STAND UP FOR BIRMINGHAM. BE A LIBERAL DEMOCRAT COUNCILLOR.

www.beacouncillor.org.uk
Acknowledgements

This guide has been produced by the Local Government Association (LGA) Liberal Democrat Group, Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors and Birmingham City Council in partnership with Birmingham Liberal Democrats.

In the course of writing this we have drawn on earlier work, and particularly on guidance produced the LGA. This Guide also incorporates elements of the Learning and Development Workbook for Potential Electoral Candidates produced by the LGA.

Cover images – top: Birmingham Lib Dem Group photo
Bottom: Councillor Karen Trench, Birmingham City Council

www.beacouncillor.org.uk
Could I be a Birmingham Liberal Democrat councillor?

YES!

Welcome to our guide to becoming a councillor for Liberal Democrat members and supporters in Birmingham.

This has been produced by the Liberal Democrat Group at the Local Government Association (LGA) in conjunction with Birmingham Liberal Democrats, and with support from Birmingham City Council

This guide contains information about how councils work, and in the case of Birmingham, sets out some history of local government in the city and its present context, the role of a councillor and most importantly, what being a Lib Dem councillor looks like.

Inside this guide, you will hear from Lib Dem councillors past and present on their experiences of being councillors and why they stood for council.

The guide is a great starting point if you have ever looked at other councillors and thought ‘I could do this’. There is also information about where to go to find out more.

In local government the Lib Dems are working hard for local people, standing up for our communities and making sure everyone knows the difference the Lib Dems can make.

As Lib Dem councillors we are proud to serve our communities and set high standards for ourselves. We are part of shaping the future of our communities, villages, towns and cities. We also are hugely important in supporting and upholding the principles of liberal democracy in action. Local government is undergoing huge changes and challenges. It is more important than ever that Lib Dems are there to remind everyone that local government is there for local people. Representing local people and campaigning with them is what we do best.

You may already be a campaigner, community activist, involved in your local church or mosque, or a local school governor. You might help delivering leaflets or organising events. If so, you already have a great basis for taking up public office and becoming a Lib Dem councillor. But ultimately, if you really care about your area, and want work to make it the best place it can be, becoming a Lib Dem councillor could be for you.
Setting the scene in Birmingham

Being part of local government in Birmingham isn’t just an exciting opportunity for the future, it’s being part of a historical legacy that very few cities can boast. Many will tell you that the current model started with Joseph Chamberlain, Mayor of Birmingham in the 1870s, when he created a framework for local government.

It’s remained mostly intact ever since. Chamberlain transformed the way local government operated – he looked at the range of services that councils needed to provide to their growing electorate, and brought many of them into public ownership.

By running them at a profit, finances improved and more could be borrowed to create the portfolio of services we, to this day, associate with local government. Birmingham has a history of innovation and transformation in public service and being a Birmingham councillor could be your opportunity to carry on Joseph Chamberlain’s lasting legacy.

Birmingham City Council needs to adapt to meet the challenges it faces now and in the future.

In 2015 it created the Future Council programme, as a way of coordinating several key improvement programmes. In part it is about getting better at what we do now, but it is also about creating a culture that embraces and relishes change – with the express purpose of making a positive difference every day.

An independent boundary review has been undertaken, which will look at how many councillors the city has and suggest changes to ward boundaries. You might have also heard about the Kerslake Review, which was published in December 2014. The report made several recommendations and warned that the council needed to make significant changes to ensure that it could provide consistently good quality services for its residents.

As part of this improvement process, the council will be holding all-out elections in May 2018. This means that the people of Birmingham will be voting for candidates across all of the wards in the city.
Birmingham is changing for the better and we need councillors who are capable, inspired and engaged, with a commitment to local people and a passion for change. Could that be you?

Decisions made by councillors affect the lives of everyone in the area in countless ways. Representing the population of over 1.1 million in Birmingham, understanding the issues and concerns they face, and then taking action are the most important tasks that any councillor undertakes.

We want Birmingham and the people who live and work here to thrive. Birmingham is a vibrant, exciting and fast-growing city. Almost half of the population is under 30 and it is proud to be home to one of the most diverse populations of all the core cities in the country. We want everyone who lives here to have access to an affordable home, a good job, a great school for their children and extra help if they need it. Representing a local community in Birmingham means representing a global economy – our vision is that even in the face of austerity, everyone who calls Birmingham ‘home’ will have a happy and healthy life here.

