WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

The law specifies that 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 is eligible. Certain circumstances will mean that an individual may be "disqualified" from standing; check with your council if unsure.

What will I do if elected?

- Attend council meetings
- Raise matters that the council can consider and formally decide to take action about at 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 Tharmarajah Solicitor for the National Association of Local Councils

KEY POINTS

- A Councillor's normal term of office is 4 years
- Is the holder of a public office and not a volunteer
- 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 his/her own
- A local council may arrange insurance cover to indemnity 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 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!