

**STAND FOR  
WHAT YOU  
BELIEVE IN**



If you are intending to stand for Council, please note that Nomination Forms must be completed and returned to the Returning Officer at the Castle, by no later than noon on Wednesday, 13 November 2019.

**BE A  
COUNCILLOR**



## WHAT NEXT?

If there is more than 1 candidate then a Poll will be taken on Wednesday, 27 November 2019. Polling stations will be set up in all eight electoral districts as per normal practice.

Candidates can witness the Poll in all its stages and be present at the counting of votes. Further details will be provided to candidates after nomination day.

## CAMPAIGNING

Candidates are at liberty to promote their candidature in the lead up to the Bye-election. However, they or anyone else taking part in the election process, should conduct themselves in a manner that does not contravene the provisions of the elections legislation.

For example, it is an offence to influence the outcome of the election through acts of bribery.



**For further information about the elections process, please contact either:**

Returning Officer, Carol George, on tel: 22470  
or email: [carol.george@sainthelena.gov.sh](mailto:carol.george@sainthelena.gov.sh)

or

Assistant Returning Officers:

Gillian Francis on tel: 22314 or email: [gillian.francis@sainthelena.gov.sh](mailto:gillian.francis@sainthelena.gov.sh)

Anita Legg on tel: 22590 or email: [sec.em@helanta.co.sh](mailto:sec.em@helanta.co.sh)

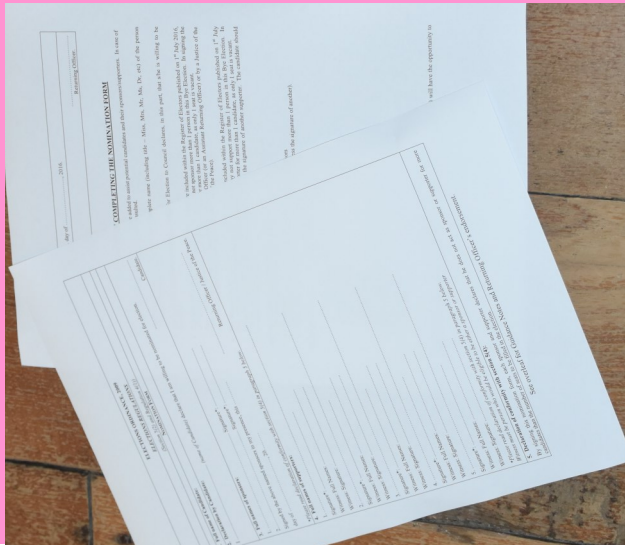
date draws nearer. This means completing the prescribed nomination form. You will need to have two sponsors whose signatures have to be attested by the Returning Officer or a Justice of the Peace; and, five supporters whose signatures will need to be witnessed.

Sponsors, supporters and witnesses will need to be on the Register of Electors published in the Government Gazette on 18 October 2019. A person should not sponsor or support more than one candidate.

Nomination forms can be obtained from the following venues:

**The Castle Reception**  
**The Customer Services Centre**  
**The Public Library**  
**The SHG website:**  
[www.sainthelena.gov.sh](http://www.sainthelena.gov.sh)

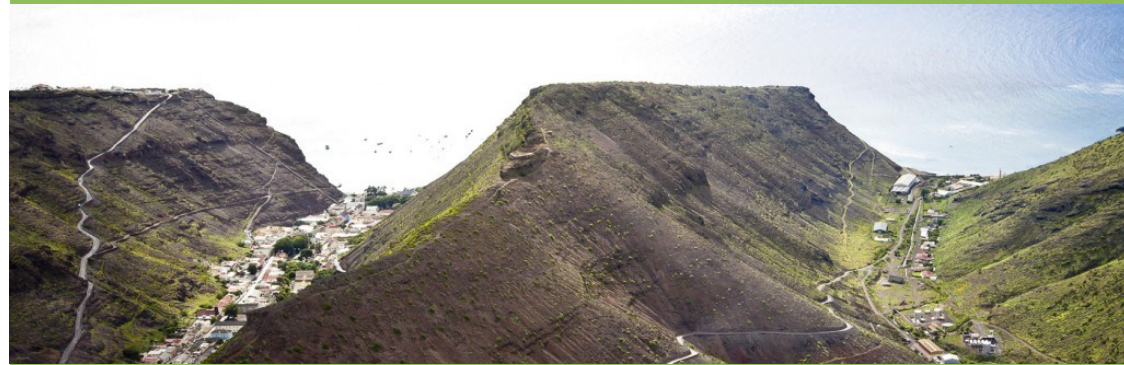
**Forms must be returned to the Returning Officer at the Castle by no later than noon on Wednesday, 13 November 2019. Any forms submitted after this time cannot be accepted.**



