



Who Stands for Council?

IT'S PEOPLE LIKE YOU.....

In May 2023, Biddulph residents will elect their next set of local councillors. Are you passionate about your community? Do you have innovative ideas for the council? Do you have concerns about a specific issue and want to do something about it? If this is you, then we need you. We need people from all backgrounds and experiences to put themselves forward for election.

BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL

Biddulph Town Council, based within the Town Hall, is the first tier of Staffordshire's three tier system of local government—County, District and Town/Parish Councils operate in the Staffordshire Moorlands.

Biddulph Town Council, created in 1974 to better represent the people of Biddulph, is your local council, and is responsible for the management of the Town Hall, Biddulph Grange Visitor Centre, the 'Bus Hub', burial grounds, allotments, tourism, community events, grant assistance to local groups, etc.

Although the smallest of the councils operating in the town, it has a varied workload, impacting the lives of those living in the town.

Biddulph has 22 unpaid councillors, elected by residents every four years, representing five geographical areas (known as wards).

Councillors engage with residents, local groups and businesses to understand their needs, make policy and take key decisions on the council's budget, service and projects.

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WITH COUNCILLOR'S:

- Councillor Chris Perkin
- Councillor Nigel Yates
- Councillor Charlie Smith

WILL IT TAKE UP A LOT OF TIME?

Unlike a normal job where your contract sets out how many hours you're expected to work, when it comes to being a councillor, it's definitely true that 'you get out exactly what you put in'.

The number of hours you need to spend will be determined by the number of committees you agree to be appointed to.

There will also be community council meetings and other events scheduled into your diary.

We try to keep August free of meetings each year, but some may take place, depending on council business.

Consider the impact on your family, you'll need their support and understanding as you may spend a lot of your spare time on council business.

THE ROLE OF A COUNCILLOR

Town Councillors are champions of the community and give residents a voice on the

decisions a Town Council makes. They play a key role:

- Regularly attending meetings of the council, and of any committee, sub-committee or other working group.
- Dealing with issues raised by constituents.
- Actively being aware of issues, inside and outside the council, which affect either their ward or the wider community.
- Working in partnership with other local organisations to identify and pursue local needs and aspirations, encouraging community action.
- Participating in local forums and events that collectively provide a focus for community activity and development.
- Representing the council in an ambassadorial role, articulating the council's policies and views, as well as projecting the good image of the council and Biddulph.

WHO CAN BE A TOWN COUNCILLOR?

Any person over 18 who is a British citizen, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or European Union can be a councillor if they are registered to vote in the area or have lived, worked or owned property there for at least 12 months before an election.

You cannot stand for election if you work for the council you want to be a councillor for, or for another local authority in a political restricted post; are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order; have been sentenced to prison for 3 months or more (including suspended sentences) during the 5 years before the day of an election or have been convicted of a corrupt or illegal practice by an election court.

DO I NEED SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS?

There are no special qualifications required to become a councillor, other than having a keen interest in your community and the town and being available for council meetings (which usually take place on Tuesday evenings).

Life experience is probably the best thing you can bring to the role.

WILL I GET PAID?

There is no salary for being a Biddulph Town Councillor; it is a voluntary role.

An allowance is available to cover reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred whilst carrying out council duties — such as travel expenses.

WHY BECOME A COUNCILLOR?

People decide to become a Councillor for a variety of reasons, usually because they want to make a difference in their community. You may already be involved in our community in some way, for example, in a parent council or a voluntary group and are looking to take the next step. Or, you may be thinking that your neighbour or friend would make an ideal candidate. Why not show them this information and encourage them to stand?

Being a Councillor requires commitment, patience and resilience and can be demanding and stressful but very rewarding and interesting too.

COUNCILLOR CHRIS PERKIN — INDEPENDENT

Why I became a councillor.....



SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND ATTRIBUTES REQUIRED

Having or being able to develop the following skills, knowledge and attributes will help you in the role:

COMMUNICATION SKILLS —including listening and interpersonal skills, public speaking skills, the ability to consider alternative points of view and to negotiate, mediate and resolve conflict.

PROBLEM SOLVING AND ANALYTICAL SKILLS— to get to the bottom of an issue and to think of different ways to resolve it, including considering the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

TEAM WORKING—to work with others in meetings and on committees.

ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS— to plan and manage time, keep appointments and meet deadlines.

ENGAGING WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY—making yourself available through meetings, the media, public forums, via email and on the telephone.

Skills gained through work, raising a family, caring for relatives, volunteering or being active in community or

COUNCILLOR NIGEL YATES — LABOUR

I've always been interested in politics, and believe that it should be a force for positive, inclusive change.

Getting involved in local politics is something that has always been on my mind, but work commitments previously prevented me from committing the time that I felt was required to make an impact.

I have to say in hindsight, I should have done it earlier, as I've found the role very rewarding and would recommend it to anyone who truly cares about their town, its environment, and its residents.



STANDING AS A CANDIDATE

You don't have to be a member of a political party to stand; you can be an independent councillor—you'll need to build your profile, so local people know who you are. If you want to represent a political party, then the next step would be to get involved with your party locally. This will help you find out more about what the role entails. It's up to the political parties' local groups to decide whether to select you as their candidate.

Whether selected by a party or standing as an independent candidate, you must be officially nominated. Ten people (registered electors in the ward where you wish to stand) must sign your nomination papers.

The local election process for Biddulph Town Council will begin in March 2023 when a Notice of Election will be published on the Town Hall noticeboard and on our website. You can request a nomination pack from the Returning Officer at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council —see contact details below.

COUNCILLOR CHARLIE SMITH — LABOUR

As someone who takes part in a lot of community events, including running charity events within the town, I always wondered what else I could do to support people in Biddulph. I saw councillors at the various events, working alongside the Town Council team. I was asked by a member of the public to stand, I did and was elected!

It's really interesting work and really great to be able to support the town and be an advocate for its residents.



USEFUL CONTACTS

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION

24A The Smithfield Centre, Haywood Street,
Leek ST13 5JW
Phone: 01538 542080
Email: smcaoffice@staffordshiremoorlands.org.uk

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Returning Officer, Moorlands House,
Stockwell Street, Leek ST13 6HQ
Phone: 01538 395500
Email: electoral.services@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk
Website: <https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk>

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS GREEN PARTY

Website: <https://staffsmoorlands.greenparty.org.uk>

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS LABOUR PARTY

25 Market Street, Leek ST13 6HX
Phone: 01538 383032
Website: <https://labour.org.uk>

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

Email: info@moorlandslibdems.org.uk
Website: <https://moorlandslibdems.org.uk>

Further information

There is more information available on the government's 'Become a councillor' page:
<https://www.gov.uk>

And The Local Government Association's 'Be a councillor' campaign is also helpful:
<https://www.local.gov.uk>