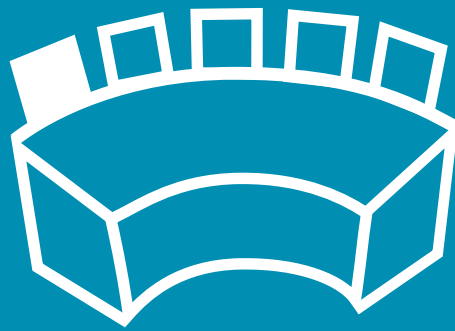


Want a seat at the table?

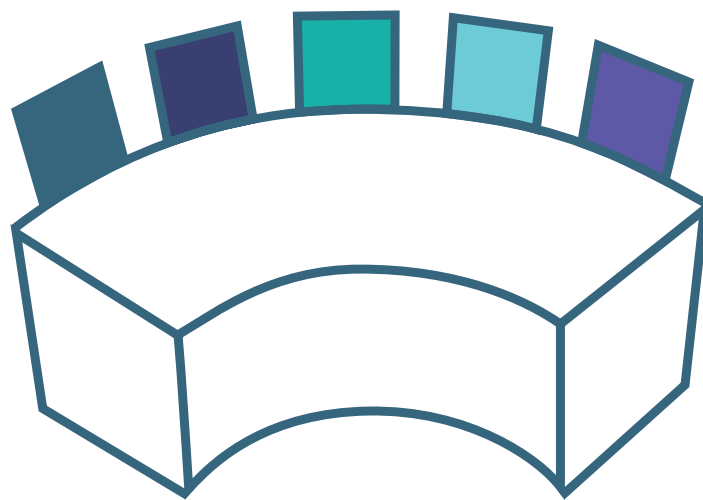


Information for candidates in
Tasmanian council elections

LGAT

Local
Government
Association
Tasmania

RUN FOR YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL



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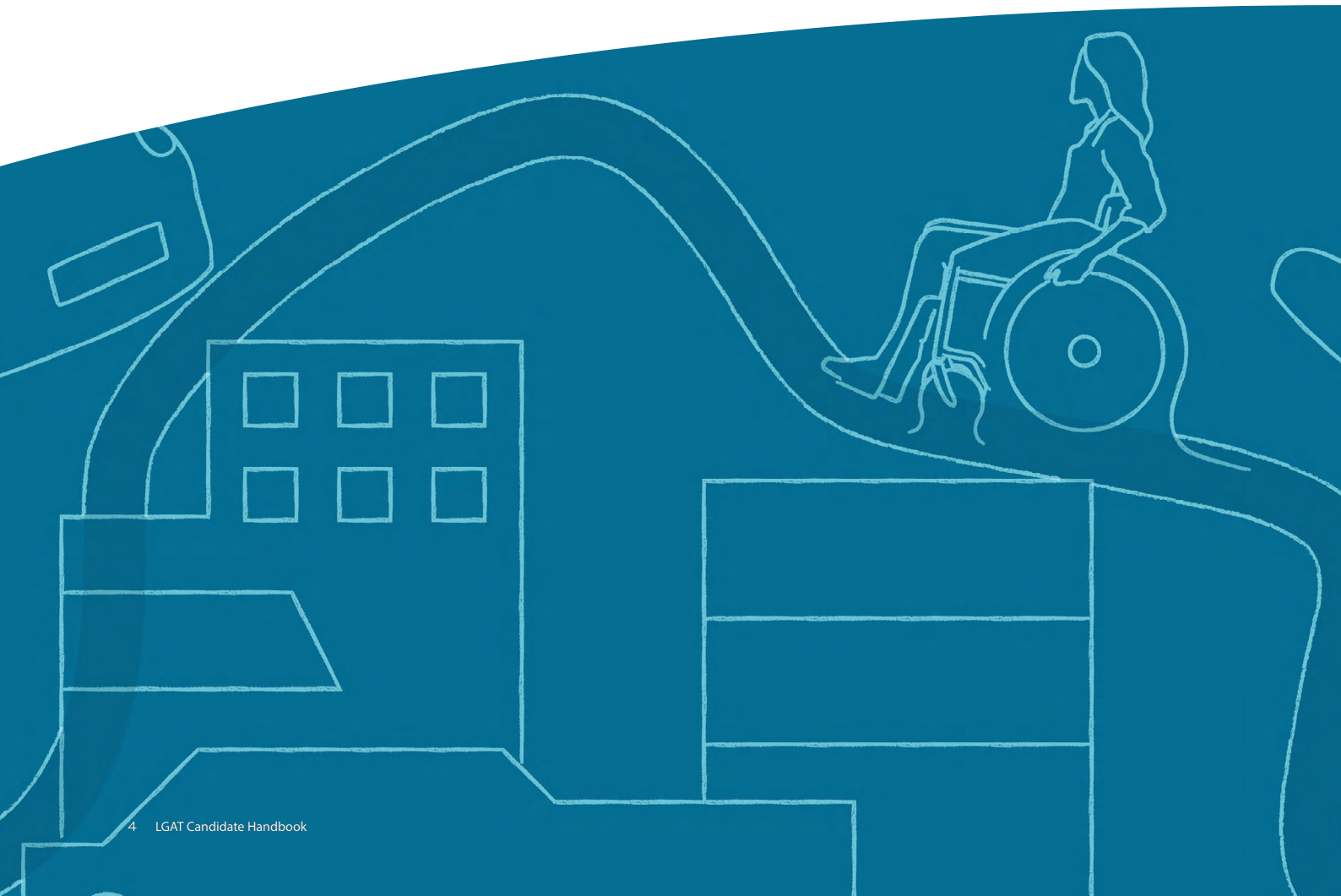
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Introduction

This resource has been prepared by the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) to provide potential candidates in the Tasmanian local government elections 2026 with important information to inform their decision to run for office.

