

13 EXCUSES NOT TO BE A COUNCILLOR

1. ***"I'm too young"***. If you are 18 you are old enough.
2. ***"What's the point of just joining a talking shop, they don't do anything"***. Have you ever been to a meeting? Basing your judgement on watching The Vicar of Dibley is definitely not valid.
3. ***"I haven't got a planning application in at the moment"***. Putting in for planning permission has got nothing to do with sitting on the Council, whatever may have happened years ago. In fact, if your own application is discussed by the Council, you must leave the room.
4. ***"I'm too busy. I couldn't commit to attending every single meeting"***. Meetings are rarely more frequent than one evening a month, and missing the occasional one is perfectly acceptable. Most meetings only take a couple of hours.
5. ***"I'm concentrating on finding a job or furthering my career"***. Being a Town Councillor is a definite plus point to add to a CV. It shows you can make decisions, work in a team, are community minded and pro-active. Prospective employers will be impressed.
6. ***"I haven't lived here very long and I don't know the area well"***. If you have lived or worked in the town for a year you are eligible. Your views as an 'incomer' should be welcomed as you will probably see things more objectively.
7. ***"I'm worried that I won't get many votes and will look silly"***. Even if you are not voted on this time, you may very well be approached if a vacancy occurs in the future and co-opted on.
8. ***"Our Town Council is full of Old Fogeys"***. The Town Council are looking for fresh, new and imaginative ideas whatever your age.
9. ***"I'd look like a fool because I would not know what's going on"***. You will be eased in gently; there is help, advice and training available. The Clerk is the legal officer in the Council and he will explain the rules.
10. ***"I'll have to sign that Code of Conduct thing"***. The Code of Conduct is nowhere near as onerous as made out by the Press. The Code stops situations like the planning one above.
11. ***"I'll have to let everyone know about all my personal and business affairs"***. The Declaration of Interest asks you to declare business interests within the town area to guard against bias when town issues are debated. As for personal affairs, get real; everyone knows about these already.
12. ***"I'm too lazy and not interested in my community"***. An excellent reason for not joining.
13. ***"I prefer to let others do the work and then criticize from the sidelines afterwards"***. Also a valid reason for not joining, but do bear in mind that expounding your views in the pub, rather than the council chamber, will not change a thing in your town.