We’re committed to economic growth and through the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) our mission is to create jobs and grow the economy – and, in doing so, raise the quality of life for all of the LEP’s population.

It doesn’t just stop there.

We’re part of the West Midlands Combined Authority – a group of 17 local authorities and three LEPs, working together to move powers from central government to the West Midlands and our locally elected politicians, who know this region best. We’ve set ourselves the challenge of creating jobs, enhancing the skills of our people, developing prosperity and driving economic growth to maintain Birmingham’s status as a global economy and establish greater Birmingham as the major driver of the UK economy outside of London.

Now is an exciting and important time for Birmingham. Being a Birmingham councillor will give you the chance to make a huge difference to the quality of life for people in your local area. We need plenty of talented, high-quality candidates to stand in the election to help us unleash our city’s full potential.

If you think being a Birmingham councillor is for you, read on. This booklet provides information about how to become a Liberal Democrat councillor and what the role involves. You’ll also hear from current councillors and learn more about what makes Birmingham a great city to represent.

Birmingham is a unique city, with huge cultural diversity and a thriving business community.
Key information to help you understand more about the city you could be representing:

- population of over 1.1 million
- Europe’s youngest city – 46 per cent of residents are under 30
- 59 per cent of children achieve grade A*-C at GCSE
- 84,000 houses need to be built in the city by 2031 – but there is only capacity for 51,000
- 30 per cent of Birmingham’s children live in a deprived household
- over 8,000 parks and open spaces
- nearly one third of residents are of minority ethnic origin
- over 430 schools.

More information can be found on Birmingham City Council’s website – take a look:

www.birmingham.gov.uk
What is a councillor, and what do they do?

Councillors are elected by communities to represent them and to run their local authority. Councillors represent wards or divisions which vary greatly in size across the country.

Councillors are expected to be active in the life of their local community and act as the voice of their constituents, raising any concerns with the local council on a range of matters related to the work of the council. From waste collection to street lights, housing to social services, councillors talk to people about everything and anything.

Liberal Democrat councillors represent the Party and its policies, and are an important part of their local party, feeding back to members about what is happening at the council.

Councillors may also work with politicians at a regional, national and European level on issues of local importance which have national implications.

Councillors are elected for a four-year term unless they are elected at a by-election, in which case they must stand again at the next normal election for the seat. They are often referred to as ‘members’ of the council.

The council is controlled by either the political party which has a majority of councillors or, if no one party has a majority, there may be a coalition of parties or a minority administration.

The councillor’s role will vary depending on whether the Lib Dem is in control or in opposition, but generally speaking will include some or all of the following broad responsibilities:

- dealing with individual pieces of casework for local residents and helping them resolve issues
- leading on local campaigns on behalf of the local communities
- serving on council committees which look at decisions being made or have specific legal or ‘regulatory’ duties
- if Lib Dems run the council, potentially making decisions which decide how local services are delivered
- acting as community leaders and helping local people get involved in the decisions made by the council.

Action point: Go online and explore your council’s website. Find out what services they provide and how many wards and councillors there are
Councillor Karen Trench  
Perry Barr Ward, Birmingham City Council

Ever thought ‘someone needs to do something about that’? Well that was my route into politics. That person could be me. Before the Government provided the single regeneration budget, I lived in one of the most deprived areas of the country. Over the years I saw the area decline and had decided to move until someone said why don’t you try and do something rather than moving.

As a result, I ended up joining my local residents association and getting more involved in the community. It was then that I started to understand the role of a councillor. I never thought I could be one until the Liberal Democrats persuaded me.

I was elected to the city council in 2004 and have attempted to meet the needs and aspirations of the local community I live in. I pride myself on my work with community groups and helping to develop services in the Perry Barr area. During this time I have developed interests in education, environmental and community based issues. Becoming a councillor has developed my knowledge and skills base at the same time as helping others, so a win win situation.

I keep in touch with residents by distributing regular newsletters which report back on the activities I have undertaken as a councillor. I also issue questionnaires on various subjects which allows me to build up a picture of resident’s views on local, and sometimes national, issues.

Over the years I have done lots of radio and television interviews including a live interview for the Politics Show. Becoming a councillor has built my confidence and I have met some wonderful people.

☑ School governor ☑ Two time parliamentary candidate  
☑ Athletics throwing coach volunteer
What is involved in being a councillor?

Being a Liberal Democrat councillor is a rewarding experience and many councillors will tell you that they have obtained new skills and experiences whilst working with their communities.