It will provide you with information on becoming a local government councillor and help you to understand a councillor's role and responsibilities. In addition, it provides information on the election process to help you decide whether to nominate and walks you through how to run an election campaign.

Throughout the document, we have links to other resources that provide more detailed information.







About local government

Local government is a vital part of our system of government - representing people who live, work and visit local communities.

The three tiers of government - local, state and Commonwealth - work together to govern and provide services to the community. Although each level of government operates differently and has very different powers and functions, all have vital roles in Australia.

Local government is an elected system of government directly accountable to the local community. Councils understand the needs of their local area and deliver a diverse range of services to their community.

A brief history

Our present local government structure has its roots in the colonial past of the early nineteenth century. Yet, sophisticated forms of local governance came before this time and have existed for thousands of years.

The palawa/pakana Aboriginal nations comprised complex social groups who developed responsible use and access to the land's resources. These groups controlled access and use of trade, managed cultural and political processes and were deeply connected with seasonal migration and land management.

When British settlers arrived in Tasmania, they disrupted and displaced these pre-existing structures of the palawa/pakana people. The British began organising localised and discrete authorities over the eighteenth century to provide essential services. These early examples of local governance reflected their former homes' civic and political traditions in Britain.

After granting responsible self-government in 1856, there were several attempts to achieve full and consistent municipalisation in Tasmania, eventually leading to the *Local Government Act 1906*. This legislation divided Tasmania into 51 local government areas and gave specific roles and responsibilities to councils.

Local government experienced significant change over the next one hundred years as Tasmania grew into the twentieth century, including modernisation, a reduction in the number of councils and further changes in what 'representation' and 'local' meant. This culminated in the modernisation processes of the 1990s and the passing of the *Local Government Act 1993*, where local government legislation currently stands.

In 2022, the Tasmanian Government embarked on the Future of Local Government Review (the Review). The Review provided insights into how local government can best serve the Tasmanian community in the future.

As part of the Review, the history and foundations of local government are explored in a research paper by the University of Tasmania. Please read the [full paper here](#) for a comprehensive background of local representation and governance in Tasmania.



Councils in Tasmania

Tasmania has 29 councils. Each council is responsible for governing and managing its municipal area and covers a defined area that varies in geography, size, population and environment. Despite these differences, all councils have the same general powers and responsibilities, and the discretion to provide services their community needs.

**ALL COUNCILS HAVE THE SAME
GENERAL POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES,
AND THE DISCRETION TO PROVIDE SERVICES
THEIR COMMUNITY NEEDS.**





Council functions and responsibilities

Councils are an important link for communities and other levels of government. They represent communities in delivering informed and responsible local decision making, they also participate in the development of policy and planning activities with other levels of government.

Councils provide many different services that benefit ratepayers, residents and visitors. Some of the essential services they provide include:

- Roads and bridges.
- Parks and sportsgrounds.
- Planning for and response to disasters and emergencies.
- Animal control.
- Waste and recycling.
- Land use planning, building and environmental services.
- Public health and food safety.
- Local events.

Councils work hard to ensure they are acting in the community's best interests and use resources in a socially just and sustainable way. They are all about providing for people within our community and doing this through various services.

Councils also provide many vital services that we often don't think about – but these are just as important. Some of these services include:

- Street lighting.
- Information services.
- Swimming pools and leisure centres.
- Community facilities and halls.
- Coastal care.
- Support services for older people and people with a disability.
- Tourism initiatives.
- Promoting economic development.





Why stand for council?


Consider how the many services councils provide improve daily life in your local community. In nominating for council, you are probably someone who wants to make a difference for the community across a range of issues.

Imagine your community without well maintained roads and footpaths, parks and playgrounds, community spaces and sporting facilities - the list goes on. Councils provide many services, programs, and infrastructure to benefit the people living in their communities.

Elected councillors determine the priorities for services, programs, infrastructure, and supporting policies. Becoming a councillor presents the opportunity to help shape the local direction and create long term, positive outcomes within your community.

Being a councillor is a rewarding experience that provides challenges - requiring commitment, responsibility, and, importantly, accountability. Many people in our local communities offer solid and strategic leadership. However, local government can only perform at its peak and make informed decisions when a diverse group of leaders represent the community.

If you want to invest in the future of your community, are willing to learn and participate, and are prepared to contribute strategically to the decision making processes that benefit your broader community - you should explore what it takes to be a councillor and nominate for council elections.



