

## Who can become a Councillor?

Anyone can stand as a candidate provided they meet the qualification requirements (see overleaf) or you can find out more by contacting the Electoral Services department at your local district Council



## How will the Council be accountable?

The decisions of the parish/town Council are made by those Councillors who have been elected – or if not enough candidates stand – co-opted to the Council.

Council meetings are open to the public and parish/town Councils must hold one meeting per year which is a meeting for the whole parish known as the Annual Parish Meeting

## BECOME A PARISH COUNCILLOR



## What is a Town/Parish Council?

A town/parish Council is the tier of local authority closest to its community as it elects representatives from within that community.  
**Parish and town Councils are democracy on your doorstep**

## What is their Role ?

- Represent the local community
- Deliver services within their powers to meet very local needs
- Work to improve quality of life in the parish or town

Examples of activities:

- Respond to planning applications
- May provide facilities eg play equipment
- Provide grants to community groups

## How much will it cost?

Parish/town Councils are entitled to levy a tax from their area.

This is known as the precept and covers the running costs for the Councils such as: election costs, local services, staff salaries and accommodation, (if the Clerk does not work from home).

The cost will vary from Council to Council but parish/town Councils are very cost effective, not least because most parish/town Councillors do not claim expenses allowances. Many will also commission local trades people which supports the local economy.

## Who will run the Council?

Parish/town council elections are held every 4 years.

Councillors, (who cannot be deselected during those four years), are the decision making body for the council.

**If there are insufficient nominations – a Council may have no choice but to co-opt non elected members.**

## Does the Council employ any staff?

A clerk (the proper officer) is appointed to advise councillors, answer enquiries and manage the administration of the council.

At higher tiers, the Clerk would be equivalent to the Chief Executive

Many small parishes only employ a Clerk but larger Councils can have a number of staff, depending on how many functions they undertake eg running cemeteries, village halls.

## Where can I get further information?

For any further information please contact:  
Your parish or town council clerk or



Warwickshire and West Midlands Association  
of Local Councils  
Tel: 02476 217349  
Email: [walc@walc.org.uk](mailto:walc@walc.org.uk)  
Website: [www.walc.org.uk](http://www.walc.org.uk)

## Do I qualify to stand for election?

### You should be:

- \* Aged over 18
- \* A British, Commonwealth Citizen or Euronational Citizen (who is a registered elector
- \* Resident for 12 months prior to the day of election – either in the parish or within 3 miles of the boundary
- \* Occupied land or premises for 12 months as owner or tenant – either in the parish or within 3 miles of the boundary
- \* Had a principal place of work – either in the parish or within 3 miles of the boundary



## Am I excluded from standing?

### You cannot become a Councillor if:

- \* You hold a paid office with the Council
- \* If you are subject to a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order creates disqualification which dates from the judgment or execution and generally ends one year after the relevant order is made
- \* If you have within five years before the election or since election been convicted in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man of any offence and been sentenced to not less than three months imprisonment (whether suspended or not) without the option of a fine
- \* Imprisonment probably includes any type of custodial sentence.
- \* This disqualification begins when the ordinary period for making an appeal is finally dismissed or abandoned or fails for want of prosecution