Together with Lib Dem MPs, Assembly Member, MEPs, and town and parish councillors, Lib Dem councillors are also important in making sure there is a good reputation for the Lib Dems in the area.

Here are some things to think about before deciding to stand for election.

What’s the time commitment?
Think about how you would balance the responsibilities of being a councillor alongside family, friends and employment.

Talk to the people around you before you stand, their support will be really important. If you have Lib Dem councillors or former councillors in your area, have a chat with them about what is involved

If you also work, talk to your employer. You are entitled to time off for being a councillor and many employers see the benefit of an employee gaining such great experience outside the workplace.

If you have caring responsibilities, think about how to manage those. Many people looking after children or dependent adults make excellent local councillors as they have direct personal knowledge of the services that affect people just like them.

**Action point:** Make a list of all the things you currently do and think about how you could manage your activities and commitments. Talk to people with experience of being a councillor and who have similar time commitments to you.

Can I afford to do it?
Most councillors receive an ‘allowance’ for their duties which is taxable. Being a councillor is a job and the allowance is to ensure that if elected you are not left out of pocket. If you are on benefits these allowances can affect your entitlement, so get advice before agreeing to stand.

There is also a childcare and dependents’ carers’ allowance for attendance at meetings payable on production of receipts, up to an agreed maximum cost per hour.
The council also provides a special responsibility allowance to those who undertake additional duties such as the Leader of the Council, portfolio holders, scrutiny chairs and opposition leaders.

Most Lib Dem Groups also agree to give part of their allowances to their local party to help get more Lib Dems elected.

**Action Point:** Find out more about the allowances scheme run by your local council, this can be found on their web site and think about your own financial situation.

What training do I need?

You don’t have to be highly educated or have a profession. Skills gained through work, education, bringing up a family, caring for a sick or disabled relative, volunteering or being active in faith or community groups are really valuable.

In addition, the Liberal Democrats and its councillors’ association (ALDC) offers training for people thinking of standing for election, as well as for candidates, and all councils provide training for both new and experienced councillors.

Although you don’t need any particular training to stand for election, think about what skills and attributes you do have and how they might help.

For instance, councillors are expected to be available to enable constituents to come to them with problems. This means that councillors need to have good listening skills, the ability to represent someone, to keep confidences, and to resolve conflict.

**Action Point:** Make a list of the skills and experience you think you have. Ask friends and relatives what they think. Be honest, but don’t underplay yourself – most people have a much wider range of skills than they think. Consider how these skills would make you a great councillor.

How can I find out more?

There is more information below in the section called ‘Once you’re elected’, as well as online at the ALDC website. The Local Government Association has also produced a workbook to help you to go through some of the things you need to consider.
Councillor Carol Jones  
Stechford and Yardley North Ward, Birmingham City Council

I left school at the age of 16 and worked in several jobs, including for the Income Tax office and in retail, but always in some way helping the public. I became a Liberal Democrat volunteer and activist after my local Lib Dem councillors were the only ones to help me and my neighbours with a planning issue.

I became a councillor in 2003 for the ward of Stechford and Yardley North to help the residents here, not for the political side of things. This I do by holding advice bureaux and attending various meetings in the ward. I enjoy the ward involvement side of being a councillor.

I have been married for 45 years and enjoy cruising holidays, cooking and watching TV when not doing casework etc.

✓ Married for 45 years ✓ Enjoy cruising holidays ✓ Keen cook
How do I become a Liberal Democrat councillor?

Before you can be a councillor you must get elected. The Liberal Democrats aim to stand candidates in every ward, and are always looking for good new people to get involved. There is a procedure to go through, but it is not complicated and there are lots of points at which you are offered help and support.

Getting approved as a candidate

There are two main reasons to have a candidate approval system. The first is to ensure that potential candidates know what is expected of them, but it is also to ensure that anyone who has the Lib Dem name and logo associated with them does the party credit.

The form the approval process takes can be adapted to suit your local area, and so whether you are in control of the council or if you are struggling to get a full slate of candidates, there is a process that can work for you.

Most approval processes involve completing a simple application form and an interview. The questions for both of these need to be agreed by the approval panel, although templates and crib sheets are available.

If you’re in a smaller local party or have a large number of wards where you will struggle to find candidates, you may decide not to include the interview part of the process, although getting potential candidates to complete a form is always useful as it gives you written ‘evidence’ in case there are problems at a later stage.