TEAMWORK IS CENTRAL TO HOW COUNCILS WORK - WORKING WITH OTHER COUNCILLORS AND THE COUNCILS' STAFF IS IMPORTANT FOR EFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING.



Do you have what it takes?

Are you passionate about your local community and willing to work as part of a team?

By working as a councillor, you are using your skills to work effectively on the council and influence the future direction of your local community.

However, it is essential to understand that councillors do not make decisions independently.

Teamwork is central to councils being effective – working with other councillors and the councils' staff is critical for effective decision making.

It doesn't mean you have to agree on everything. However, it does mean that you will need to be prepared to engage in respectful debate on issues and build effective, professional working relationships.

The following tables list some of the qualities that may help you be an effective councillor. Consider whether these are attributes you already possess or are willing to develop to serve your community.



Councillor Skills Checklist

PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS



Do you...	Already possess	Willing to possess
Remain calm and respectful in all situations, even when you feel challenged or under pressure?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider other people's culture, values and feelings and show compassion and empathy when making difficult decisions?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Want to achieve great things for your community and make a positive difference?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicate clearly and succinctly, employing respectful language and tone?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listen deeply, seeking to understand others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

READING PEOPLE AND SITUATIONS



Do you...	Already possess	Willing to possess
Have an awareness of the needs, motivations and values of other people?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have the ability to notice and understand other people's perspectives (regardless of whether or not you agree with them)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make professional, well informed and ethical decisions in difficult circumstances?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have the ability to make informed decisions when presented with input from multiple stakeholders from varying interest groups?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have the ability to make fact-based decisions rather than be influenced by emotions?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

WORKING WITH OTHERS

Do you...	Already possess	Willing to possess
Manage relationships and work well with others to achieve desired outcomes?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engage respectfully in debates with others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enjoy connecting with and learning from others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ask questions, bring an open mind to decision making and admit when you don't know an answer or make a mistake?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Carefully consider the evidence and different points of view presented by multiple stakeholders to make a decision in the best interest of the community?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make decisions based on rules and professional advice, rather than personal views?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



SKILLS

Skilled in...	 Already possess	 Willing to possess
Listening and communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Analytical and strategic thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of computers, mobile devices and other communication tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing difficult conversations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public speaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

KNOWLEDGE

Understanding of...	Already possess	Willing to possess
The needs and aspirations of your local council area and community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local government roles and responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social justice principles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meeting procedures and principles of good governance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relevant legislation and policies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Australia's political system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

STRATEGIC THINKING

Are you...	Already possess	Willing to possess
Interested in the world around you and keep track of long-term and current trends and how they may have an impact upon local plans and objectives?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Able to articulate your clear vision or intent for serving your community and contributing to the greater good?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Want to achieve great things for your community and make a positive difference?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Curious to understand, learn and consider all relevant facts and options when making a decision?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Councillors

As part of the role, councillors perform a variety of tasks. These tasks go beyond the regular council meetings and attending the occasional opening of a building or project.

The role of a councillor is like a part-time job – similar to the Director of a Board. Councillors receive a taxable allowance that the Tasmanian Industrial Commission determines.

The part-time role of a councillor is often undertaken whilst juggling family, community or paid work responsibilities. Legislation requires that councillors must attend a specific number of council meetings and cannot miss too many in a row without a leave of absence.

The role of a councillor

Councillors serve the community by listening to residents and local businesses and representing their views on council. You will work with the other councillors to make strategic decisions about how the council will address the community's needs.

It will include setting objectives to meet local requirements, establishing priorities between competing demands, and deciding how to raise and allocate resources. Legislation and policies, together with the council's strategic management plans, provide the framework for the ongoing management and operation of the council.

Councillors do not get involved in the day-to-day running of the council. It is the responsibility of the General Manager, or Chief Executive Officer (CEO)¹ to direct council officers to achieve the council's strategic objectives.

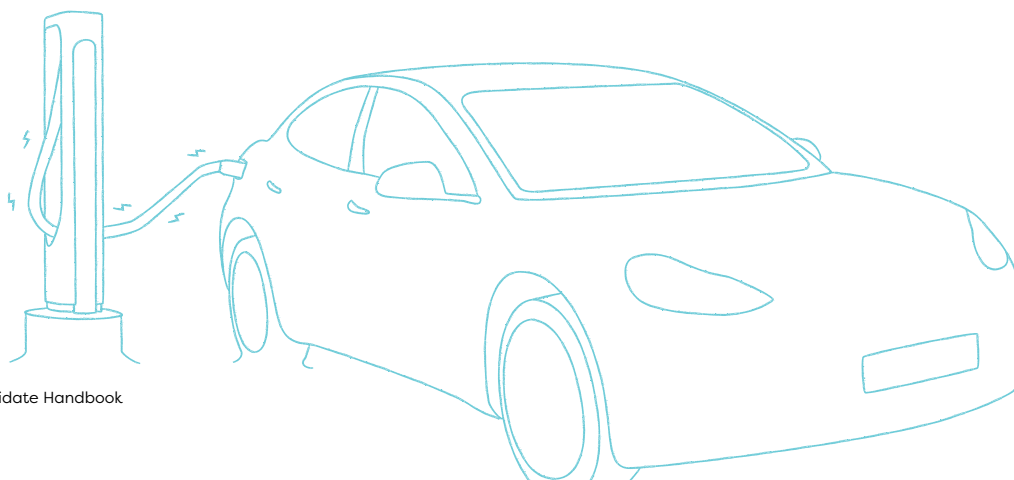
Councillors may also represent the council on other bodies, such as local organisations or regional bodies. You could also represent local government at the state and national levels by involvement with LGAT.

