

## **How to become a Councillor**

Are you interested in helping in your local community? Do you ever wish you could influence the way things are done in your area? Have you ever thought about becoming a Councillor?

### **What is a Councillor?**

A Councillor is someone who is elected by local people to represent their electoral division and the people living in it on a Council. Councillors are elected for a four year term. If Councillors are elected at a by-election, they will serve until the next scheduled elections take place.

### **So what do Councillors do?**

The Council provides a range of services to its area, such as schools, roads, social services etc. Councillors therefore usually need to attend meetings of the Council and its Committees from time to time. All Councillors also deal with the issues and problems brought to them by their constituents. They are also likely to spend time getting to know other organisations and services in their area, and may be appointed by their Council as representatives on some of those local bodies.

### **How much time will it take?**

It depends on how much time, effort and commitment individuals are able to give to their role. Councillors are expected to attend meetings as part of the decision making process as well as the work they will undertake in their electoral division. Councillors who take on leading roles, such as Chairs of Committees or Executive/Cabinet Members will have to allocate more time to the Council.

### **How do Councillors keep in touch with their Constituents?**

There are lots of ways Councillors can keep in touch with their constituents. They include:

- holding surgeries
- issuing newsletters
- setting up a website
- campaigning on local issues
- working with the community to find solutions to local problems
- helping to win resources for their community
- supporting local partnerships and organisations

### **Will I get paid?**

Each Councillor receives a basic allowance, which is paid monthly. The Council also provides other kinds of support such as full training and access to IT equipment. There will be a programme of induction and training sessions for new and returning Councillors after the election. There will also be ongoing development training to support Councillors to be effective in their role.

### **Do I get time off work?**

This depends on your employer. Some employers are good at encouraging their employees to be Councillors and do allow time off within reason. You should always discuss this with your employer before standing as a Councillor.

## **Do I have to be a member of a political party?**

No, you don't. You do not have to be identified with a particular political party; you can stand as an independent candidate. If you wish to stand as a candidate for a particular political party you should contact the party's local office.

## **So how do I become a Councillor?**

To become a Councillor, you must stand for, and win, an election in one of the County's electoral divisions.

## **So how do I become a Councillor?**

If you are interested in standing as a candidate for Flintshire County Council elections, you must be:

- 18 years of age or over at the date of the nomination
- a British Citizen, a citizen of the Commonwealth, the Republic of Ireland or of another European Union State
- a local government elector within the County
- you must also meet a least one of the following four qualifications on the day you are nominated and on polling day;
  - ✓ registered as a local government elector for the local authority area in which you wish to stand, or
  - ✓ have been an owner or tenant of any land or premises in the local authority area during the whole of the 12 months before the day you are nominated, or
  - ✓ your main or only place of work during the last 12 months has been in the local authority area, or
  - ✓ you have lived in the local authority area during the whole of the last 12 months.

You cannot stand as a candidate if you are disqualified from being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972. The full range of disqualifications for candidates at local elections is complex, so please contact the elections office for advice.

If you wish to stand as a candidate, please contact the elections office about six to eight weeks before the date of the election. As soon as possible after this you will be sent a nomination pack.

## **Nomination Paper**

Every candidate must submit a Nomination Paper. This must be signed by ten local government electors for the electoral division in which you wish to stand; a proposer, a seconder and eight assentors. The Nomination Paper must be delivered before the date given on the Notice of Election.

## **Consent to Nomination**

Your nomination is not valid unless you submit Consent to Nomination. You must sign a declaration to the effect that you are qualified to stand and the form must be attested by a witness.

## **Appointment of Election Agent**

If you wish to appoint another person to act as your election agent, you must complete an appointment of election agent form and the person you appoint must sign a declaration of acceptance. If no such application is received, the candidate is deemed to be acting as their own agent.

## **What happens when I have submitted my Nomination Paper and Consent to Nomination?**

Once your nomination paper has been checked and accepted you will receive a notice of validity which means you are now a candidate in the election. If your nomination paper is not valid you will be informed of the reason why.

As a candidate you will be sent information regarding polling stations, postal voting and count arrangements.

For further advice, please contact Elections office on 01352 702329 or email [elections@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:elections@flintshire.gov.uk)