THINKING OF BECOMING A TOWN COUNCILLOR

Find out more...

What do Councillors do and how much time does it take?

How does the Council work?

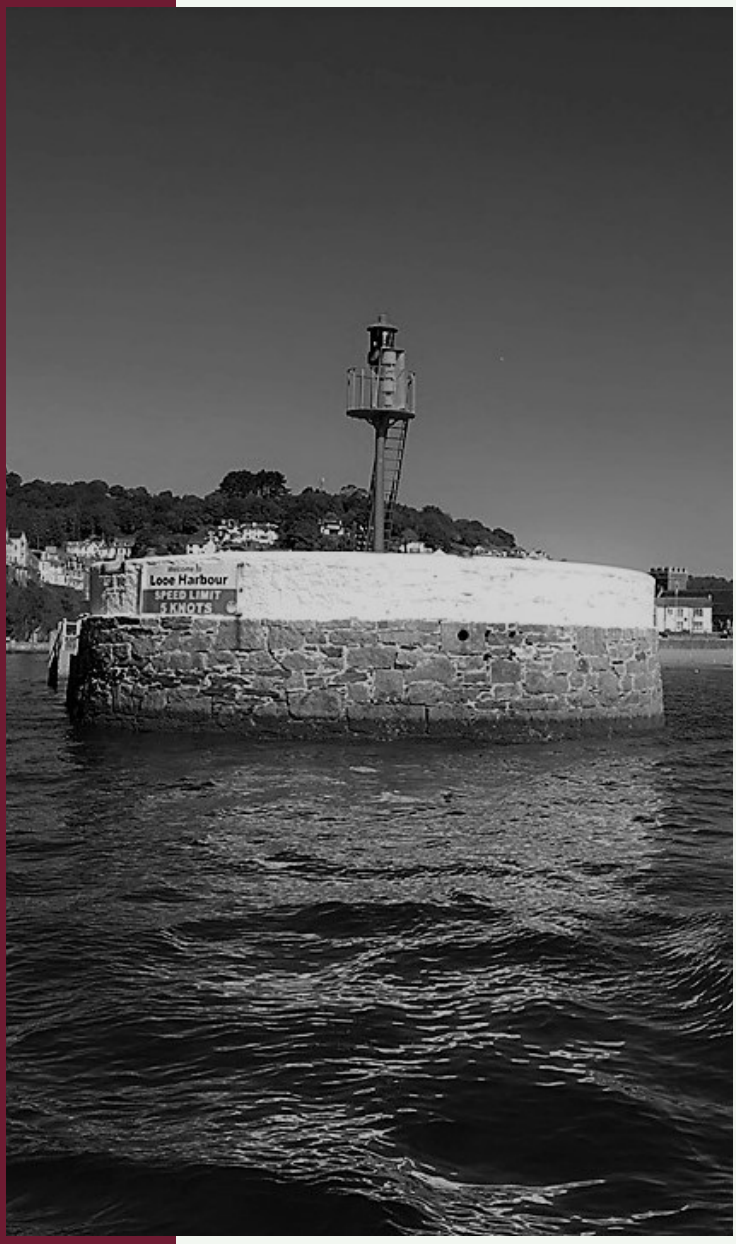
Apply to be a Councillor.

WHAT DO COUNCILLORS DO?

Councillors make decisions that influence how the Council works. The decisions they make affect the lives of everyone who lives and works in Looe or comes to visit here. Councillors also help people get and access the services they need when they experience difficulties.

If you are a Councillor you will:

- Represent everyone in your area;
- Be a community leader, bringing together partner organisations;
- Help to sort out problems for the people you represent;
- Work with community groups, the police and others to get things done;
- Hold the Council and other public organisations to account for their performance and the decisions they make;
- Help agree the budget for the Council and the level of tax;
- Help to decide which services the Council will provide;
- Be honest, open and abide by accepted standards of public life;
- ·Work with Council Officers to help resolve issues in the town;
- Explain and justify Council decisions and policies;
- Be a public figure and have your contact details published as a point of contact



BEING A COUNCILLOR

Our Councillors all take on particular responsibilities in the Council depending on their interests and experience so you could find yourself involved as a...