One of the most important roles you will have as a councillor is to make policy decisions for how your community is governed – within the parameters of law set by the Tasmanian Parliament.

Your role as a councillor will typically involve:

- Reading council agendas and business papers to prepare for meetings.
- Taking part in discussions and decision making at council and committee meetings.
- Reviewing strategic plans, policies and budget information.
- Acting as the 'Planning Authority' to decide on development proposals for your community within the rules of your planning scheme.
- Being available to discuss and advise community members on individual concerns and relay these through the appropriate channels.
- Participating in civic events such as citizenship ceremonies and awards.
- Representing council on other bodies and meetings.
- Providing leadership within your community.

¹Councils can utilise the title of either General Manager or CEO. For ease of reference this document will use the term 'general manager' to refer to both titles.





Who can nominate?

Almost any Australian citizen enrolled for state and federal elections in your municipality is eligible to stand for council.

It is an open opportunity to represent your community and make a positive impact. You can nominate for a position on the council regardless of qualifications, religion, race, gender, experience or profession.

Nominations are encouraged from people with diverse backgrounds to ensure that a wide range of views are represented.

For more detailed information about nominating, please see the Tasmanian Electoral Commission website.

Why diversity is important

Communities include a wide variety of people from different backgrounds with varying needs and interests. People from some groups or diverse backgrounds are often underrepresented as candidates and councillors in Tasmania and other levels of government. These include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- People with a disability.
- People who are gender diverse – LGBTIQ+.
- Young people.

Strong and effective councils reflect the diverse communities they serve. That's why it's crucial that people from diverse backgrounds, genders, abilities and ages represent their community.

COUNCILLORS DO NOT GET INVOLVED IN THE DAY-TO-DAY RUNNING OF THE COUNCIL. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO DIRECT COUNCIL OFFICERS TO ACHIEVE THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.



Allowances and expenses

During your term on council, you will receive an annual allowance. This is not a salary. The Tasmanian Industrial Commission (TIC) sets the allowance every four years before council elections. The amounts are adjusted annually by a CPI-based formula.

Councillor allowances are determined based on a range of factors, including the size, population, and revenue of each council. The State Government is proposing to update the categories and criteria for determining councillor allowance following the 2026 election. You can find out more on the [Office of Local Government website](#).

As allowances vary between councils, you should contact your local council to determine the allowance in your council area.

In addition to an allowance, you are entitled to receive reimbursement for some expenses incurred during your duties as a councillor. These expenses can include travel and child care to enable you to attend council or committee meetings and functions.

Councils may also decide to reimburse other expenses, such as telephone and internet costs incurred during council duties. Your council's allowances policy will explain what expenses you will be able to recover.

Personal interest returns

Shortly after the 2026 Local Government Elections, the State Government will be introducing changes to support the improved management of councillor interests, including the introduction of a Personal Interest Return (PIR), providing details on things like sources of income, property interests and memberships.

The changes will involve a detailed PIR to be completed and provided to the council's general manager. However, only a summary register of information in returns will be made available on council websites. It is expected that the public summary will not contain:

- any monetary value of income or shares,
- the street address of any property or land and
- any other information that could compromise the personal safety of a person at risk or unreasonably expose a business, commercial undertaking.

Further guidance and thresholds around what does (and does not) need to be disclosed in PIRs is expected to be available in advance of the election.

You can find out more on the [Office of Local Government website](#).

Ethical and legal considerations for councillors

Councillors are public officers, who as a collective, exercise powers, functions and duties on behalf of the community.

They must separate public interest from self-interest and respect and uphold principles and laws designed to protect the public interest and preserve public trust and confidence in government institutions.

