**Research: what can my local councillors do?**

There's a local election coming up ... why is this important to me?


<https://votingcounts.org.uk/what-do-local-councillors-do>

Which of these things are important to me?

What do these things actually mean? Look on line, and find an example of what is included under each heading. Examples:

* Highways – a pot hole, a streetlight, a speed bump to slow cars down and make it safer for me to walk home after school.
* Leisure & recreation – the park, the sports centre
* Waste collection – the bins
* Waste disposal – recycling
* Education – my school
* Libraries – the books I want to read

Which of these things would I like to be different?
Be specific. Give details.
For example, not just ‘the books I want to read’. Which books exactly do you want to see in the library?

**Understanding: Lobbying and persuading**

Could I get my councillor to change the things which I would like to be different?

* When is the best time to get someone to promise something?

Answer: when they want something from me, and they will promise to do something for me in return.

[E*xample: my mum might promise that I can have an ice cream at the end of the week, if I agree that I will be well behaved* ***and*** *do all my homework* ***and*** *keep my room really tidy for all of that week*.]

* What does my councillor (or the candidate to be my councillor) want from me?

Answer: for me to get my parents to vote for them.

So, can I get my councillor to agree to change the things that I want to be better, if they are elected, in return for me persuading my parents to vote for them?

How do I let my councillor know what I want?
[Because if they don’t know that you want it, then they can’t agree to change it!]

* write a letter
* go to a surgery
* invite the councillor to my assembly

**Making a Plan**

Let's set up a plan to get my councillor (or the candidates to be my councillor) to do something which we want.

* First - what do we want to be different?
* Next - let's put some details on that: How much will it cost? How long will it take?
* After that - let's put together a class presentation, explaining what we want - perhaps a poster, a video, a letter.

Now, how can we present our request for change to our councillor (or the candidates to be our councillor)?

* Shall we invite the candidates to our assembly, to listen to our presentation?

**Taking Action**

Now that we have a plan … let’s do it!

* Let’s make the best presentation we can.
* Let’s invite the candidates to be our councillor to come and listen to our presentations.
* Let’s get the candidates to agree to our request for change.

**Alternative to inviting candidates**

Stand for election on a platform of promising to make the change you want to see in your local area (e.g., getting more lighting on the street outside your school for winter evenings)