Ward residents' representative: for most this is the rewarding part of the job and is the role of all councillors

Trouble-shooter and advocate for the community: working with others to raise and sort out issues for residents

Member of a Committee, e.g. Planning, Finance or Assets, where you'll be more involved in specific Council responsibilities

Councillor Champion, e.g. for the Environment or Young People, taking a lead in furthering initiatives and being the link between the Council and your groups and projects

Member of a focus or working group, e.g. Neighbourhood Development Plan, which are set up for specific issues and then consult, consider and make representations to the Council

Whatever role you take on you will need to work closely with Cornwall Councillors and our partner organisations.

HOW MUCH TIME DOES IT TAKE?

Each Councillor approaches their role differently and there is a degree of flexibility that allows you to fit duties around your other commitments.

Being a Councillor does, however, require a significant commitment.

The Full Council usually meets around 9 or 10 times a year and you will also be on at least one Committee - some meet, monthly and others quarterly.

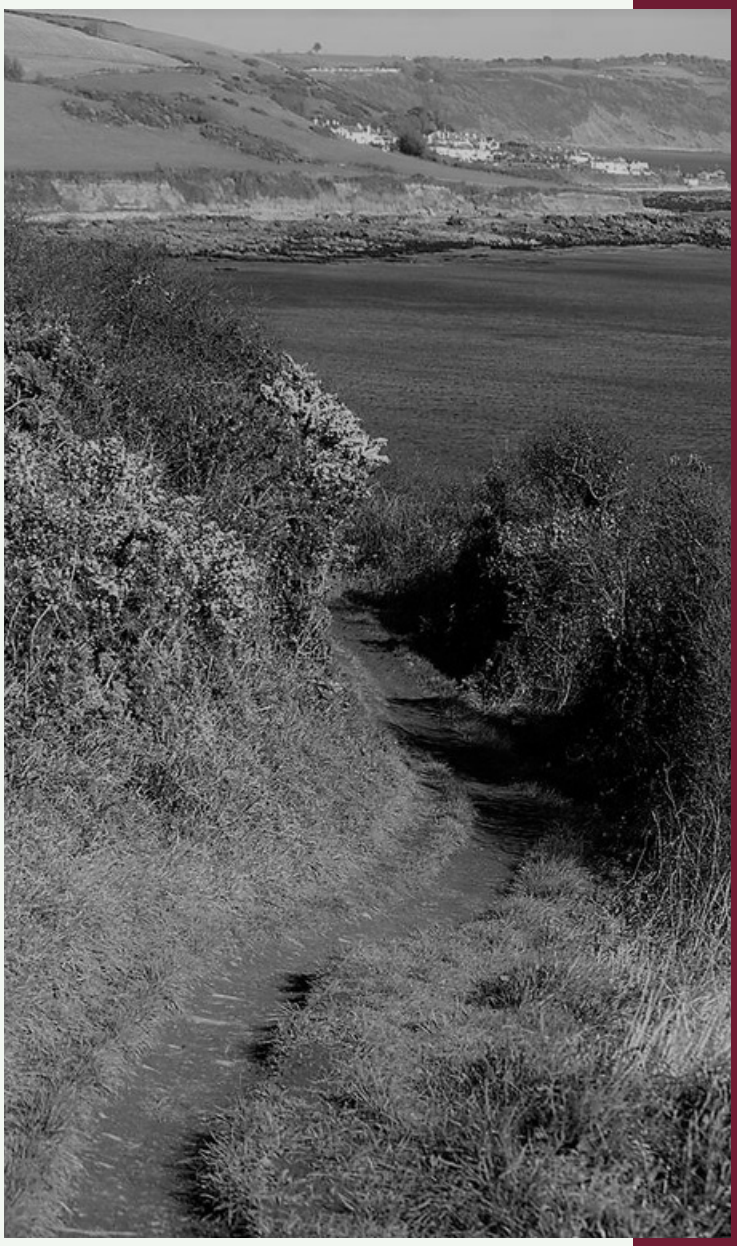
From time to time, there are other informal meetings and briefings about community projects and initiatives that you may be invited to attend.