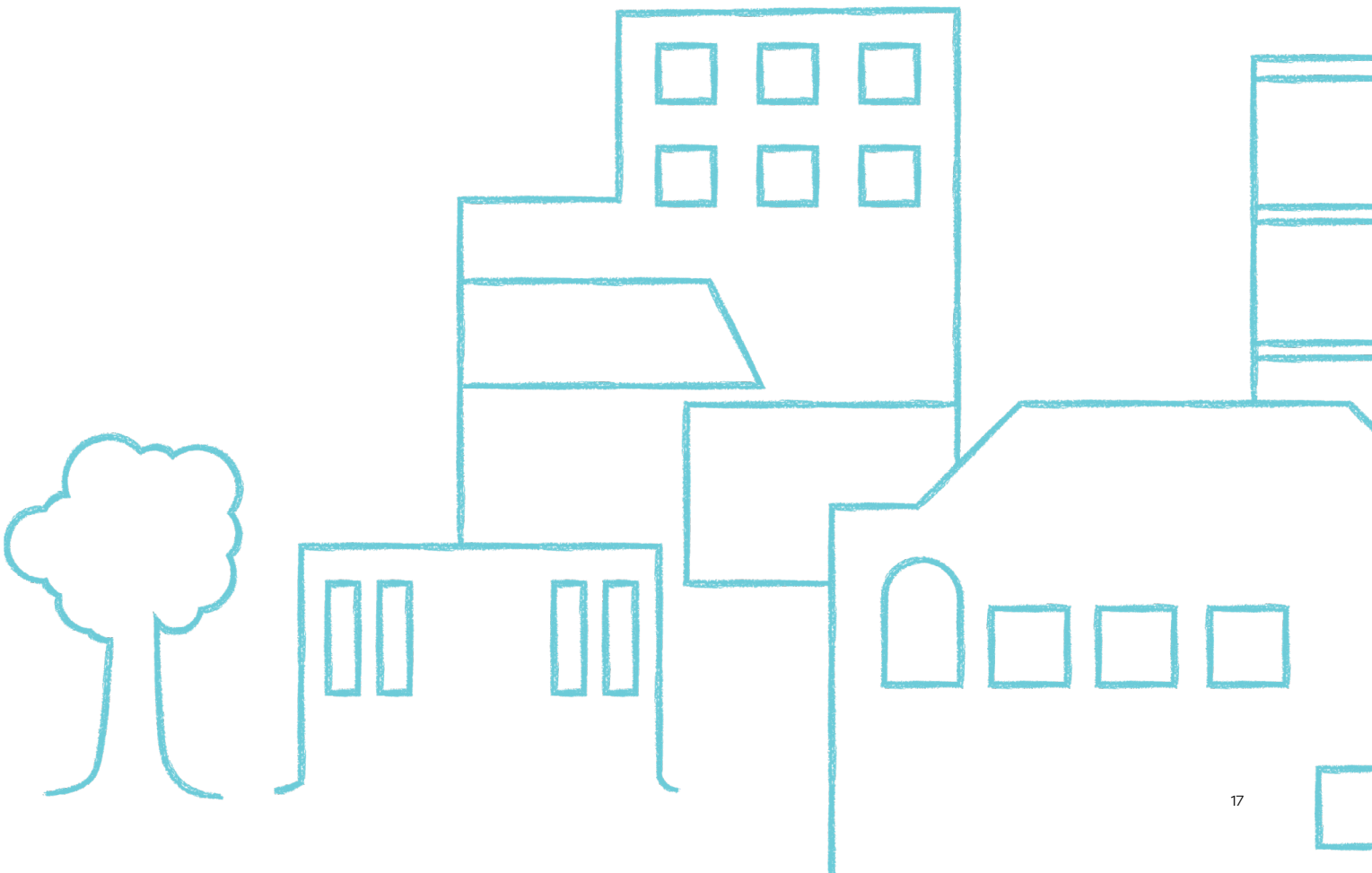
If elected, you need to be ready and willing to meet the required standards of conduct, including:

- Understanding and complying with laws that apply to the conduct of councillors.
- Acting honestly and only using your position as a councillor for proper purposes.
- Bringing an impartial and well-informed view to every council decision.
- Declaring, and avoiding, making decisions on matters when your private interests, or those of your family, friends or associates conflict with the impartial exercise of your duties as a councillor.
- Publicly disclosing specified information about your personal, family, business and financial interests.
- Submitting to public and official scrutiny of your conduct and decisions as a councillor and reporting wrongdoing by others that relate to public office.

The *Local Government Act 1993* sets out councillors' general duties and code of conduct. At, or before, the first meeting attended, the Act requires each councillor to make a formal undertaking to carry out all duties conscientiously and to the best of their ability.

The community can judge a council according to individual councillors' behaviour and public image. Because of this, councillors must conduct themselves appropriately for elected community representatives. You also need to behave respectfully towards fellow councillors despite any personal, policy or political differences you may have.

For further information and reading on the ethical and sound governance principles of being a councillor, candidates should refer to the State Government's ['Good Governance Guide'](#).





How councils work

A council comprises of several councillors who represent the council area, with a Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Councillors and Mayors are elected for a four-year term and have a responsibility to consider the interests of the council area as a whole.

Councillors form the council that meets to make decisions. Individual councillors have no individual authority to make decisions on behalf of the council, it is the elected council as a whole that has this power.

Below is a list of some of the responsibilities usually undertaken by the Mayor:

- Preside over meetings of the council.
- Carry out the civic and ceremonial duties.
- Work closely with the General Manager between council meetings regarding the implementation of the council's decisions.
- Act as the principal spokesperson of the council (unless the council determines otherwise).

Councillors are part of an incorporated body responsible for carrying out the duties and exercising the powers conferred on the council by the *Local Government Act 1993* and other laws. The Act specifies that councillors have the following functions:

- Represent the interests of ratepayers and residents.
- Act in the best interests of the community.
- Facilitate communication between the community and the council.
- Undertake duties and responsibilities as authorised by the council.

Relationship between councillors and staff

The working relationship between the council, the councillors and council staff, is very important. There are some essential elements to consider when thinking about how a council is run:

- Councillors decide the overall strategic direction of the council and set the policies and plans.
- As a councillor you will have no direct involvement in administration or managing council staff, and no independent authority to act or make decisions on behalf of the council.
- Through the General Manager, staff undertake the operational actions required to achieve the council's strategic directions, policies, and plans.

