Article 2 – Members of the Council

DEVELOPING ROLES FOR COUNCILLORS

The role of the Councillor is enhanced by the new Political Structures introduced by the Local Government Act 2000. Members' representational roles are stronger through the development of policy formulation processes feeding into the full Council, Scrutiny Committees, the Cabinet, Overview Groups or Regulatory Committees. This role is strengthened further by the Area Committees. Individual Councillors also have a scrutiny role, offering important opportunities both to assist the policy development process and also to conduct in-depth inquiries into specific issues of concern.

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This Article sets out the composition of the Council, eligibility to stand for election as a member of the Council and the form of election to be used.

The Article also contains a section in which the Council provides a statement of the roles and functions of members of the Council. This reinforces the fact that all members, whatever their formal position in the Council and party political system, share common roles and responsibilities.

The Article also deals with the rights and duties of members, especially as they affect access to land, buildings, documents and information and any confidentiality requirements surrounding the latter.

2.01 Composition and eligibility

(a) **Composition.** The Council will comprise 42 members, otherwise called Councillors. Councillors will be elected by the voters of each Ward in accordance with a scheme drawn up by the Local Government Commission and approved by the Secretary of State.

(b) **Eligibility.** Only registered voters of the Borough of Poole or those living or working there will be eligible to hold the office of Councillor.

2.02 Election and Terms of Councillors

OPTION 1: ELECTION OF THE WHOLE COUNCIL EVERY FOUR YEARS

Election and terms. The regular election of Councillors will be held on the first Thursday in May every four years beginning in 2003. The terms of office of Councillors will start on the fourth day after being elected and will finish on the fourth day after the date of the next regular election.

2.03 Roles and Functions of all Councillors

The following Article is intended to clarify the key roles and duties of Councillors. All Councillors have a responsibility for the good governance of

the local authority. Councillors have a representational role and to act as a link and point of mediation between the Council and the community.

It is all Councillor's duty to adopt high standards of conduct in order to give expression to the General Principles of Conduct and the Council's own Code of Conduct for Councillors.

(a) **Key roles.** All Councillors will:

(i) collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions;

(ii) represent their communities and bring their views into the Council's decision-making process, i.e. become the advocate of and for their communities;

(iii) deal with individual casework and act as an advocate for constituents in resolving particular concerns or grievances;

(iv) balance different interests identified within the Ward or Electoral Division and represent the Ward or Electoral Division as a whole;

(v) be involved in decision making;

(vi) be available to represent the Council on other bodies; and

(vii) maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics.