



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS 2013

# WHY BE A COUNCILLOR?

get  
involved  
and influence  
your community

As a local government councillor  
you can influence decisions about  
your community in areas including:

- Sport and Recreation
- Environment
- Community Development
- Public Health and Safety
- Essential Infrastructure
- Future Planning

*The best way to influence change is to  
be involved in the decision-making process.*

Local government councillors are elected by people who live and do business in the local Council area.

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## COUNCILLORS PLAY A VERY IMPORTANT COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP ROLE AND INFLUENCE THE DECISIONS THAT COUNCILS MAKE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS LOCALLY.

A Councillor gets involved in:

- determining local government policies
- developing and monitoring strategic plans and budgets
- making sure the Council's resources are used fairly for the benefit of all community members and
- overseeing the allocation of the local government's finances and resources.

The best way to influence change is to be part of the decision-making process. A term on Council is one way you can make sure that community perspectives are heard and considered by a local government. It's your community and it's your local government. Be part of both.

### A BIG DECISION, BUT REALLY WORTH IT!

Taking on a community leadership role means taking on extra work. So becoming a councillor is a big decision. There are demands on your time to read local government documents, attend monthly council meetings as well as attend additional meetings and community functions. You may have to travel, speak publicly and make decisions that are for the good of everyone in your local community.

Many councillors also represent local government on other boards and committees to make sure that they remain aware of community needs and goals. You will also receive training in a number of areas on being a Councillor. It's about balancing responsibilities, obligations and commitments. But for the extra work there are many rewards for being on council. It's your community and it's your local government. Be part of both.

### ONCE YOU ARE ELECTED AS A COUNCILLOR YOUR ROLE WILL INVOLVE:

- presenting your arguments and debating with other councillors
- reading and understanding reports, plans, policies including budgets, strategic plans and local laws
- public speaking at community events and being in the public eye
- dealing with issues that sometimes may not seem important to you
- experiencing expectations from within the Council and community on issues. It is the job of all Councillors to represent everyone in their communities
- dealing with the reality about what issues you can influence and what you can actually achieve and act on as a councillor.



## WHO CAN NOMINATE AS A CANDIDATE?

Local government elections are held every 2 years to elect councillors for terms of 4 years. People can nominate to become a candidate, if they are:

- 18 or older
- an elector of the district
- a resident or rate payer of the council area, or an occupier of rateable land in the area.

However, some people may be ineligible and therefore cannot be a candidate if:

- they are already an elected member of State or Federal Parliament
- they have been bankrupt
- they are in prison
- they have been convicted of a serious local government offence within the past five years
- they have been convicted on indictment of an offence for which the indictable penalty was or included imprisonment for life; or imprisonment for more than 5 years
- they are a member of another local government council.



## CHECKLIST - WHAT YOUR NOMINATION MUST INCLUDE:

1. Fill out a nomination form
2. Attach a candidate profile
3. Pay a deposit of \$80
4. Sign an authorisation form
5. Get in touch with the returning officer of your local government office about processing your nomination.

**Nominations open on Thursday, 5 September and close at 4.00pm on Thursday, 12 September 2013.**

If there are the same number of positions as candidates nominated, you will automatically be appointed as a councillor. If not you will have to think about campaigning for a position on council.

## ASSESS YOUR CHANCE OF WINNING

- Get to know the local area and issues really well.
- Attend some council meetings and get an idea of the meeting processes and issues discussed.
- Work out your campaign theme. The theme needs to reflect what the voters want to hear based on community issues. The community will want to know what you stand for so they can decide whether to vote for you.
- You will need to plan and market your campaign and promote yourself.
- You will need to develop a profile and be seen. This can be involvement in community groups and organisations. Listening to community and individual concerns.
- Encourage people to enrol and vote for you. Let them know why their vote is important.
- Work out who can help promote you as a candidate. You can consider publishing brochures, door knocking and meeting with people. There may be local media opportunities.



## CAMPAIGN TIPS

Being a candidate will involve time, money and effort.

Allow time for research and to find out local information.

Don't be afraid to ask for help.

# More Information

You can call into your local Council office and ask for information or contact the Department of Local Government and Communities

Department of Local Government and Communities

Telephone: (08) 6551 8700

Freecall: 1800 620 511 (Country callers only)

Website: [www.dlg.wa.gov.au/Content/LG/Elections/Publications.aspx](http://www.dlg.wa.gov.au/Content/LG/Elections/Publications.aspx)

You can find these publications and more that will provide information about the elections.

- Standing for Council - Information for candidates.
- Frequently asked questions about your local government elections - Commonly asked questions about election procedures and the law.