Every council has a General Manager, who is the most senior staff member.

The General Manager is responsible to the council for making the council decisions happen, and managing the general administration of council functions. Additionally, they are responsible for employing and managing all other council staff, advising councillors, and ensuring the council acts within the law.

Understanding the differences in the roles and functions helps establish a trusting and mutually respectful working relationship between the council and the General Manager, and also council staff.

As a councillor, you will be required to represent the views of residents and ratepayers to your council and explain council policy and decisions to community members. You will serve as a bridge between the community and the council.



Council meetings

When people imagine the role of a councillor, they see a group of people sitting around a table making decisions about their council area. This is an accurate picture, as one of the most critical functions of a councillor is to attend and participate in the decision-making process at council meetings.

Formal council meetings are held at least every month, with additional meetings associated with committees in many councils. There are also council workshops either on a regular basis or associated with particular items or events. It is a good idea to check on your council's website to understand their current committee and council meeting schedule.

Well-prepared councillors read and understand all the meeting papers and reports. It's a good idea to set aside enough time to work through these documents to make sure you feel comfortable going into the council meeting.

When you attend the meeting, you need to assess issues and make decisions with the best interests of your community and the council area as a whole in mind.

Some tips for understanding council meetings:

- Get copies of recent agenda papers - you can find these on your council website.
- Attend a council meeting - you might have to check how attendance works. Most are in-person, but many councils also provide a way to watch or listen online.

Committee meetings

As a councillor, you may be involved in additional activities, such as a committee member. Councils establish committees to assist with the wide range of functions they are responsible for.

The roles and tasks of committees can be very different depending on their purpose. For instance, a council might establish a committee to:

- Carry out a specific project or task on behalf of the council.
- Occur on a regular basis for certain areas of the council, such as planning or infrastructure.

**YOU WILL SERVE AS A
BRIDGE BETWEEN THE
COMMUNITY AND THE
COUNCIL.**

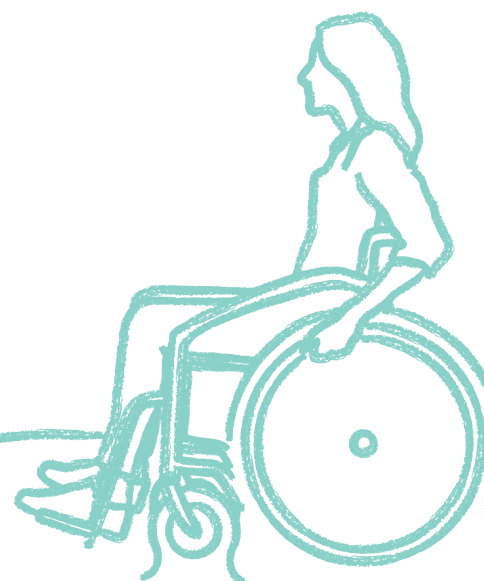




Council as planning authority

It's a good idea for candidates to be aware of council's role as a planning authority, understand how it operates and what is expected of councillors. For councillors, land-use planning decisions are a challenging and important responsibility. Planning decisions affect communities, the environment and quality of life and usually have long-lasting consequences.

When councillors are elected to a council, they also become a member of the planning authority for the municipality. As a councillor on a planning authority, your role is very different to being a representative of your community on council. This is because councillors, when acting as a planning authority, have an overarching duty to enforce the planning scheme in their municipality completely irrespective of any pre-existing views or broad community sentiment, unless expressly allowed by the planning scheme. This can become particularly apparent when considering development applications which members of the community might object to, despite the proposal being allowed under the council's planning scheme. In this case, the planning scheme must be followed by the planning authority, whether or not it is politically palatable.





About council elections

The *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2025* set council election requirements. The legislation identifies how the elections are run, who can nominate and who can vote.

In Tasmania, the Tasmanian Electoral Commissioner is the Returning Officer for all council elections. The Returning Officer is independent of councils, and is responsible for running the elections and ensuring they are lawful.

Voting in all Tasmanian local government elections is compulsory just like in state and federal elections. Voting is completed by postal vote or by returning your ballot paper to a ballot box at your council. The Returning Officer posts ballot papers to all electors, who cast their votes and post them back.

The 2022 [Tasmanian Electoral Commission \(TEC\) Candidate Handbook](#) provides more specific information about the local government election process. An updated version for 2026 is expected to be released around the middle of this year. Please check the TEC website for updates.

Role of the Tasmanian Electoral Commission

Under the *Local Government Act 1993*, the TEC and the Electoral Commissioner are responsible for supervising local government elections and undertaking any specific tasks in carrying out the elections.

Some of the tasks include:

- Management of the main electoral roll.
- Production and despatch of ballot papers.
- Approval of forms and procedures.
- Appointment of returning officers.
- Public awareness and education.
- Statutory advertising.

Commencement

The local government 'notice of election' is similar to a writ for a Parliamentary election. The notice specifies the:

- Date and time of closure of the roll.
- The vacancies to be filled in the election.
- Details of who can vote.
- Anything else the TEC considers appropriate.

