

## **KCC Prospective Councillor Webpage**

### **Introduction:**

Kent County Council is led by 81 democratically elected Councillors, also known as Members, who represent the people within their electoral division and develop Council policy. Councillors are elected every 4 years. The next election will take place on 6 May 2021.

A County Councillor's role and responsibilities include:

- Attending meetings to guide decisions on local services
- Community leadership and engagement
- Scrutinising Cabinet and Council decisions
- Advocating for local issues and concerns
- Contributing to Council policies and strategies

Please see the Member Roles [\(insert hyperlink once available\)](#) and FAQ [\(insert hyperlink once available\)](#) documents for more details.

### **Understanding local government:**

Local Government can come in two forms: unitary or two-tier. A unitary manages all local authority services in their area under one centralised body such as Medway. Kent follows a two-tier system, separated into one County Council and twelve district, city, and borough councils.

The County Council is responsible for services such as Adult Social Care, Highways, Libraries, Consumer Protection, and Emergency Planning.

The district councils are responsible for collecting Council Tax, Refuse Collection and Housing.

The [Constitution](#) is a codified document containing the functions, processes and responsibilities of all aspects of the Council, including Councillors and Officers. This is approved by the Council.

### **Councillor eligibility:**

Who can be a Councillor?

To stand in a Kent County Council election you must be:

- British or a citizen of the Commonwealth or European Union
- At least 18 years old
- Registered to vote in Kent or have lived, worked or owned property in the County for at least 12 months before an election.

You cannot become a Councillor if you:

- Work for Kent County Council, or for another local authority in a politically restricted post

- Are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order
- Have been sentenced to prison for three months or more (including suspended sentences) during the five years before election day
- Have been convicted of a corrupt or illegal practice by an election court.

Further details about the qualifications and disqualifications can be found in the [Electoral Commission Guidance](#)

### **Commitments and meetings:**

How much time allocated to your duties will depend on the roles and responsibilities you take on. However, the Local Government Association (LGA) Councillors' Census 2018 found that Councillors spent 22 hours per week on council business on average. Council meetings was found to be the largest contributor to this, at 8 hours per week.

You can watch our Council meetings [here](#). All meetings are being held virtually until the end of 2020.

### **Support:**

A comprehensive induction programme for new and returning elected Members is planned which is being overseen by the Member Development Sub-Committee.

A Prospective Councillor virtual event is taking place on **x December 2020**. Please email [elections@kent.gov.uk](mailto:elections@kent.gov.uk) for more information and to register a place.

### **Allowance and Expenses:**

All Councillors receive a basic allowance (£15,406.25 for 2020/21) to perform their duties.

Some elected Members receive an additional allowance for any special responsibility that they might have as a Member of the Council, such as being a Cabinet member or a Committee Chair.

Elected Members are allowed to claim travelling expenses for their official duties. Elected Members are also allowed to claim expenses for caring responsibilities, either for a child under 16 or a dependent adult.

[Further information about councillor expenses can be viewed here](#)

### **Next Steps:**

1. Check your eligibility to stand as a candidate
2. Decide if you want to stand for a political party or as an independent.
  - a. For a political party, you need to contact the political party and take part in their selection process.
  - b. Resources and advice are available for those interested in being an independent Councillor. Please see the [LGA Independent Office](#) and the [Independent Campaign Corner](#)
3. View the [Electoral Commission Guidance](#) on how to put yourself forward in an election

4. Complete and submit your nomination papers during the nomination period.
5. Build your local profile, reputation, and campaign

**For more information:**

Please contact [elections@kent.gov.uk](mailto:elections@kent.gov.uk)