



Guidance for Local Authority Candidates

Are you interested in representing your local area?
If so, this leaflet provides some helpful information

- ❖ The date of the next Local Authority General Election is Thursday 22nd July 2021
- ❖ Candidates need to put forward their names for election by Tuesday 29th June 2021
- ❖ Nomination papers are available from your Local Authority — see contact details below

To be eligible to stand for election, candidates must have been registered on the electoral register which was published on 1st April 2021, and must be 18 years or over on the day of the election

Help to shape the future

By serving on a local authority you can make your voice heard and influence decisions that will help to shape the future of your community.

housing, street lighting, public toilets, parks, playgrounds and other leisure facilities, car parking, environmental health, control of dogs and the enforcement of local byelaws.

What do local authorities do?

For the forthcoming elections there will be 21 town, district, village and parish authorities. There are also bodies for housing, waste management and regional swimming pools. The responsibilities of the local authorities vary, but may include waste collection,

Local authorities also vary widely in terms of their size and cost.

The largest, Douglas Borough Council, has gross expenditure of around £30million — half the total of all local authorities and more than 200 employees — whereas several of the smaller parishes have expenditure of less than £100,000 per year.

Anyone interested in standing as a candidate is encouraged to contact their local authority

Andreas. 306103	Garff..... 861241	Onchan.....675564
Arbory & Rushen.....834501	(Laxey, Lonan and Maughold wards)	Patrick. 803031
Ballaugh.....204166	German 816112	Peel.....842341
Braddan 852808	Jurby.....896979	Port Erin. 832298
Bride. 819235	Lezayre. 890183	Port St Mary..... 832101
Castletown825005	Malew823522	Ramsey..... 810100
Douglas.....696300	Marown.....851630	Santon.....342090
	Michael. 878836	

The Electoral Register

People must be on the electoral register on Thursday 1st July 2021 to be eligible to vote in the local authority elections.

The cut-off point for submitting your completed registration form to ensure your inclusion on the register is Friday 18th June 2021.

Further information is available from the Electoral Registration Unit, Crown and Elections, Cabinet Office, Government Office, Bucks Road, Douglas, IM1 3PN, email elections@gov.im or call 685754.

How long would I be elected for?

Your term of office, if elected, will be until 1st May 2025.

Attendance at meetings

Members are required to attend regular meetings, typically in the evening, which are minuted.

Some local authorities have committees that focus on specific workstreams or services, others have one main meeting.

Allowances

Local authority membership is not a paid office. Attendance allowances can be claimed as follows:

Daytime rate: £12.50 per hour (to a maximum of £50 per session).

Evening rate: £7.50 per hour (to a maximum of £30 per session).

The maximum allowances payable to a member per annum are £3,600 for evening sessions or £6,000 for daytime sessions (or both daytime and evening sessions combined).

Travel allowances can also be claimed if appropriate.

Setting a rate

One of the main functions of a local authority is to set a rate for the district to provide the

required services to the ratepayers.

When an authority fixes its rate and budget for the forthcoming year, it first estimates how much it will spend in that year to provide those services.

Any grants or income from other sources are deducted along with any changes in balances. The remaining sum is raised from local ratepayers through rates.

Rates are a tax on occupation of property — not a payment for services. Ratepayers cannot seek to pay less on the basis that they do not use some of the authority's services.

Housing Authorities

If a local authority is also a housing authority any expenditure on housing does not come from rate income. Instead it is generated from rents receivable and central government housing deficiency payments.

Confidentiality

Local authority members are sometimes provided with information in confidence, and the trust placed in them must not be abused by disclosing the information to any unauthorised person without the consent of the local authority.

Likewise, personal data held by the authority must not be disclosed to a third party. Any breach could result in a fine. This applies even when that person ceases to be an elected member.

Accounts

All local authorities are required to produce annual accounts which are audited and laid before Tynwald.

Local authorities are responsible for their own finances and should ensure they have robust financial management systems in place.

Every local authority has to appoint a Responsible Finance Officer who is approved by the Department of Infrastructure.

Functions

Local authorities carry out a wide range of functions, some which they are legally empowered to do and others that are performed with assistance from central government.

A summary of the functions that Local Authorities shall or may carry out in their district:

FUNCTION	NATURE OF SERVICE
Refuse collection	Collection of household and commercial waste; administration of civic amenity sites; recycling.
Street lighting	Provision and maintenance of street lighting.
Public toilets	Provision and maintenance of public toilets.
Planning	Power to appeal against a planning decision made within their district. Local authorities are also consulted on any designation of a conservation area or registration of a building affecting their district and on the preparation of the development plan for their area.
Trees and high hedges	Local authorities have the power to act in relation to complaints about trees and high hedges.
Certain highway services functions	Local authorities are responsible for hedge cutting, street sweeping, gully clearing and weed spraying within their districts. The Department of Infrastructure retains responsibility for these functions on strategic routes.
Litter	Local authorities must designate a Litter Officer to enforce the Litter Act 1972. Some authorities also provide and empty litter bins.
Abandoned vehicles	Local authorities have the power to remove a vehicle from a road or any land in its district that is causing an obstruction or danger.
Leisure facilities	Provision of recreational and entertainment facilities, including parks and playgrounds.
Car parking	Provision of off-street and short-stay disc parking.
Control of dogs	Enforcing byelaws made by the authority.
Public information and advice	Point of contact for information on local and central government matters.
Libraries and museums	Provision of public libraries and museums.

Declaration of interest – principles

Local authority members must comply with the following ethical principles:

* Members hold office by virtue of the law and must at all times act within the law. A member should make sure that he or she is familiar with the rules of personal conduct required by the law and the standing orders of the local authority.

* A member has an overall duty to the whole community and a special duty to his or her constituents, including those who did not vote for him or her.

* A member should never do anything which could not be justified to the public, and which could affect the reputation of the local authority.

* Members must not act in any circumstances in which there is a conflict between their personal interests and their public duties. This must also be borne in mind with any organisation that they may be a member of.

* They should regularly review their personal circumstances and, if in doubt, seek advice from an appropriate senior officer or legal adviser.

Functions

A summary of the functions carried out by Local Authorities with the assistance of Central Government:

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Enforcing legislation relating to environmental health, including statutory nuisances, verminous premises, unsanitary and unfit housing, regulation of flats, prevention of overcrowding, dangerous/ruinous buildings and unsightly land, and unsanitary drainage. All of these functions are in the main undertaken on behalf of local authorities by officers of the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture.

HOUSING

Provision of public sector housing in their districts. The Department of Infrastructure's Housing Division provides public sector housing in other districts. Sheltered accommodation for the elderly can also be provided. (Government meets 100% of the housing deficiency on the Island).

BUILDING CONTROL

This function is currently undertaken by Douglas and Onchan for their districts; elsewhere the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture is the Building Control Authority.

SEWERAGE

Manx Utilities is responsible for all sewerage on the Island, though this may be delegated to a local authority for a particular district.

Legislation

There is various legislation governing the constitution, proceedings and general powers of local authorities, principally the Local Government Act 1985.

Responsibilities

It is important that, when a person seeks to be elected as a member of a local authority, they have a basic understanding of the statutory functions, legislation and proceedings by which local authorities are bound. This leaflet provides a summary of some of those areas.

Borrowing

Local authorities are given power to borrow money for specified purposes. The consent of the Department is required in certain circumstances.

This leaflet has been produced by the Department of Infrastructure