For state-wide local government elections, the Electoral Commissioner will advertise the notice of election in daily newspapers on the 8th Saturday before closing day. Closing day is the last day of the polling period and is set down as the last Tuesday in October every four years unless the Governor changes this by an order.

For council by-elections, the Electoral Commissioner fixes the closing day.





Nomination

To be eligible to nominate for the local government election, you must meet this criteria:

- Be enrolled on the House of Assembly electoral roll or on the General Manager's Electoral Roll for the municipal area you intend to nominate for; and
- Have your principal place of residence in Tasmania; and
- Are not a councillor of another council whose term of office is to end after the certificate of election is issued in respect of that other council's elections; and
- Are not an employee of the council in that municipal area; and
- Have not been barred from nominating; and
- Have not been removed from the office of councillor because of inadequacy or incompetency; and
- Are not bankrupt; and
- Are not undergoing a term of imprisonment or been sentenced for a crime but the sentence has not been executed; and
- Are not subject to an assessment order or treatment order under the *Mental Health Act 2013* or an order under the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1995*.

You are eligible to nominate for the office of mayor if you meet the above criteria. You cannot accept the office of mayor unless you have also been elected as a councillor.

General Manager's Electoral Roll

If you are on the House of Assembly electoral roll in respect of an address within the municipal area in which you wish to cast your vote at a council election or nominate, you are automatically enrolled.

However, if:

- You are a resident in a municipality, but not eligible for the State electoral roll (for example, because you are not an Australian Citizen), or
- You own or occupy land in a municipality, but do not live in that municipality (e.g. you lease a shop or own a property such as a shack or rental property), or
- You are the nominated representative of a corporate body which owns or occupies land in a municipality.

Then you are eligible to be on the General Manager's Electoral Roll. You must apply to be on the General Manager's Electoral Roll – contact your local council for the relevant enrolment form.

Campaigning as a candidate

The following information provided in this resource aims to promote good practice in election campaigning. Candidates are encouraged to use the following information in combination with other resources.

Effective campaigning for council is critical to becoming a councillor, because your success will be determined by the number of people that vote for you.

What you need to know

Before you begin campaigning, you should gather some background information to ensure you understand:

How the election is run

Your council's current programs, strategies, plans and policies

How many votes you are likely to need to be elected

Any local issues and concerns

Your council area, including maps and population data

Laws and regulations that relate to council election campaigning

Key dates

At the time of writing, the TEC had not released the final dates for the 2026 elections. However, it is likely they will be as follows:

Notice of elections	5th September
Candidate nominations open	7th September
Candidate nominations close	21st September
Polling period	5th - 27th October*
Closing day	27th October

*This may be extended by the TEC.

Planning your campaign

Your campaign needs to encourage people to vote for you. Voting in council elections is compulsory and people will typically only vote for a candidate they think will make a positive difference in their community.

Ballot papers are distributed around the commencement of the polling period. A significant proportion of people complete and return their ballot paper straight away, so you should aim to have your campaign underway well before distribution commences.

While elections are competitive, candidates are encouraged to focus on their own positive messages, rather than making negative comments about opponents.



Some key things to consider in planning your campaign include:

- What issues will you campaign on.
- What you stand for and the message(s) you wish to convey.
- What resources (time and money) you are willing to commit to campaigning, noting that there are strict limits on and reporting requirements for all advertising costs.
- Whether you wish to seek campaign donations or undertake fundraising activities.
- If there are other people you can enlist to help with your campaign.
- Whether there are high-profile individuals who might endorse your candidacy.

Candidates also need to note that there are expenditure limits in place for the local government elections. The spending is determined under the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2025* which sets the total expenditure for campaigning. This total is different depending on which council area you are running in.

The total expenditure for Clarence, Glenorchy, Hobart, Kingborough and Launceston will be \$21,000 and for other councils it will be \$13,000. However, please confirm these details with the TEC.

You may also wish to investigate:

- Contact details and editorial deadlines for local media.
- Costs for advertising in local media and/or digital advertising.
- Designers and printers to assist you with your campaign materials.
- Website developers to assist with your online presence.
- Establishing a social media presence on Facebook, X, Instagram or other platforms (separate to your personal accounts).
- Whether your council is hosting 'meet the candidate' events.

There are many different ways to campaign and get your message out to the community:

- Social media posts
- Social media advertising
- Face-to-face (individually or in a group)
- E-newsletter
- Leaflets or flyers
- Posters and signs
- Newspaper advertising
- Email or letter.

Having researched and assessed your strategies, you should prepare a campaign plan setting out who will do what, when, and how much it will cost.

LGAT and individual councils do not provide individual support or advice about developing your campaign materials or online resources. Each candidate is responsible for obtaining their own advice and assistance to create their campaign.



Preparing election materials

In addition to your candidate profile, which is sent to all electors with their ballot papers, you may wish to produce a leaflet/postcard to help promote your candidacy.

Ensure you read and understand the legal requirements relating to the publication of electoral material and campaign donations.

Your promotional materials should be easy to read, concise and clearly state the messages you wish to convey. In addition, you may want to consider following the [Plain English Guide](#) developed by 26TEN.

