents relied on by an author in the writing of a report and which provide the basis of the information contained in the report.

By-Election- An unscheduled election to fill a vacancy on an elected body.

Cabinet- The Cabinet consists of the leader of the Council along with up to nine other members who are responsible for a particular Council service or group of services. Forms part of the “Executive” of the Council.

Cabinet functions – Those functions of the Council that are handled by the Cabinet.

Citizen- Any person who lives or works in the Chelmsford area, and those who qualify to vote in Chelmsford.

City- The City includes Chelmsford and its surrounding rural area and comprises the entire local government electoral area.

Committee- A body comprising Councillors which has responsibility for defined functions.

Constituents- The general public in a Councillor’s ward/ constituency.

Constitution (the)- The suite of documents which describe how the Council operates.

The Council- Chelmsford City Council, the local authority in the Chelmsford area. This term refers to the authority as a whole, including Council officers (employees) and the elected councillors.

Deputations- A group of people appointed to take part in a formal process on behalf of a larger group or to represent the views of that group.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest- A financial or material interest which must be disclosed by a Councillor.

Executive functions- Those functions defined by legislation which are the responsibility of the Leader of the Council; they can be delegated by the Leader to the Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members, Cabinet committees or officers.

Extraordinary Meetings- Additional Council meetings which can be called by Council resolution, the Mayor, the Chief Executive or any five Councillors if the Mayor has failed to call a meeting within seven days of their signed request.

The Full Council- All 57 councillors meet together (usually 4 times a year) as the 'Full Council'.

Full Council functions – Those functions of the Council that are the responsibility of the Full Council.

Functional Responsibility- The responsibilities a Council Officer or Council Committee are tasked with.

Leader- Usually refers to the Leader of the Council, who is elected by Councillors every four years. May also refer to the leader of a Political group depending on context.

Legislation- Laws and Regulations passed by Parliament.

Local Government Ombudsman- An organisation formed to look into complaints about councils and other local authorities.

Maladministration- Dishonest and/or inefficient administration.

Minutes- The formal written record of a meeting.

Monitoring Officer- The Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring lawfulness and fairness of decision making and dealing with complaints about councillors. This role is performed by the Legal and Democratic Services Manager.

Motion- A formal proposal or recommendation put forward by a councillor at a meeting.

NNDR- Acronym for: National Non Domestic Rate. (A tax on the occupation of non-domestic property.)

Parish- A sub-unit of the City, Parishes usually have their own Parish Council and Councillors representing local issues.

Politically Balanced- The number of members of a political group on a committee reflects the overall proportion of members of those groups on the council as a whole.

Quorum- The minimum number of members of a body who need to be present in order for the meeting and the decisions taken to be valid.

Regulatory functions – Those functions of the Council that deal with applications by individuals or companies for permission to do something, or which involve the enforcement of requirement to do something, such as licensing functions and planning functions.

Task + Finish Groups- A group of members set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to look at a particular function or issue and report back to the Committee.

Ward – The City is divided up into wards, which are voting areas for the purpose of electing councillors.