All meetings are usually held at the Council Offices at the Millpool, although have recently been run remotely using video-conferencing. You will be asked to agree to attend every meeting that you are nominated to.

Outside of formal meetings you will need to deal with correspondence, you may be contacted by members of the public with questions and you may have other tasks that you have agreed to take on.

There will also be ceremonial duties and civic functions you attend as part of your duty to the community e.g. Remembrance Sunday and civic dinners.

COULD I DO IT?



It is important that the Council represent a cross section of all walks of life and reflects the diversity of our community.

Our Councillors have different backgrounds, levels of education, knowledge and experience. Most important is that you are:

- **involved and interested in the community;**
- **practical and determined to get things done;**
- **good at communicating and working with people;**
- **keen to help and prepared to listen to others;**
- **well organised, flexible and confident;**
- **keen to see community initiatives succeed.**

Our Councillors all follow Looe Town Council's Code of Conduct as well as the 'Nolan principles' which are the basis of ethical standards expected of people in public office. These principles are:

Selflessness
Integrity
Objectivity
Accountability
Openness
Honesty
Leadership

WHAT TRAINING WILL I RECEIVE?

All Councillors attend induction with Officers and experienced Councillors and are encouraged to shadow others to find out how things work.
You will also be asked to undertake specific training in some roles: e.g. to sit on the Planning Committee or to Chair a Committee.

DO I GET PAID?

No. The Council has resolved that Councillors do not receive expenses for their work. The Council will, however, meet the cost of your approved training and certain conference and seminar expenses.

WORKING TOGETHER

Councillors decide upon policies with advice from the Town Clerk. Council Officers directed by the Town Clerk then put them into practice. This is a close working relationship and mutual respect is important. Officers are employed by the Council, not Councillors, and therefore can only be directed by the Council and Town Clerk.

As a Councillor you will be supported by the Officer Team, who can advise you on local issues and council standards as well as signposting you to additional training that may be of benefit.

THE SMALL PRINT

To be a Councillor you must:
· be at least 18 years old
· be a British, commonwealth or EU citizen
· be on the electoral register, or have lived, worked or owned property in Looe for at least twelve months before the date of election
· not be a member of staff of the Town Council

You can stand for election as an independent Councillor or as a representative of a political party, but you must be their duly authorised candidate.

A BIT MORE ABOUT US...

The town council is the first tier of local government which means that we're close to our community. We're a vibrant, forward-thinking group who aim to use the powers of a Town Council positively for the benefit of our residents and visitors.