The interview should be professional but not be too formal. It shouldn’t be a harsh grilling and all efforts should be made to put the potential candidate at ease. Before the panel meets it is a worthwhile exercise to discuss and write down the qualities that make a good a Lib Dem councillor. These are not always skills that you can learn or develop through training but their absence can later cause problems for the reputation of the party or group unity.

Councillors often have to make difficult choices in public about the services their councils are responsible for. This is a considerable responsibility. Top of most lists would come: Lib Dem values, team player, and loyalty to the group and the party.

Action point: Start making notes for your application form and identifying your strengths and weaknesses – for instance, if you don’t know much about party policy do some research to find out.
Getting selected as a candidate

As a democratic party it is important that we have a fair, open and transparent process for choosing the people who stand for us in elections. The procedure is not designed to be complicated or onerous, but is intended to ensure we get the best candidates and that everyone who put themselves forward is given an equal opportunity of being selected.

Even if you are in an area where council candidates often get selected unopposed or where your existing councillors are hoping to re-stand, you still need a fair selection process to make sure that others have the opportunity of standing and to put you in good stead for when selections become more competitive.

There is a lot of freedom in how candidate selections can be organised, however, there are a few principles that are important:

• where there is an election for a candidate, this must be done through a secret ballot using the Single Transferable Vote system

• in England, only those people who are members at the time where the position is advertised can vote in the selection.

The initial stage is for local parties to advertise the wards in which they are selecting candidates to all of the party membership within the council area.

Potential candidates will be asked to submit a simple application form or slip or send an expression of interest through an email to the Returning Officer.

As a campaigning party we should encourage potential candidates to speak to members if they want to be selected. All applicants should be given a list of the members eligible to vote, (which should be returned after the selection), with encouragement to get in touch with them. The Returning Officer may also wish to allow each candidate to produce their own canvass leaflet.
The Returning Officer should also write to all of the eligible voters explaining that a selection is underway, that they may be contacted by candidates and including a one-side of A4 artwork from each candidate.

They should also outline details of a hustings meeting when members can come along and listen to speeches from candidates and ask questions.

Most selections allow members to have a postal ballot if they cannot attend the hustings meeting, but usually these are only available on request to the Returning Officer. In most cases, the votes are counted at the end of the hustings meeting, but in some places they run a full postal ballot. This is for you to decide.

**Action point:** If you’re not used to making speeches find someone who can help you to practice. Think, too, about the kind of questions you might be asked; what are the important issues in the area, and what kind of challenges is the council facing? You don’t need to know all the answers, but you should be able to demonstrate that you understand the question, and that you have an opinion on key issues.

Getting elected as a councillor

Unless you are a candidate in a by-election, the election will most likely happen on the first Thursday in May. Between your selection and election day you will be expected to help lead Lib Dem campaigning in your ward, and, in particular, to talk to voters and listen to their concerns.

This can be done on the doorstep and/or by phone, and there are various kinds of events you can hold as well as leaflets and letters you can distribute.

You will have an agent (and/or campaign manager), and that person will be responsible for organising the detail of the campaign. As polling day approaches things will get busier, and more will be expected of you, so remember to be proactive in making sure that you still have time for family and work.

If you are elected you will be expected to start immediately, so make sure in advance that people such as your family and employers know this.

**Action point:** Find out about elections in your area and contact your local Lib Dem team. Ask about how elections are run locally and how you might get involved.
Former Councillor Jerry Evans
Springfield Ward, Birmingham City Council

I decided to become a councillor following a couple of years of doing a leaflet delivery round for my local councillors. I wanted to do something for a neighbouring ward, which had no activity, and develop my organisational skills. Next thing I knew I had to be the candidate.

This was all very well but somebody then said to me I had no chance of ever winning it. My response was “we will see”. We distributed leaflets, did resident surveys and casework, and built our votes by a few hundred every year. Within five years I was a councillor, and I remained a councillor for 13 years. It was interesting and challenging and I really felt I did something for the community.

✔ Archaeologist ✔ Expert on Roman pottery ✔ A keen recycler
Costs, legal issues and probity

The main cost of getting elected is the cost of the campaign itself. Items such as leaflets, canvass cards and posters. Local parties should have a fundraising plan to cover the cost of the campaign.

Candidates do not receive expenses or payments, but once elected councillors normally do receive allowances.

