

WHY BE A  
**COUNCILLOR?**

As a community leader in  
Local Government you can  
influence local decisions about

- Libraries
- Immunisation
- Priority setting for the region
- Environment and land management
- Tourism
- Sport and recreation
- Aged care services
- Community transport
- Economic development
- Native Title
- NAIDOC Week events
- Youth activities

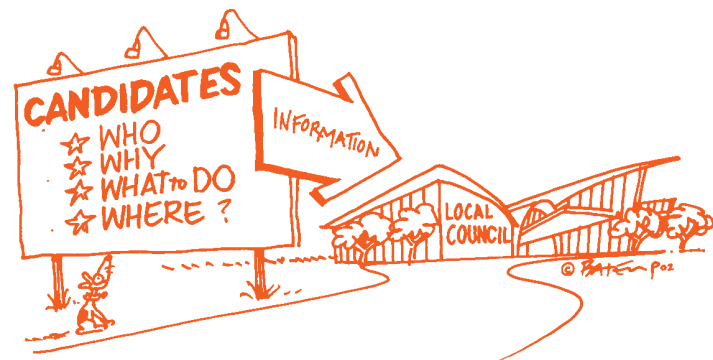
Local Government Councillors are elected by people who live and do business in the local Council area.

**Councillors play a very important community leadership role and influence the decisions that Councils make about what happens locally.**

A Councillor gets involved in:

- deciding on Council plans and policies for the local area
- guiding Council affairs
- making sure Council resources are used fairly for the benefit of everyone in the community
- talking to local people about their views and ideas for the area
- letting others know on the Council, regionally and in State and Commonwealth Government agencies, about the local community issues.

Councillors are not paid wages but they are entitled to receive an annual allowance. The annual allowance paid to Councillors varies from Council to Council. Expenses related to doing Council business can also be reimbursed, for example, telephone and travelling costs, fees for child care or care of other relatives paid so that a Councillor can attend Council meetings. Check with your Council to find out more about Councillor fees and entitlements.



## WHAT DOES BEING A LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILLOR INVOLVE?

Taking on a community leadership role means taking on extra work - there are Council agendas, papers and reports to read, meetings to attend, and community events to go to. The work of a Councillor also involves getting out and about in the community and talking to people about their views and how they want to be represented. At the same time Councillors carry on with their other work, including looking after their families. But despite the extra work and time commitment required, there are many rewards.

Once successfully elected, your role as Councillor will involve:

- attending and participating in Council meetings, which are run using formal meeting rules
- reading and understanding reports and recommendations, including financial and social research reports
- dealing with issues that sometimes may not seem important to you or Aboriginal people generally
- presenting your arguments, and debating with other Councillors
- public speaking at community events.

You can find out more about what is required before nominating as a Councillor. Refer to "Where to go for more information" on the back of this brochure.

Training and support is available to newly elected Councillors to help them find their way around Local Government business. You will find many people, including more experienced Councillors will want to help you learn about the work of the Council.

Most Councillors have said that they had to learn new things very quickly. There are other things current and previous Aboriginal Councillors say potential candidates need to understand.

- Once elected, Aboriginal Councillors are in the minority and there may be high expectations from within the Council and the local communities.
- It is the job of all Councillors to represent everyone in their communities, not just Aboriginal people. This can be difficult, because sometimes the local Aboriginal people think you just represent them.
- Because of the high expectations placed on Aboriginal Councillors, you need to be realistic about what issues you can influence, and what is possible to achieve and act on in your role as a Councillor.

You will need lots of energy and courage to try new things, and be prepared to keep in touch with and respond to your local community - you will be a "community voice". Some of the skills that will be helpful are:

- good listening and communication skills
- good organisational and leadership skills
- making links with community - being part of the networks, and
- being able to manage your time well.

All Councils operate differently and expect different commitments from their Councillors. You can talk to an existing Councillor in your Council area or someone at your local Council office about what is required.

**ENROL BY**  
11/08/06

**CANDIDATES  
NOMINATE BETWEEN**  
5/09/06 and 12 noon  
19/09/06

**RECEIVE BALLOT  
PACK IN MAIL BY**  
end October 2006

**POST BALLOT PAPER  
FOR DELIVERY BY**  
5pm 10/11/06

**ELECTION RESULTS  
PUBLISHED BY**  
14/12/06

## WHAT ARE THE RULES FOR CANDIDATES?

The Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 sets out the rules for nomination and standing as a candidate. Some of the requirements and procedures are as follows:

- Candidates must **nominate between 5/09/06 and 12 noon on 19/09/06.**
- Nomination forms are available from the Council office or State Electoral Office or Deputy Returning Officer.
- Nomination involves completing and lodging nomination forms with an Electoral Officer appointed for the Council, including an accurate candidate profile of no more than 150 words and an optional photograph.
- A copy of the voters roll is available to candidates at the Council Office.
- All campaign material must be accurate, and include the name and address of the person authorising the publication and the name of the printer.
- Candidates must keep records of campaign donations and after the election, submit a return, which lists any donations or gifts received for their campaign.

