

## **FAQs for Prospective Councillors**

### **When are the County Councillor elections?**

The next scheduled election is on 6 May 2021. Councillors are elected for a 4-year term. Occasionally by-elections are held between County Council elections when a vacancy occurs.

Previous election results can be viewed [here](#).

### **Why would I want to be a Councillor?**

Becoming a Councillor gives you the ability to help guide the Council in making decisions on behalf of the local community.

You can give a platform to the voices of residents, to ensure they are represented and to help protect local interests.

Councillors have the ability to improve and develop Kent, shaping the county for future generations.

Our Councillors have diverse backgrounds with unique and varied skillsets, which are valuable to the development of Kent. You can contribute your experience and knowledge to better your community.

Moreover, the position of Councillor can enhance your skillset, developing your leadership and analytic capabilities.

### **What do Councillors do?**

Councillors are elected representatives for their local division and are engaged regularly with community leaders and issues.

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

### **What skills do I need?**

Kent County Council values the skills and experiences of its Councillors. There are no specific requirements for this role but some skills that may be useful to your role include:

- Understanding of your local area
- Communication
- Ability to engage with others
- Organisation

### **How do I become a Councillor in Kent?**

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

### **What is an election agent?**

The election agent is the person responsible for the proper management of your election campaign and, in particular, for its financial management. You must have an election agent. If you do not appoint an agent, you will become your own agent by default. The Electoral Commission provides [guidance](#) for candidates and agents.

### **How do I find out which electoral division I live in?**

Kent County Council has [81 Councillors](#) who represent 72 electoral divisions. There are 63 single-member divisions and the following nine two-member divisions: Birchington and Rural, Deal and Walmer, Dover Town, Gravesend East, Maidstone Central, Northfleet and Gravesend West, Ramsgate, Sheppey and Tonbridge. You can find which electoral division you live in using the [Postcode Finder](#). The maps showing each division's boundaries can be viewed [here](#).

### **What additional roles are there at Kent County Council?**

As a Councillor, you may have the opportunity to take on further responsibilities and duties, such as joining a committee. Other roles include:

- Chair of a Committee
- Cabinet Member
- Deputy Cabinet Member

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

### **Do Councillors get paid?**

Councillors do not receive a salary, but all Councillors are entitled to a basic allowance. For a Kent County Council Councillor, this amount is currently set at £15,406.25 per annum (2020/21) and is paid in monthly instalments.

A special responsibility allowance is available for selected Members, who hold additional duties such as Chairman of the Council and Cabinet Members.

Members are also allowed to claim on travel or other relevant expenses including the costs of caring responsibilities.

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

### **What is the Kent Code of Conduct for Members?**

This is a document details the obligations and standards that will be expected of you as a Councillor. The code is based on the 7 Principles of Public Life, which are the ethical standards expected of public office holders. You can view the document [here](#).

### **Will I need a DBS Check?**

All elected Members require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which is process of viewing whether an individual has a criminal record. Elected Members will be required to produce certain identification documents in order to complete the check which is organised by Kent County Council.