

## **Standing as a candidate to sit on the Parish Council of East Peckham**

East Peckham Parish Council actively seeks residents to stand for either election (every 4 years) or for co-option when a casual vacancy occurs. When a vacancy arises, residents who are interested in joining the parish council are invited to submit a C.V. An appointment to the position will be by a majority decision of the parish council.

Interested residents may find the following information useful and they are welcome to approach existing Parish Councillors or the parish office with any queries or questions.

- East Peckham Parish Council is non-political in that there are no parish councillors that have stood/or been elected as members of a political party. There is nothing to actually stop a parish councillor bringing strong views into a discussion however there is no 'political whip' and they still only have one vote and are subject to the normal policies and procedures of the parish council.
- It is up to individual councillors to decide how much time to commit to the parish council and some councillors are able to give more time than others. With 11 members the views are always varied and sometimes members do not agree on what should be done but by being a parish councillor they help to make a difference to the parish and lives of the residents.
- The parish council is an effective way to get involved in community life but most of our work goes unnoticed by the general public. It is generally only when large scale local issues occur that the public becomes more involved. At all other times the parish council carries on with its day to day commitments of supporting the community, community groups, responding to government consultation, etc.
- Much of the work is done at committee level and parish councillors cannot only influence the work but also some of the projects that the parish council considers.

Councillors have three main areas of work;

**DECISION MAKING:** through attending meetings and committees with other elected members, councillors decide which activities to support, where money should be spent, what services should be delivered and what policies should be implemented.

**MONITORING:** councillors make sure that their decisions lead to efficient and effective services by keeping an eye on how well things are working.

**GETTING INVOLVED LOCALLY:** as local representatives, councillors have responsibilities towards their constituents and local organizations. This often depends on what the councillor wants to achieve and how much time is available.

The day-to-day work of a councillor may include (if you volunteer for it), making representations to the borough council and other organisations such as the police, the Highways Authority, schools and colleges

Visiting the Council is the best way to find out what happens. Give us a call or look on our notice boards to find out when the next public meeting is to be held and come along as a spectator.

The Council supports training for councillors and this and in-house training will be made available.

There are approximately 8,500 parish councils in England and most of the parish councillors would have initially become involved due a local issue that was of concern to them. None of them would have had previous experience but all of them would have wanted to contribute to and improve their community. A sense of humour, a wish to help and common sense are probably the main attributes of a parish councillor.

To stand for co-option a candidate must be 18 years or over and not be a bankrupt, not (for the previous 5 years) been convicted with a jail sentence (suspended or not). You must fulfil one of the following qualifications;

- You must be on the register of electors.
- Live within 3 miles of the Parish boundary
- Work within the Parish boundary
- Own land or other premises within the Parish boundary.

On joining the Parish Council you will be required to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and a Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

Additional information that might be of help to you in deciding whether to put yourself forward:

- With 11 parish councillors there is a variety of experiences, interests and opinions. East Peckham Parish Council is, at present, non-political.
- The parish council has a comprehensive list of policies and procedures and an information folder is supplied to every new councillor. All of this helps new parish councillors settle in very quickly and arrangements are made, for the first couple of meetings, for them to sit by an experienced parish councillor who can offer guidance if needed.

The Parish Clerk will be happy to clarify any information or answer any questions you may have.

**HOW TO APPLY.**

Submit a C.V, no more than 2 sides of A4 please, to the parish office. You can include information on job/life/volunteer experience. You may wish to make some comments about how you feel you could contribute and what your interests are. Include anything that you feel would interest/benefit the parish councillors in making a decision.

**Comment from the Parish Clerk**

Please do not be put off by the thought of having to speak or provide a C.V. Some of the existing councillors will have gone through the same process and will be very sympathetic and understanding. If you are disabled or have a hearing problem then feel free to talk to me about how I can help.

**Address for C.Vs.**

**East Peckham Parish Council, The Parish Office, East Peckham Jubilee Hall,  
Pippin Road, East Peckham, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 5BT**

**Tel 01622 871309**

**E-mail: [admin@eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk)**