There are some legal constraints on who can and can’t be a local councillor, for example you have to live or work in the council area where you want to stand. There are other reasons such as bankruptcy which prevent an individual from standing and most local authorities publish the reasons why a person couldn’t stand in the election section on their websites.

Elected representatives at every level are required to complete a Register of Interests which declares your financial and property interests and membership of any organisation that may influence you – such as a political party. The main thing to remember is, if in doubt, declare it and take advice from the Chief Legal Officer if you are elected.

Every council also has a ‘Members’ Code of Conduct’ which sets out rules for how its councillors are expected to conduct themselves in office such as the need to declare any pecuniary interests at a meeting before items are discussed. Following election, all newly-elected councillors sign a written undertaking to abide by the Code of Conduct. Council officers provide advice on all of these matters to councillors.

Liberal Democrat Groups also have Standing Orders to ensure that group business is conducted fairly and professionally. Make sure you are given a copy of the Standing Orders during your approval and selection process. If you are elected they will be your Standing Orders too.

**Action point:** Check what the legal requirements for being a councillor are and that you meet them.
Being a Liberal Democrat councillor

If you are elected you will take up office immediately, and although it may seem a little intimidating at first there will be training and support to help you settle in. The council will run an induction for new councillors, and, in terms of the work in the ward, you will find that much of it will follow on from the work you were doing before the election as a local campaigner.

Liberal Democrat campaigners believe that councillors and indeed the whole structure of local government should engage with people and work with them rather than simply take decisions on their behalf.

Lib Dem councillors are expected to keep their residents up-to-date with what they have been up to. With regular newsletters in many places called FOCUS, emails and Facebook postings.

They may also hold advice surgeries for constituents, attend regular Liberal Democrat Group meetings and play a full part in the life of the Party locally in their area. Lib Dem campaigners and councillors will often be the people leading the charge on issues of great importance to a local community.

A significant part of all these responsibilities is the work that councillors do at a neighbourhood level, representing the people of their electoral ward or area. There is good evidence that councillors who develop and nurture a good reputation in their ward earn the respect of the electorate, who in turn repay them at the ballot box. In itself, this is a compelling reason for taking the role of the ward councillor seriously.

But the need to be effective as a ward councillor is about much more than this. Representing people in your area, understanding the issues and concerns they face and being equipped with the skills, confidence and ability to take action and make a difference is the most important task that any councillor undertakes. Significantly, it is also often the role that local people value most.

Lib Dem campaigners and councillors can act as the leaders and organisers for real change. As a result we may win council seats but the real victories will be in the community groups built and the control taken by people over the decisions which effect their own lives.
There are a number of key roles that councillors are involved in:

- serving the community
- representing the community
- representing the Lib Dems.

Serving the community

Providing public services is the main function of the council. Local councils provide around 800 different services, from highways and adult social services to education and refuse collection. Councillors have a key role as:

- policy-makers
- decision takers
- ‘scrutineers’ of the effectiveness of the council in delivering services.

You need to be the voice of your community at the Town Hall, representing its wishes and a link between your community and the council.

The surest way of finding out what really matters to local residents is by asking them – whether on the door or on the telephone. Use time in queues, coffee shops, the launderette, on the bus, the hairdressers to listen to what people are talking about. Conversations are vital to getting more information, beyond voting intention and is vital to maximising your vote at election time.

Representing the community

Councillors represent all of the people within your communities (including those who did not vote for them).

The task of representing a group of several thousand local people can be complex. The way that councillors carry out their ward duties can vary enormously, but as a Lib Dem Councillor it is expected you will be very involved in every aspect of your community – from attending functions to supporting local events and regularly being in contact with residents through a variety of mediums.

You should:

- **Understand the ward** – the key issues facing local people, by talking directly with voters.

- **Represent local voices** – by being a channel of communication between your local community and the council and ensure you are listening and representing the views of those you represent.

- **Manage casework** – listen to and respond to requests from individuals and groups in the community, resolving problems.

- **Represent the Liberal Democrats**.
Understanding the ward

If you are a new councillor, it is essential that you get to know the area you represent. You need to know and understand your ward. What are the issues that concern people most? What issues are coming down the pipeline?

A great place to start is with local community groups and ‘community players’. You don’t need to attend every meeting of every community group, but you do need to know they are happening and have good links with the key people. Good links with local vicars or religious leaders, the Police community support officer, the corner shopkeeper or the local branch of the Citizens Advice are great contacts.