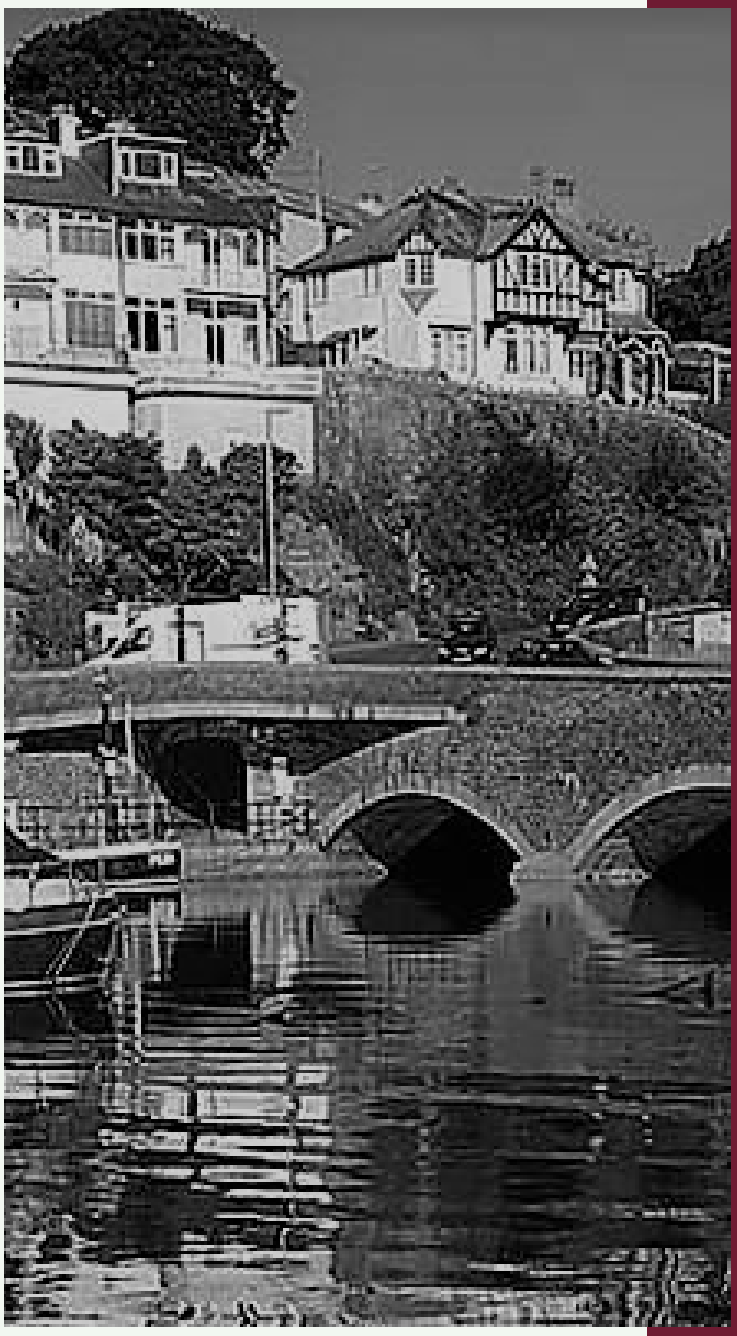
The range of powers available to Town Councils is constantly changing and more localism is being encouraged by the Government. Additional responsibilities, therefore, continue to be devolved to us by Cornwall Council (our second tier of local government).

Our responsibilities include Looe Library and Community Hub; Community Plans; the Mariners Garden; allotments (on lease); public conveniences; CCTV; Old Bridge Surgery car park; Community events; and Memorial benches around the town. We also comment on planning applications within our area and are actively involved in a number of projects with other local organisations.

KEY FACTS

2 Wards: East Looe and West Looe
15 Councillors
Approximately 5,500 residents
Annual budget circa £400,000

HOW WE WORK



We have a small team of officers who manage the day-to-day workings of the organisation and support Councillors with meetings, projects and engaging with the community. Officers are employees who are not elected or politically affiliated. Our team is made up of a Town Clerk; Deputy Clerk; Responsible Financial Officer; 2 Administration Officers; Community Hub Manager; 3 Community Hub Information Officers; a Content & Comms Officer; and a Cleaning & Maintenance team - Supervisor and 4 Operatives.

Our Committee structure is frequently reviewed to make sure we're meeting the needs of our community. Currently we have Committees for:
Planning;
Finance & Strategy;
Services, Assets & Community;
Staffing.

To provide the best local service possible, we aim to form good working relationships with our residents, local businesses and voluntary organisations throughout the town. Those that we work particularly closely with include:
Cornwall Council and Councillors
East Looe Town Trust
West Looe Town Trust
Looe Development Trust
Looe Harbour Commissioners
Devon & Cornwall Police
Cornwall Fire & Rescue Service

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

WHAT DO I STAND FOR?

If you are standing for election, you will need to tell residents what you feel you can bring to the Council. Do this in discussion with people, in your social media posts and in any election leaflets.

Try to explain what you stand for personally and what you want the Council to be doing to help the community in the next four years.

Tell people relevant details about yourself and give them examples of how you have been involved in community activities and initiatives.

THE ELECTION TIMETABLE

A new Council is formed every four years and interim elections are also held if vacancies arise during that period.

Where vacancies still remain after elections have taken place, the Council can co-opt additional members.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Make sure that you look on Looe Town Council's website and social media to see what any current issues might be.

The Cornwall Council website contains lots of information about Town and Parish councils and Elections.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

LOOE TOWN COUNCIL

The Millpool, West Looe, Cornwall, PL13 2AF
Telephone: 01503 262255

Email: enquiries@looetowncouncil.gov.uk

www.looetowncouncil.gov.uk