



Do you want to make a difference in your community?



Do you want to have a say in the future of Wyre?



Do you want to help us shape and improve our services?



If you can answer yes to any of these questions, then have you ever thought of becoming a councillor?

Introduction

This leaflet explains how to become a councillor and what this important role is really about.

We hope it will encourage people from all walks of life to take an interest in local democracy and to think about putting themselves forward for election.

What is a councillor and what do they do?

Councillors are elected to represent an individual geographical area of the council, known as a ward. They are elected by the public every four years. A councillor's role and responsibilities will include:

- representing their ward
- community leadership and engagement
- decision making
- developing and reviewing council policy
- scrutinising decision making
- regulatory & statutory duties

How much of my time will it take up?

The amount of time you spend on your work as a councillor is entirely up to you, although there will be a minimum number of meetings that you should attend each year.

Am I eligible to stand for election?

If you are aged 18 or over on the day of nomination and you are a British, commonwealth or EU citizen, you can stand for election in Wyre providing you meet at least one of the following criteria:

- you have lived/worked in the borough for the whole of the 12 months before the election date
- you have owned or leased land or property in the borough for the whole of the 12 months before the election date
- you are on Wyre Council's electoral register

Is there anything that would prevent me from standing?

You cannot stand for election as a Wyre councillor if:

- you are employed by the local authority or hold a paid office under the authority
- you hold a politically restricted post
- you are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order
- you have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more (including any suspended sentence) without the option of a fine, during the five years before polling day
- you have been disqualified under the Representation of the People Act 1983 or under the Audit Commission Act 1988

Do I need any special skills or experience?

Whilst you don't need any special qualifications to be a councillor, having or being able to develop the following skills and attributes will help you in your role:

- communication skills
- problem solving and analytical skills
- the ability to work as part of a team
- organisational skills
- good social skills

How do I get nominated?

You will need ten people who are on the electoral register in the ward in which you wish to stand who are willing to sign your nomination form. The form is part of a 'nomination pack' which is available eight weeks before each election. You will need to make sure that you return the completed forms at least 19 working days before the election day.

Do I need to stand for a political party?

No, anyone can stand as an independent candidate. If you wish to stand for a particular party, you will have to contact your local branch.

What about my current employer?

If you work, your employer must by law, allow you to take a reasonable amount of time off during your working day to perform your duties as a councillor.

This is covered in the Employment Rights Act 1996, Section 50. The amount of time you will get off will depend on your responsibilities as a councillor and the effect your absence will have on your employer's business.

Will it cost me anything and will I get paid?

It is free to stand for election as a councillor. You just need to be nominated and eligible to stand.

Councillors receive an allowance and councillors with special responsibilities receive greater allowances. Councillors can also claim for travel and subsistence. All allowances are set by the council as recommended by an independent panel.

When is the next election?

Parliamentary, borough council and town/parish council elections will take place on 7 May 2015.

What do I do now?

For further information about standing as a candidate and the election process, see below.

Get In Touch

www.wyre.gov.uk/standing
or ring 01253 887503
and ask for Joanne Porter