Action point: Look at the internet and search for groups using key local area names. You’ll probably discover a multitude of groups you were unaware of – and were unaware of you. Set yourself a challenge to meet up with one contact and group every month.

Issues will come up in your ward that require campaigning. A good local campaign is a brilliant way to cement the relationship between you and local people. You don’t have to run the campaign, we’re much more interested in ‘empowering’ other people to campaign themselves, but you will need to be involved, and perhaps help get things going.
Sometimes issues are difficult. If we run the council it may be that we are the ‘baddies’ that people want to campaign against. There are still ways you can stand up for your ward and you need to discuss how best to do this with your Lib Dem colleagues. Sometimes an issue divides a community and there is no ‘winning answer’ – you need to stick to your Lib Dem good senses – most people who disagree with you will appreciate you standing up for the area.

Representing local voices
The task of representing a diverse and mobile mix of communities, groups and individuals can be tricky.

While representing individual voters, councillors often try to keep in touch with as wide a range of people in the ward as possible. This will involve going to meetings and events, meeting people on a one-to-one basis, and listening to different views about what is needed or what should be happening. Your role as a representative includes lobbying to get a fair share of investment and service improvements in your area, dealing with casework and getting things ‘sorted’, and championing your area at the council.

Many authorities have an area or neighbourhood board structure bringing together councillors from a local area.

Lib Dem have long been advocates of more local decision making and it is important we make the local structures work.

Because councillors are often one of the main link points between local people and the council, you will also need to be able to provide information as clearly as possible to help them to understand local government services and processes. This becomes easier once you are a councillor and understand them better yourself.

The biggest challenge for ward members is often in getting the council or an outside body to take local views into account when making decisions. There are various ways of doing this, but the first requirement is to understand what those views are yourself.

We as Lib Dems pride ourselves on asking voters what they think is important in their area, getting their feedback on local issues, reporting back to them what we have been up to and sharing information.

People are much more inclined to listen and pay attention if they feel that the person speaking to them knows what they are talking about, is committed to getting the best outcome, and has credibility as an elected representative.
Managing casework
Some councillors find casework the best part of their role – the opportunity to sort out problems for people who find the council ‘an impossible nightmare’.

Customer service studies always show that it is the speed and style of the initial response that is remembered by the resident. Respond quickly to all enquiries – email makes this very easy nowadays.

You need to set up a system for managing your casework that works for you. A book, a system using your email, a spreadsheet – whatever works for you. Bits of paper and your memory will not work. All ALDC members get access to the online CONNECT Casework module for free (£3 a month for others), an online casework management tool that will allow you to keep track of all the casework that you do in your ward.

**Action point:** Speak to current councillors about their casework, the issues and problems as well as how they handle an issue.

However, make sure you do not raise false expectations about what you can achieve. Help individuals achieve things themselves. Remember we are here to empower not act as an alternative social worker or benefits advisor.

It is a good idea to build up a network of good contacts to help you solve casework. Good relations with a small number of officers will work wonders – always say thank you to officers when something is done!

Representing the Liberal Democrats
You are also importantly a representative of the party. We want our local community and our local council to be a more liberal and democratic place. If we are not any different from the Labour or Tory councillors who went before us, then there was no point getting elected.

It’s our real chance to put Lib Dem policies into practice. We can use scrutiny, questions, FOCUS and the media to hold the ruling group to account. We can use council motions, proposals, amendments and campaigns and lobbying to put our ideas across.

You are the face of the Lib Dems locally. Stand up for what we believe in, stand by your colleagues.

For the best solutions for local residents you will also have to work with others, identifying a common agenda to address the needs of the community but these still need to be in line with the party.
Further information and support

Publications
Learning and Development Workbook for Potential Electoral Candidates, 2015, LGA
Councillors’ Guide 2015/16, LGA, 2015
Councillor Briefing Pack: Sustainable Communities, LGA, 2015
Councillor Briefing Pack: Healthier Communities, LGA, 2015
Councillor Briefing Pack: Resilient Communities, LGA, 2015
Councillor Briefing Pack: Growth, LGA, 2015

Useful organisations and websites

Local Government Association Liberal Democrat Group
Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ
020 7664 3235
www.local.gov.uk/web/lga-libdem-group

Your council's website

Liberal Democrats
www.libdems.org.uk/

Local Government Association (LGA)
An invaluable source of help and advice for all those in local government.
www.local.gov.uk

The Electoral Commission
Independent elections watchdog and regulator of party and election finance.
www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors (ALDC)
www.aldc.org