

# Putting Civic Office at the Heart of Community Engagement

**National Association of Civic Officers**

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**“There are too many authorities where a hard pressed mayor’s secretary will spend several weeks in advance organising a charity tiddlywinks match, which the Mayor heralds as a great success if it raises £200.”**

*Philip O’Brien, Deputy Chair, NACO*

**“The main thing, is to keep the main thing the main thing”**

*– Steven Covey*

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**“I've just been informed that due to budget constraints our plan will have to be scaled down to neighborhood domination.”**

# Working with councillors

- **Elected from their communities to serve their communities**
- **There is no background blue-print of special preparation for the role**
- **The diversity is not good, but educational and occupational background varies hugely**
- **There is a reluctance to spend money or time on own development**

# Members/officer relations

## Why it goes wrong

- **The political environment**
- **Sense of mutual suspicion**
- **Balancing competing interests/demands**
- **External pressures/challenges**
- **Further complicated by:**
  - **Cabinet/scrutiny relations**
  - **Cabinet/backbencher relations**
  - **Administration/opposition relations**

# Coming at it from different places

## Values & Philosophy

### Members

- political and party values

### Officers

- professional and managerial values

## Conversation & language

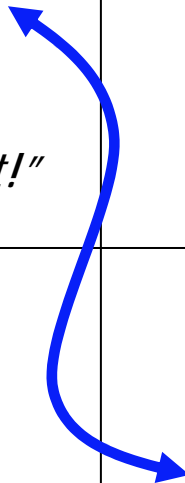
- what do you hear?
- storytelling
- interests and symbols

- what do you know?
- reports based on data
- info, money and people



<p><b>IS Thoughtful realist</b></p> <p><i>Councillors 18%</i> <i>UK Population 39%</i> <i>UK Manager 21%</i></p> <p><i>"if it ain't broke don't fix it!"</i></p>	<p><b>IN Thoughtful Innovator</b></p> <p><i>Councillors 14%</i> <i>UK Population 9%</i> <i>UK Manager 20%</i></p> <p><i>"Let's think ahead!"</i></p>
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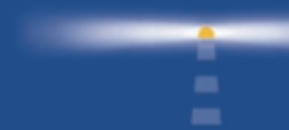
Q1. Now I will read you a list of different types of people. For each would you tell me if you generally trust them to tell the truth, or not?

2008 (November)

2009 (September)

	Tell the truth	Tell the truth
Doctors	92%	92%
Teachers	87%	88%
Professors	79%	80%
Judges	78%	80%
Clergyman/Priests	74%	71%
Scientists	72%	70%
The Police	65%	60%
Civil Servants	48%	44%
Trade Union officials	45%	38%
Business Leaders	30%	25%
Journalists	19%	22%
Government Ministers	24%	16%
<b>Politicians generally</b>	21%	13%





Leadership Centre for local government

manifesto

latest news and comment

case studies

rate your authority

homepage for local government

about 21st century councillor

related projects

*"a manifesto for a modern local politics"*

1. **Revitalising recruitment**
2. **Understanding leadership of place**
3. **Developing cabinet members for your ward**
4. **Promoting effective scrutiny**
5. **The politics of austerity**
6. **Levers of influence, not levers of power**
7. **Championing community Identity**
8. **Localist politics - the art of engagement**
9. **Member orientated institutions**
10. **Politicians prepared to raise their game**

# WHY SOCIAL MEDIA?

- It enables conversations and helps create networks.
- It helps to highlight issues that are of specific or general concern to you and your constituents.
- It provides an online resource of easily accessible information using text, images, audio and/or video.
- It helps to establish and build enduring two-way relationships with local people and further afield.
- It helps you to manage and influence your reputation both online/offline, rather than allow a **'Gripe Site'** to.



# WHY MEMBERS NEED SOCIAL MEDIA

- To establish an online presence **separate from the local authority** and party website or web page.
- To highlight or promote **issues that are of specific or general concern** to their local community.
- To provide an **online resource of local community information** in the form of text, images, audio and video.
- To **build relationships** on issues of mutual interest with local people and many others regionally, nationally and globally.
- To help **manage your online (and offline) reputation**.



# Honestly, it was THIS big!

Councillor Dominic Thorncroft examines a huge one in Machell Road, Nunhead:

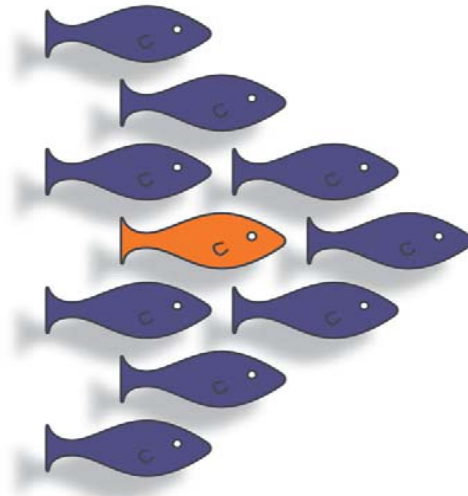


# Local leadership academy

## **Joining the chain gang**

Preparing for the role of civic mayor

Member workbook





# Skills for an effective Mayor

- **Leadership**
- **Chairing**
- **Organisational skills**
- **Team working & relationship building**
- **Communication**
- **Knowledge**

*Adopted from Kirklees MBC's role profile for a Mayor/Deputy Mayor*



# Preparing for the role

- **Be committed**
- **Get your family behind you**
- **Get Advice**
- **Check and practice your skills**
- **Talk to your officers**
- **Read the handbook**
- **Check your wardrobe**
- **Attend events that the current Mayor is attending**
- **Stay healthy**
- **Start distancing yourself from controversial matters**

# Focus of the Mayor's Role

- **Leading the community**
- **Acting as First Citizen**
- **Presiding over civic functions**
- **Attending a range of functions**
- **Helping to raise funds**
- **Observing civic protocols**
- **Supporting corporate objectives**

# The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Mayor

## Let's hear your ideas.....

- A.** How can they contribute to the delivery of the Council's duty to promote democracy?
- B.** How can they help to demystify the role and work of the council and encourage greater participation from 'hard to reach groups'?
- C.** What role can they play in promoting and developing the role of Young Mayors?
- D.** How can they use social media to raise the profile of the Mayor's office and its work in the community?
- E.** How can they contribute to the promotion and delivery of the councils key corporate objectives?
- F.** How can the Mayor's office make better use and be more creative in promoting its work in the local and national media?

# ANY QUESTIONS?

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