Consider including:

- Your details – the type of work you do, your interests and background.
- Why you are standing for election – areas of concern, what you hope to achieve, your views about the area and its future development.
- Election details – the name of your council, and key election dates.
- Voting details – how to mark and return ballot papers.
- Contact information.
- A recent photograph of yourself.

Once you have prepared your campaign material and before you print it, ask others to read it to check for errors and provide feedback.

Once finalised, the information in your leaflet can provide the basis for other promotional materials, including website content, media releases and newspaper advertisements.

Signs and posters are a popular method of promotion during elections. Candidates may place election signs in various locations (front yards etc.) during the campaign, but these signs must comply with guidelines for the placement of election signs. You will need to contact your local council to understand how and where you can place your election signs.

Candidates must seek permission from relevant business owners, residents, and venue operators before displaying posters in windows or on noticeboards.

Promoting your candidacy online

People are becoming increasingly reliant on the internet as a source of information for various topics, including elections.

The internet is a low-cost option for candidates to promote themselves and connect with voters.

You can also use a blog or candidate website to share campaign messages and expand on ideas in greater detail. It can also serve as a hub to connect your other online accounts.

Social media platforms like Facebook, X, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok or LinkedIn are crucial to engaging with residents, community groups, interest groups, and businesses to share information and respond to questions or concerns.

There are many resources on how to campaign, use social media, face-to-face meetings, and what messaging you might like to use. Two books that may be of use are:

- Suzy Cooper's 'Thank goodness you're here – now get elected and make a difference'
- Ruth McGowan's 'Get Elected'.

Face-to-face

In general, it is more likely that someone will vote for you in a council election if they have engaged directly with you. One of the most common forms of face-to-face engagement is door knocking.

However, it is also time consuming and there are some risks that need to be carefully considered and managed. You should consider the following points before door knocking:

- Understand that your personal presentation is important.
- Prepare a brief introduction and be clear about the questions you wish to ask and/or messages you wish to convey.
- Expect a wide range of interest levels and responses.
- Be prepared for complaints and be prepared to respond, but noting the limitation of the role of a councillor.
- Consider your own personal safety.

Obeying the law

The regulations and legal requirements of campaigning are set out in the TEC handbook.

Now you're a councillor

Following the election, the General Manager will advise when you will be sworn in and also when the next council meeting will occur. The time between the end of the election and the first council meeting will vary from council to council. It may be almost straight away or as long as three weeks later.

It may help if you prepare by learning about:

1. The procedure for taking your place on your council, and
2. The meeting guidelines set down in the *Local Government (Meetings Procedures) Regulations 2025*.

In the weeks following the election, we will contact successful candidates congratulating them on their election to their council and providing further information on the important aspects of their role.

As part of the welcome to local government, LGAT will host induction workshops to provide you with important information for fulfilling your role, introduce you to the sector, the work we do on behalf of councils, and what opportunities there are for personal development.

LGAT has developed resources for newly elected councillors and Mayors.

The LGAT Councillor Handbook and the Mayors Handbook provide further useful information about the role and functions of councillors.

In addition, LGAT and the Office of Local Government have developed a series of online training modules. Access to the LGAT Learning Management System (LMS), that houses these modules will be provided to all new and returning councillors post-election. The online modules will be supported with a series of face-to-face induction sessions in your region. The State Government is intending to introduce mandatory learning and development obligations for new and returning councillors following the 2026 election. LGAT will provide further information on these requirements following your election.

We also provide regular opportunities for networking and professional development for elected representatives. This training and development aims to provide you with the skills and knowledge needed to operate effectively on the council.

You won't need to know everything from the start; however, it is important that you have a strong interest in your community and a commitment to learning to grow into a councillor's role.



LGAT

About LGAT

The Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) is the voice of local government in Tasmania.

Our role is to support, promote, advocate for and represent the local government sector so our members are in the best possible position to serve their communities.

All 29 of Tasmania's councils are members.

Our vision is to build stronger councils and our mission is to provide leadership, support, representation and advocacy on behalf of Tasmanian councils.

The functions of the Association are to:

- Protect and represent the interests and rights of councils in Tasmania.
- Promote an efficient and effective system of local government in Tasmania.
- Provide services to member councils, councillors and employees of councils.

The Association has been the peak body for local government in Tasmania for 115 years (founded in 1911) and is part of a national network of associations. It is funded by councils and other income earned through projects sponsored on behalf of local government, and a range of services and sponsorships. LGAT is an incorporated body under the *Local Government Act 1993*.



More information

**Deputy Returning Officer
for your council**

Contact your
local council

**Local Government
Association of Tasmania**

P 6146 3740

**Tasmanian Electoral
Commission**

P 6208 8700

**Office of Local
Government**

P 6232 7022

**Future of Local
Government Review**

www.futurelocal.tas.gov.au

Other resources

Suzy Cooper

Thank Goodness You're Here

Ruth McGowan

Get Elected

More resources are available on [our website](#).

LGAT contact details

reception@lgat.tas.gov.au

www.lgat.tas.gov.au/council-elections

P 6146 3740

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/lgatas>

LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/local-government-association-of-tasmania-lgat>