It is illegal to do certain things, for example, there are rules about being honest, not interfering with voters or the secret ballot, and not assisting people to vote. Some practices can result in a fine or imprisonment.

## WHO CAN NOMINATE AS A CANDIDATE IN THE NOVEMBER 2006 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS?

Local Government Council elections are held every four years. Generally, anyone who is entitled to vote can stand as a candidate.

Candidates must be:

- over 18 years of age
- a resident or ratepayer in the Council area
- an Australian citizen
- on the Electoral Roll, to be able to nominate.

People who are not entitled to nominate as a candidate include Council employees, or candidates for election in other Local Government Council areas.

The State Electoral Commissioner runs the elections, which are conducted by voluntary postal voting.

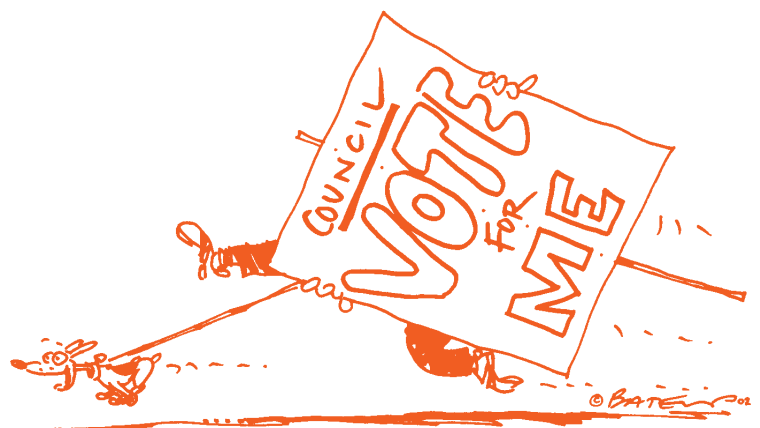
## SOME CAMPAIGN TIPS

If there are the same number of positions as candidates nominated, you will automatically be appointed as a Councillor. It is wise to find this out before you put too much energy and effort into your campaign.

Running as a candidate will involve time, money and effort, so before you commit yourself you will need to do some research and find out some local information.

- Get to know the local issues and area really well so you are clear about what and who you will be representing. The local Council office can provide maps of the Council area and wards, and population information.
- It is also advisable to attend Council meetings to become familiar with what is discussed and the meeting procedures.
- Work out what issues you will campaign on and who you are up against. You will need to be able to let people know what you stand for so they can decide whether to vote for you.
- You will need to plan your campaign and how you will market and promote yourself. You could encourage Aboriginal people to enrol and vote. Tell them why you think they should vote for you, and why their vote is important. You might want to consider door knocking, letterboxing brochures, or meeting people at local gathering places.
- Work out who can help promote you as a candidate.
  - Are there high profile people who will speak up for you and encourage people to vote for you?
  - Who can you ask to help you with your campaign tasks?
  - Are there any opportunities for you to talk to the local media?

**But remember - you must be on the voters roll by 11/08/06. Check at your local Council.**



# MORE

## INFORMATION

### WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call into your local Council office and ask for a package of information for potential candidates. You will also find the following publications useful.

- *So you want to be on Council - A Guide for anyone considering nominating for election to their local Council* prepared by the Local Government Association of SA (LGA). You can telephone the LGA and request a copy on telephone 8224 2000, or visit the LGA web site at [www.lga.sa.gov.au/goto/elections](http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/goto/elections)
- *Local Government Elections Candidate Handbook for Postal Elections* prepared by the State Electoral Office, South Australia. You can telephone the State Electoral Office and ask for a copy on 8401 4300.
- *Making the decision to get involved in local government - ATSIIC Local Government Handbook*. Useful information about making the decision to get involved, planning an election campaign, and marketing and media promotion is available via [www.lga.sa.gov.au/goto/indigenous](http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/goto/indigenous) under the **Elections** section.

### Cover Artwork

The cover artwork by Tamara Watson depicts pathways to places and communities, and a hand grasping the crystal ball is a symbol of taking control of the future. Tamara's family is from the Coorong in South Australia - Tanganeakald people.