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE: YOUR GUIDE TO BECOMING A COUNCILLOR

What are the issues St Helena is facing?  
Is it the state of the environment, the need for more activities for young people, improving services for older people, making the roads safer or ensuring that local businesses can thrive?  
Do you think the Island is moving in the right direction in terms of social and economic development?

Whatever needs changing, you could be just the person to help make the change by becoming a Councillor. Perhaps you are already involved in Island affairs and want to take the next step? Or you may be looking for a worthwhile and rewarding way to help our community? This publication should help you decide whether to take the plunge and stand in the 2019 Bye-election.



## WHO CAN STAND FOR ELECTION?

We have a single constituency on St Helena with one vacant seat on the Legislative Council to make a total of 12 Councillors to represent the whole Island. Save for some exceptions that are listed further on in this publication, anyone can stand for election provided they are on the Register of Electors published on 18 October 2019 and are at least 21

years of age. There are no prerequisite qualifications or experience. You will just need to have a genuine interest in Island affairs and be committed and hardworking. The role of a Councillor will allow you to make a difference to the quality of life for the people of St Helena. Being a Councillor is both challenging and rewarding.



## THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM

St Helena has a committee system. Once elected, you will become a member of the Legislative Council. There are currently five Council Committees namely the Economic Development Committee, Education Committee, Environment & Natural Resources Committee, Public Health Committee and Social & Community Development Committee.

Each Council Committee is allocated policy responsibility for specific areas of Government business. For example, the Social & Community Development Committee is responsible for policy for any legislation for the following: social security, social services, culture & heritage, leisure, human rights, immigration, sports & recreation and employment rights.

## WILL I GET PAID FOR BEING A COUNCILLOR?

Yes, Councillors are paid as follows:

- Members of Legislative Council  
£14,000 per annum
- Members of Executive Council  
£18,000 per annum

In addition, Councillors are also eligible for the following allowances and benefits:

- Silver internet package
- mileage allowance at 60p per mile for some official journeys.

A contributory pension will be paid on behalf of Elected Members in line with St Helena Government staff policy and the pension rules as applicable at the time that an Elected Member entered Council.

Councillors are also provided with computer equipment i.e. laptop, printer and consumables.

When travelling overseas on official business, Councillors receive also various allowances.



## THE TIMESCALE

If elected, you will have the opportunity to serve on Legislative Council until 2021 when the next General Election is due, although the constitution allows the Governor to dissolve Council at any time prior to the expiration of 4 years from the date Legislative Council first meets.

## NEXT STEPS

Once you decide you want to take it further and put yourself forward as a candidate, what are the next steps?

You must make sure that you are officially nominated as the election

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## WHY SHOULD I BECOME A COUNCILLOR?

There are many reasons why people decide to become a Councillor. They include:

- Wanting to make a difference and be involved in shaping the future of the Island
- Being concerned about constituents and wanting to ensure that the community gets the right services

- Wanting to represent the views of constituents and ensure that community interests are taken into account
- Wanting to pursue your political beliefs
- Wanting to contribute your business or professional skills
- Concerns about particular issues.

## WHO CAN BECOME A COUNCILLOR?

The easy answer is almost anyone, as long as you are:

- On the Register of Electors published on 18 October 2019
- At least 21 years old

However, there are some exceptions. You can't be a Councillor if you:

- Are by virtue of your own act, under acknowledgement of allegiance, obedience or adherence to a foreign power or state
- Are an undischarged bankrupt, having been adjudged or declared bankrupt under any law in force in any country
- Are mentally ill within the meaning of any law
- Have been sentenced to prison for 12 months or more (including suspended sentences but excluding sentences in lieu of fines) as

imposed by a court of law in any country

- Are disqualified for membership of Legislative Council in connection with election offences
  - Hold an office within SHG and do not have the necessary approval to stand for election
- Hold an office as a judge or judicial officer (including Justice of the Peace)
- Hold an office that is exercising any function in connection with the election or compilation of the Register of Electors

If you are in any doubt about whether you are eligible to stand as a Councillor, you should contact the Returning Officer for advice. Contact details are provided in this document.

