



## **Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council**

### **Role of Councillor**

### **We want you!**

In May 2027, Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council will hold elections to choose the 15 councillors who will represent the town for the next four years. If you are interested in your local community, please consider being a Councillor.

Councillors make a huge difference to the quality of life for local people and how local issues are dealt with. We would like people from all backgrounds and experiences, who reflect the communities they serve, to put themselves forward for election.

Local councils can only be as effective, relevant and vibrant as the people elected to run it, so we need councillors who are energetic and engaged – from all backgrounds and experiences, to reflect their communities.

Being a councillor is highly rewarding. No other role gives you a chance to make such a huge difference to the quality of life of people in your local area and to influence the way issues are dealt with locally.

### **So what does a town councillor do?**

Councillors play a vital role in ensuring their community's needs are met by making sure that the voices of their residents are heard and representing their views accordingly. Councillors work closely with the communities in their area to improve the quality of life for all residents and they have responsibility for a wide range of issues.

Councillors are likely to be involved in a wide variety of duties including:

- Preparing for and attending meetings
- Speaking on behalf of the community
- Public consultation and campaigning
- Policy formulation
- Liaising with council staff
- Responding to enquiries
- Representing the council at other meetings
- Looking at the services the council provides
- Monitoring the performance of the council

## **Am I qualified to become a town councillor?**

There are no formal qualifications that you need to become a councillor! However, you do need to meet some legal criteria to be eligible to stand for office. If you meet these criteria, have an interest in the future of local services, and feel passionately about your local area then you may be exactly what we are looking for.

To stand for election, on the day of nomination, you must be 18 or over, and a UK, EU or Commonwealth Citizen. You must either be registered to vote on the current register with the local council, or have either worked or lived in the council's area for one year, or have been an owner or tenant of any land or premises in the council's area for one year.

However, you cannot stand if you work for your local council, hold a politically restricted post for another authority, are subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order, have served a prison sentence (including suspended sentences) of three months or more within five years prior to the election, or have been disqualified under any legislation relating to corrupt or illegal practices.

## **How long is the term of office?**

The term of office for a district councillor is four years, but there is the option to resign part-way through your term if you are unable to continue in your position. If you stand to replace a councillor who has retired during their term you will only serve as a councillor for the remainder of that term of office until the next scheduled elections take place. At the end of the four-year term you can either retire or stand again in the next set of elections.

## **Co-Option**

In the event of a standing Councillor resigning Council is required to publish a Notice of Vacancy. The vacancy can be filled by co-option unless ten local electors submit a written request for a by-election. If such a request is received, an election would be held, and voted for by the local electorate. If not, the Town Council will proceed to fill the vacancy by co-option, i.e. consideration of an application at the next Full Council meeting. The candidate in this example does not stand for election but is co-opted to join the Council and serve until the next local elections (i.e. May 2027)

## **How do I stand for election?**

Once you have decided to stand for election you will need to decide whether you wish to stand as an independent candidate, or as a representative of a political party. If you are standing on behalf of a party then you will need to contact them to become a member of the organisation, if you are not already.

The [Electoral Commission's website](#) contains lots of useful information for prospective candidates for all types of elections.

## Process

Prior to an election a 'Notice of Election' will be displayed, to advertise the start of the election period and give information about the nomination process. The Democratic Services Team at East Suffolk Council run the Elections and support candidates through the process.

## Support for elected members

The Town Clerk at Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council provides support to councillors once they are elected.

If you are elected you will be invited to take part in an induction programme, introducing you to the workings of the council. Training for councillors continues throughout their term of office on a variety of relevant topics.

The officers working at the council will assist you in any way they can, such as advice about council procedures or problems in your ward.

## About Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council

**Full Council Meetings** are held on the second Tuesday of every month at 6.45pm, Leiston Community Centre.

Other Committees and Working groups of interest include:

Assets, Open Spaces, Planning, Highways, Energy and Infrastructure

## Assets owned by Council include:

Open Spaces	King Georges Recreation Ground Victory Road Recreation Ground Community Orchard Haylings Pond Valley Road Allotments Hayling Road Allotments Millenium Wood
Community Buildings	Waterloo Centre Leiston Community Centre Leiston Film Theatre
Other Assets	Dinsdale Public Conveniences

**If you would like to meet the Town Clerk and/or a serving Councillor to learn more about the role of Councillor please telephone the main office 01728 830388 or email: [townclerk@leistontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@leistontowncouncil.gov.uk). We look forward to hearing from you.**