



## **Being A Local Councillor**

**What's It All About?  
Standing for Election  
in  
May 2017**



**Cornwall Association of Local Councils**

[www.cornwallalc.org.uk](http://www.cornwallalc.org.uk)

# Are You Ready to Make a Difference?

Parish and town Councils are only ever as vibrant, effective and relevant as the people who are elected to run them. We need local councils which truly represent the local population, which are ambitious for their community and are passionate about where they live.

The decisions made by your local councillors will make a real difference to your community in countless ways; from the environment, roads, planning, open spaces, community buildings and helping local community organisations thrive.



- \* Do you have a passion for where you live?
- \* Do you believe that your community should have a real say in local services?
- \* Would you like to make a difference in your area?
- \* Do you like solving problems and finding local solutions?
- \* Do you have the Xtra Mile factor?

If the answer to any of the above is YES then please think about supporting the work of your local parish, town or community council.

## Become a Councillor!

### So... how do I stand for election?

It couldn't be easier. 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 within three miles of the area of the council. You will need to complete an application pack and return it in person to the designated Registration Office, so that your candidacy can be verified and registered.



Find out more at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/beacouncillor](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/beacouncillor)



## What will I do if elected?

- \* Raise local community issues to the Council for discussion and action
- \* Attend Council meetings and speak on behalf of the community
- \* Make informed contribution to the decisions made at council meetings
- \* Help identify a local vision for your area
- \* Work to improve the quality of life and the environment in your community
- \* Set high standards for those delivering services to your community
- \* Represent the Council and the Community



## What help will I get?

Your Council will have its own Clerk, someone who is there to help you as you learn about the role of being a good councillor. Training, seminars and courses for Councillors are organised throughout the year across the County; you will also have access to on-line learning and interactive websites for local councillors.



Parish and Town Councils are supported by the National Association of Local Councils through the County Association of Local Councils. The Association is there to offer legal advice, training and general support to all of its member councils.

## What will be expected of me?

- \* A normal term of office is four years
- \* You must attend all meetings of the council or give your apologies. If you fail to attend for six calendar months you will automatically lose your seat.
- \* You will be asked to sign up to the Council's Code of Conduct, to treat others with respect and maintain the principles of public life.
- \* Information about you will be available on the Council's website
- \* Your register of financial and certain other interests in Council business must be transparent and will be on Cornwall Council's website.
- \* You will be expected to make decisions on behalf of the whole of your community, attending meetings with an open mind. Decisions are normally taken by a show of hands and you are expected to play a role in the decision making.

# Did you know what your local council can do?



## **Open Spaces, Playgrounds and Playing Fields**

Local Councils play an essential role in providing playgrounds and open spaces in your community. They are responsible for the upkeep, improvements and maintenance of green areas in the parish, often as the custodial trustees of small playing field charities.



## **Footpaths, Verges and countryside access**

Local councils maintain public rights of way, footpaths and walk ways around the parish. In partnership with Cornwall Council they will use local contractors to ensure that paths are maintained for everyone to enjoy. In coastal communities they



## **Local Transport and Community Transport Schemes**

Parish and town councils are consultees in local transport strategies and can reflect the needs of local communities. Not only can they lobby and influence but they can also provide local solutions in isolated areas, funding community transport and arranging for local delivery services.



## **Planning, Enforcement and Neighbourhood Plans**

Local councils are statutory consultees and every month will look at planning applications in their area. Their role is to comment using planning considerations to ensure that the local voice is heard and that any application is appropriate to their area. Local councils are able to write Neighbourhood plans, local planning criteria for your community.



## **Village Halls and Community Buildings**

Local councils support local community buildings. They can act as trustees, own the building or simply provide financial support to local organisations to ensure that the community has a place to meet and local groups can prosper.



## **Funding and Financial Support**

Local councils are key to providing financial support within their communities. Whether it is funding for a significant project or a small grant to a local group, local councils are able to fund a wide variety of services, projects and local events. They can even borrow to act big!