## WHAT DO COUNCILLORS DO?

Councillors consider a variety of issues that are in the public interest and find a balance when prioritising how to deal with these issues. Being an effective Councillor requires dedication, commitment and the ability to engage with your constituents. Councillors are very much in the 'public eye' and have to balance the needs and interests of their constituents with the overarching needs of the Island.

If you become a Councillor, you will, amongst other things, be involved in setting the strategic goals and objectives for SHG, formulating policies, approving legislation, allocating budgets to SHG directorates and monitoring SHG directorate performance against strategic plans and budgets. You will have to attend meetings and read papers in advance of the meetings to ensure that you are able to effectively contribute to discussions and make informed decisions. These responsibilities will all make legitimate demands on a Councillor's time, on top of the demands and needs of their personal lives. Before you consider becoming a Councillor you may want to discuss it with your family and friends to make sure they understand what you are taking on. You will need their support as you'll have to spend some of your spare time on

Council business. Councillors need to stay in touch with their constituents. There are different ways to do this and if elected you will need to consider how you can best engage with the community. You could hold regular drop-in surgeries where you provide opportunity for constituents to meet you and discuss their problems or concerns. You could hold public meetings or make use of social media. You may also need to spend time visiting constituents in their homes. On top of this you will be dealing with letters, emails and phone calls from constituents.

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When dealing with casework or council business you may need to meet with SHG officials. An effective partnership between Councillors and the administration is important to help ensure optimum service delivery for the Island.

Councillors also have a scrutiny role. Scrutiny is the crucial process of looking at the work and decisions of the executive.

Councillors serving on the Public

Accounts Committee are more involved with scrutiny but others are equally responsible. Councillors may also sit on Statutory Boards and Committees, for example the Enterprise St Helena Board and the Employment Rights Committee. Appointments to such Boards and Committees are more often than not, linked to a Council Committee.

#### *A typical day in the life of a Councillor can start at 6am*

*6am - 7.30am Respond to emails from constituents, directorates and elected members*

*8am Double check that you are well equipped for your first meeting*

*9am Attend Council Committee meeting*

*1pm Call at the office to check for emails and messages and follow up on those that are urgent*

*2pm Private meeting with a constituent*

*3pm Meeting with officials to follow up on outstanding actions*

*7pm Attend constituency/ public meetings or read documents and undertake research relating to key issues*

*9.30pm Check emails, voice mails and social media, and ensure final preparation for the next day's meetings*

## **DO I NEED ANY SPECIAL SKILLS OR EXPERIENCE TO BE A COUNCILLOR?**

A Council made up of individuals who can relate to and represent different segments of the community tend to make better informed decisions. Ideally Councillors should have a broad

range of skills and life experience. You don't have to be highly educated or have a profession. Skills gained through raising a family, caring for a sick or

disabled relative, volunteering or being active in faith or community groups can be just as valuable. While you don't need any special qualifications to be a Councillor, having or being able to develop the following skills, knowledge and attributes will help you in the role:

#### **• Communication skills**

These include listening and interpersonal skills, public speaking skills, the ability to consider alternative points of view and to negotiate, mediate and resolve conflict.

#### **• Problem solving & analytical skills**

This includes being able 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.

#### **• Organisational skills**

Being able to plan and manage your time, keep appointments and meet deadlines.

#### **• Ability to engage with the community**

You may have to make yourself available through meetings, the media (including social media), public forums, debates and on the telephone.

#### **• Team working**

Being able to work with others in meetings and on committees and being able to complete any tasks that you agree to do on time.

You may have gained skills and knowledge through professional, personal or community experience. These could include:

- Knowledge of the needs of specific groups such as children and young people, older people or people with health problems
- An understanding of financial management and reporting processes
- Legal and regulatory systems or procedures
- Housing, regeneration or environmental issues
- Any other skills that relate to the work or facilities provided by SHG.

Don't worry if you feel that you don't have all of these skills or confidence to be a Councillor. The administration will provide support and guidance during your term in office and you will also receive an induction pack immediately after election to office.