



# BEING A LOCAL COUNCILLOR

## What's it all about?

Want to do something positive?

Help make a difference by influencing decisions that affect your community?

Then stand for election to become a Councillor on your Local Council!

And these include:

- Parish Councils
- Town Councils
- Community, Village and
- Neighbourhood Councils



Produced by the Sussex and Surrey Associations of Local Councils

**Are you concerned  
about your local  
area?**

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**Do you want to  
represent the views  
of local people?**

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**Do you want to  
contribute your  
business or personal  
skills and expertise?**

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**Are you passionate  
about services  
provided to your  
community?**



## **Who is eligible?**

Any person over the age of 18 who is a citizen of the United Kingdom, The European Community, or the Commonwealth can be a Councillor if they are an elector in, work in, live in or live within three miles of the area of the local Council.

## **What will I do if elected?**

- Raise matters that the Council can consider and formally decide to take action about at meetings
- Attend Council meetings
- Make informed contributions which influence the debate on the business that needs to be decided at those meetings
- Participate in the Council's decision making process, which in itself is subject to strict rules and guidelines
- Represent the Council externally

From Local Councils Explained by Meera Tharmaarajah Solicitor for the National Association of Local Councils



## **Key Points**

- A Councillor's normal term of office is 4 years
- He/She is the holder of a Public Office and not a volunteer
- They can receive expenses for their role
- The main job of a councillor is to participate in the collective decision making processes of the Council
- He/She has no authority to make decisions about Council business on their own.
- A Local Council may arrange insurance cover to indemnify its councillors against liability resulting from them being representatives of the Council
- A councillor's financial and certain other interests in Council business must be transparent
- He/she is subject to obligations set out in the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council
- Information about councillors is available in the Council's publication scheme
- The first business of the Council's annual meeting is the election of its Chairman.
- Most Councils appoint a Vice Chairman, but this is optional
- The normal term of office for the Chairman and Vice Chair is one year.

## **So, what are you waiting for?**

Advice is always available regarding becoming a councillor.  
Contact your local council today to find out more!

